

**POLICE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES FOR HANDLING  
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN SOUTHERN  
GHANA AND LAGOS STATE**

**BY**

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## **APPROVAL PAGE**

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## **DEDICATION**

This study is dedicated to the sweet memory of my Giant Father, the Late Rev. Patrick Awuku Yalley, also known as Old Soldier. You always stood by me and invested discipline, hard work and the fear of God in me. You believed in me and encouraged me to pursue the greatest in life because with God nothing is impossible. Your Little Baby could not have achieved this without your solid belief in the female child. I say thank you, but I wish you were here to celebrate with me. More love to you My Dear Father.

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## ABSTRACT

Domestic Violence (DV) is a precarious social problem found across all strata of society worldwide. A major effort to curb this menace was the criminalisation of domestic violence and the involvement of police in handling DV cases. Previous studies focused on the rates of DV reports to police and police role in victims' access to justice, with little consideration for the effectiveness of police interventions in meeting victims' needs. This study was, therefore, designed to examine the ways in which police intervention strategies in domestic violence met the needs of female victims in Southern Ghana and Lagos State. Feminist Theory, complemented with deterrence and empowerment theories, served as framework; while exploratory research design was used. A total of 10 DV police units in Ghana and Nigeria were purposively selected as case studies due to the enormous cases they handled. In Southern Ghana, the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Units in Accra-Central, Cape Coast, Sekondi, Nsawam and Takoradi Police Stations were selected. The Family Support Units in Isokoko, Ilupeju, Ikeja and Ketu Police Stations, and Gender Office were selected in Lagos State. In-depth interviews were conducted with victims (60 in Ghana and 60 in Lagos), and police officers (15 in Ghana and 15 in Lagos), while key informant interviews were conducted with social workers (two in Ghana and two in Lagos). Non-participant observation was also undertaken in the Police Stations and law courts in the countries. Secondary data garnered are textual materials. Data were thematically analysed.

The intervention strategies adopted by the police in handling DV in Southern Ghana and Lagos included sensitisation, arrest, prosecution and mediation. Interventions in the two countries followed a similar procedure of investigation, and gave less priority to counselling. The interventions were mostly effective in stopping the initial abuse reported, but exposed victims to psychological and economic abuse. Ghana Police focused on prosecution, which proved effective in deterring offenders, while Nigeria Police focused on reconciliation, which preserved family relationship but aggravated revictimisation. Ghana Police employed 'invisible' arrest, while Nigeria Police utilised civilians in mediation of DV cases. Religious beliefs in forgiveness and God's sovereignty were cited as major reasons for victims' rejection of prosecution in both countries. Victims' needs included psychosocial support, shelter, justice, medical aid, security and financial empowerment. Psychosocial support was least met in Ghana, while in Nigeria justice was least met. Corruption in the two police institutions impeded victims' access to justice and impoverished them. Masculinisation of the police, which was more prominent in Ghana, manifested in their attitude and operations. Interventions in both countries were characterised by hostility, blaming of victims, impatience, and use of force causing secondary victimisation. Policewomen were more aggressive, hostile and less successful in handling cases than policemen in both countries.

Police intervention strategies were ineffective in meeting most of victims' needs, which created a cycle of violence and hopelessness for victims in Southern Ghana and Lagos. Government should restructure Domestic Violence units to include psychologists and social workers to provide a comprehensive approach in handling this problem.

**Keywords:** Domestic violence, Nigeria Police, Ghana Police

**Word count:** 500

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ADR	Alternative Dispute Resolution
CLEEN	Centre for Law Enforcement Education
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DEVAW	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women
DFID	Department for International Development
DPO	Divisional Police Officer
DV	Domestic Violence
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FSU	Family Support Unit
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
LASUTH	Lagos State University Teaching Hospital
MDGF	Millennium Development Goal Fund
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPIA	The National Policing Improvement Agency
NVCS	National Crime Victimisation Survey
PCRC	Police Community Relations Committee
SARS	Special Anti-Robbery Squad
SWAT	Special Weapons and Tactics
UKAID	United Kingdom Aid
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Aid
UN	United Nations
VAW	Violence Against Women
WAJU	Women and Juvenile Unit
WHO	World Health Organisation
WiLDAF	Women in Law and Development in Africa

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background to the Study

*My husband name is 'A' (name withheld) and we have been married for about 18 years now. 'A' has been beating me every time at the slightest provocation. Even without provocation, he will beat. He beats me in front of my children every time and because of that, my children fear him. Even the little ones, they don't want to be with him. There was a time he beat me with a pestle and I was hospitalised for days. I fear that my husband will just kill me one day. This is why I reported to the Police to help me. I have made reports to many police stations in Lagos, but every time they say it is husband and wife matter so they don't take it seriously. When I no gree de go say I too stubborn (when I reject they will say I am too stubborn). But person wey wear shoe naim know where epinch am (but he who wears the shoe knows where it pinches most). Every time de go just talk to am, settle am but the beating de continue, ino change am (every time they will just talk to him and settle it but he continues beating me, it doesn't change him). I don tire, I no wan die leave my children (I am tired, I don't want to die and leave my children). This man wan kill me, I need help (weeping) (Victim of domestic violence, Lagos, March, 2018)*

The above quotes extracted from the account of an abused woman in Lagos, Nigeria gives a vivid portrayal of the agony of domestic violence victims and how their quest and cry for protection from death is trivialised by the SCpolice. Many such victims have been killed as a result of police indifference to domestic violence. Indeed, the constant disposition of the Criminal Justice System, especially the police, to the incidence of domestic violence is precarious, which demands for critical study and enquiry. Domestic violence is a pattern of violent behaviour or acts that occurs among family relations or people living together in a household as well as those who are or have been in an intimate relationship (Igwe 21012). The major forms of domestic violence include physical assault, sexual violence, emotional and/or psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking, economic control, harassment, physical intimidation, or injury (Adu-Gyamfi 2014).

Domestic violence against women is a major social menace with critical health, social and economic effects on victims, family, society and the world at large. It is a social problem that cuts across all strata of societies affecting women with diverse economic, social, religious and racial backgrounds (Andersson, Ho-Forster, Mitchell, Scheepers and Goldstein, 2007). Domestic Violence (DV) had been historically viewed as a private affair worldwide where abused and battered women were blamed for being the cause of their own victimization. As a result of this, there exists a culture of silence surrounding domestic violence with most cases going unreported (Tenkorang and Owusu, 2013). Although both men and women could be victims of domestic violence, extensive research has demonstrated that more women are victimised domestically than men (Isahakou, 2013, Dienne and Gbeneol, 2008 and Abiri and Abioye, 2012), hence the focus on women. Dienne and Gbeneol (2008) found in their study on DV in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, that only 0.0023% of men suffered DV compared to the 47.01% of women who experienced DV. Scholars such as Igwe (2012), and Alemika and Chukwuma (2012) have together argued that men usually suffer more violence than women, but women suffer more family violence and their perpetrators are often those in close family relations or live together in a household. Focusing on women does not eliminate the fact that men experience DV but rather attempts to expose the sexed and gendered nature of domestic violence (Johnson, Ollus and Nevala, 2008).

Feminists and scholars of the feminist hue such as Walby (1979), Dobash and Dobash (1979) and Walker (1984) have argued that domestic violence against women results from male superiority and domination over women, as well as sexist ideologies and false consciousness which comes as part of the patriarchal socialization process. Hattery (2012) argues that patriarchy enforces limitations to women's freedom, educational attainment, sexuality, and economic liberations. It is believed that the different forms of domestic violence against women are as a result of unequal gender relations between men and women. Acker (2006) also contends that domestic violence results from gender inequality regimes. He posits that it is a powerful tool used to enforce and reinforce gender hierarchies and gender inequalities.

According to the World Health Organization (2012), globally one in every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime. Domestic violence has also been recognised as a major developmental challenge in developing countries including Ghana and Nigeria, and therefore requires serious attention. Studies have shown that one in every three women has been a victim of domestic violence in Ghana (Ghana Demographic and Health Survey, 2013). In similar vein, cases of homicide continue to increase in the country as a result of domestic violence (Manjoo, 2012). Nigeria is similarly afflicted by the same problem of violence against women. As with many sub-Saharan African societies, Nigeria is a typical patriarchal society that is plagued with gender inequality, male domination, and superiority (Alemika and Agugua, 2001). As a result, violence against women is a feature of everyday life in many parts of the country (Effah-Chukwuma and Nnorom, 2011). The Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey (2013) revealed that two out of every three Nigerian women have experienced domestic violence from a husband, in-law or lover. In a similar nationwide survey conducted by Centre for Law Enforcement Education (CLEEN) Foundation on crime victimization in 2013, it was revealed that domestic violence in Nigeria increased from 3% in 2008 to 31% in 2012 with women being the majority of the victims. Another study by Project Alert on Violence Against Women conducted in 2011 in Southwest Nigeria indicated that domestic violence against women was prevalent in the study area (Effah-Chukwuma and Nnorom, 2011). The results of the study showed that 30% of women in the Southwestern part of the country had experienced domestic violence, with 2% losing pregnancy as a result of the violence.

A major effort to curb this menace was the criminalisation of domestic violence and the involvement of police in handling DV cases. In 2007, the Ghana government enacted the Domestic Violence Act 2007 (Act 732). In Nigeria however, the quest for the criminalisation of domestic violence at the national level did not receive early attention. Until 2015 when the Violence Against Persons' bill was passed, there was no law specifically addressing domestic violence although the Nigeria Penal Code addressed assault and rape. However, other States such as Lagos had already enacted state laws that

criminalized domestic violence. The Lagos State Domestic Violence Bill was passed into law in 2007.

The Ghana and Lagos State Domestic Violence Laws both criminalised DV mandating the police to arrest and prosecute offenders and provide protection and psychosocial support for victims. The criminalisation of domestic violence in Ghana and Lagos State placed police involvement paramount to the fight against domestic violence which led to the establishment of special domestic violence units. The Domestic Violence and Support Unit (DOVVSU) formerly the Women and Juvenile Centre was created within the Ghana Police Service while the Family Support Unit was established in the Nigeria Police Force. These domestic violence units are tasked with the responsibility of handling cases of domestic violence, prosecuting offenders and providing support services for victims.

Prior to these DV laws, the police often disregarded domestic violence, considered it a private matter, and often advised victims to settle them at home (AduGyamfi,2014). The criminalisation of the domestic violence by the law therefore demanded a shift of police disposition to domestic violence, mandating police to take serious actions of arrest, prosecution of perpetrators and provide special support services for victims. The need for police involvement in domestic violence is based on the argument that perpetrators must be held accountable for their abusive behaviours to prevent impunity (Karmen, 2007). A loosed criminal justice system breeds impunity and increases crime (Effah-Chukwuma and Asiwaju, 2006), making police involvement imperative to curbing domestic violence. However, considering the patriarchal and masculinised culture under which the Ghana Police Service and the Nigeria Police Force operate, there is a huge debate surrounding the effectiveness of police interventions for African women which requires comprehensive investigation. This is necessary because the police organizations in Ghana and Nigeria have been criticised for militarisation, abuse of human rights, patriarchal control and insensitivity to gender issues (Alemika and Agugua, 2001; Aning 2006). Thus, it was imperative to study how effective the law and criminal justice, especially the police, have been in responding to domestic violence twelve years after the criminalisation of domestic violence. This study critically examined police intervention strategies in domestic violence



against women in Southern Ghana and Lagos State, Nigeria and how they meet the specific needs of female victims.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Since the evolution of the battered women movement in the 1970s, there have been several studies on domestic violence against women worldwide. Particularly in Africa, there have been several studies that unveil the diverse elements of domestic violence. Yet there are still gaps in many areas. Studies that focus on police interventions in domestic violence have largely been unexplored. In Ghana many of the studies focused on different angles of domestic violence. For example, Ofeibea-Aboagye, 1994; Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF) Ghana, 1996; Ankomah, 1996; Adayfio-Schandorf, 2006; Seziafa, 2014; Tenkorang and Owusu, 2013 studied the forms, prevalence, causes, and effects of domestic violence. Isahaku (2012) on the other hand, examined the experiences of victims who sought health care services. Nigerian scholars such as Effah-Chukwuma and Nnorom (2011); Orasiremi (2012); Abioye and Abiri (2012); Adebayo and Kolawole (2013); Oni-Ojo, Adeniji, Osibanjo, and Heirsmac (2014); Okonola and Ojo (2012) also studied the prevalence, causes, the implications and the socio-economic dynamics of domestic violence against women. The few studies conducted on police interventions in domestic violence, however focused on the report rates and perceptions about the police. Abioye and Abiri (2012) studied the rate of DV reports to police and victims' perception about the criminal justice system, Agbitor (2014) studied police procedures of response to DV while Mitchel (2012) examined police role in victims' access to justice without considering the effectiveness of police interventions in meeting victims needs. This study, specifically interrogated police intervention strategies and its effectiveness in meeting the needs of female victims of domestic violence. Therefore, this study aimed to fill in this gap that other studies could not fill.

## **1.3 Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What intervention strategies did the Ghana Police Service and the Nigeria Police Force employ to deal with domestic violence against women in the study areas?
2. How effective are these interventions in meeting the needs of female victims of domestic violence?
3. How different or similar are police intervention strategies in Southern Ghana and Lagos State?
4. How does the masculine nature of the police organisation influence interventions and operations in domestic violence?
5. What are the existing challenges of police interventions in domestic violence in Southern Ghana and Lagos State?

#### **1.4 Aim and Objectives**

The study generally aimed to critically examine police interventions strategies in domestic violence against women in Southern Ghana and Lagos State, Nigeria and how they meet the needs of female victims by comparing and contrasting findings from the two police institutions.

##### **1.4.1 Objectives**

The study was able to specifically:

1. Identify and critically examine the existing intervention strategies employed by the police in handling domestic violence against women in the study areas.
2. Interrogate the effectiveness of police interventions in meeting the needs of female victims of domestic violence.
3. Examine the similarities and differences between police interventions in southern Ghana and Lagos State.
4. Determine how the masculine of the police organisation influenced interventions and operations in domestic violence and
5. Highlight some challenges of police interventions in domestic violence against women.

## **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study was conducted in Southern Ghana and Lagos State, Nigeria. The study focused on the intervention strategies employed by the domestic violence units of the Ghana Police Service and the Nigeria Police Force in handling domestic violence against women because no study has been conducted to fill this lacuna in academic scholarship.

Ghana and Nigeria were chosen for this comparative study because they both have a similar colonial history (British Colonies), policing culture and challenges on the menace of domestic violence against women. The Ghana and Nigeria Police were both established by the British government and as a result have similar mode of operations and practices which include hierarchical structures, use of force, are oppressive and masculine with minimal attention to gender issues. These two police institutions also face similar challenges of inadequate logistics, funding, insufficient and poorly trained personnel among others. Again, both the Lagos State Domestic Violence Bill and the Ghana Domestic Violence Bill were all passed in 2007. Thus, it is appropriate to study how effective the law and criminal justice system, especially the police, have been in responding to domestic violence twelve years after its passage.

Lagos State was chosen for this study because Lagos State was among the States that enacted a law against domestic violence in Southwest even before the passage of the Violence Against Persons Law at the Federal level. Consequently, it is the only State that has a special unit (Family Support Unit) established within the Nigeria Police Force to handle domestic violence and sexual offences in the whole of Nigeria. Thus, all the 11 Family Support Units offices of the Nigeria Police Force are located in Lagos State. Also, as the economic hub with a cosmopolitan and highest population in Nigeria, Lagos has the highest prevalence of domestic violence in Nigeria (CLEEN Foundation, 2013 and the Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2013), which makes it ideal for a study like this. Five of the 11 Family Support Units were studied. Specifically, the Family Support Units of Ilupeju police station in Odi-Olowo Ojuwoye Local Government Area, Isokoko police station in Agege Local Government Area, Ketu police station in Kosofe Local Government Area, Ikeja Police Station and the Gender Office of the Lagos State Police Command all in Ikeja Local Government Area were selected as case studies. These police stations were selected because two of them (Isokoko and Ilupeju) were among the early pioneers of the

Family Support Unit while the Gender Office being the headquarters oversees the activities of all the FSU. Also the police stations received a high number of domestic violence cases.

Southern Ghana is made up of seven Regions. These are the Greater Accra Region, Central Region, Western Region, Volta Region, Eastern Region, Ashanti Region and Brong Ahafo. This study however concentrated on four police stations in four Regions: Greater Accra, Western, Eastern and Central. Specifically, the Greater Accra Regional DOVVSU headquarters in Accra Central police station, Nsawam police station, Central Regional DOVVSU headquarters in Cape Coast, Takoradi Central Police Station and the Western Regional DOVVSU headquarters in Sekondi were selected as case studies. These DOVVSU units were selected because of two major reasons. Firstly, one of the police stations (DOVVSU regional headquarters in Accra Central Police Station) was the first DOVVSU unit to be established in Ghana and secondly these police stations received a high number of domestic violence cases. Although there are several forms of domestic violence, this study concentrated on physical, sexual and economic violence and also focused on the Formal Policing (national police institutions).

## **1.6 Justification for the study**

Domestic violence is a precarious social menace with devastating health, psychological, economic and death consequences. It has been recognised a major developmental challenge in developing countries including Ghana and Nigeria, and therefore requires serious attention. Transnational feminist movements identifying the impact of patriarchy and the cycle of domestic violence advocated for the criminal justice system, especially the police involvement in domestic violence to break the cycle of violence by providing social support services for victims and placing punitive measures to deter offenders and potential offenders. Police involvement in DV was made paramount and mandatory by the Ghana and Lagos State domestic violence laws. However, not many studies have been conducted to critically examine the work of the police as well as their effectiveness in meeting the specific needs of victims. This study, therefore, examined the intervention strategies employed by DOVVSU and FSU in dealing with domestic violence and interrogated its effectiveness in meeting the specific needs of victims together with theories and existing

scholarship. Furthermore, it highlighted the major similarities and differences in the approaches and operations of the two domestic violence units in Ghana and Nigeria. It also critically examined how the masculine culture of the police affected their operations in domestic violence and documented the challenges of police intervention strategies in the two study areas.

### **1.7 Significance of the study**

The research is highly deemed crucial in determining whether or not the interventions used by the police are effective in protecting and minimising victims' experiences of abuse and helping them overcome the effects of the abuse. Also, the highlight of specific needs of victims will assist policymakers, police and other social protection institutions to streamline their services and approaches to be gender sensitive in order to meet the specific needs of victims. It will help with prospects on improving Ghana and Nigeria police operations in dealing with domestic violence and contribute greatly to existing knowledge and scholarship on domestic violence. Further to this, scholars will find this work as a foundation for further research on policing domestic violence.

### **1.8 Definition of terms**

**Domestic Violence:** Any act or behaviour that constitutes a threat or harm likely to result in physical, sexual, economic, emotional abuse or a combination of these in a domestic relationship. Domestic relationships involve family members or individual related by blood, domestic assistants of house-helps, in-laws and individuals who are or were in intimate relationships. Family violence is sometimes used interchangeably to refer to domestic violence. Other terminologies used include spousal violence, marital violence or intimate partner violence which limits domestic violence to marriage partners excluding other household members such as fathers, co-wives, in-laws, domestic servants or other members of the family. This research adopts the use of domestic violence over family violence because the victims of domestic violence are not limited to family members or intimate partners but could include people living together in a household who may not necessarily be related by blood such as domestic assistants and in-laws. Thus domestic violence is contextually ideal for African situation where people live in large and extended families

**Police:** An institution established by a national government and empowered for the purpose of enforcing law, protecting lives and property and maintaining order. Police can also refer to a body of persons, trained for the enforcement of law, prevention and detection of crime as well as the apprehension of offenders. Police are the main agencies charged with the maintenance of public safety and security.

**Policing:** Policing refers to the acts and means of enforcing law, maintaining order, protecting lives and securing individuals or society from danger. The various forms of policing include formal policing, community policing and traditional policing.

**Police intervention:** Measures used by police to prevent and respond to domestic violence against women. The interventions include programmes and practices designed to reduce domestic violence and vulnerability of victims and empowering them to overcome the trauma.

**Masculinity:** Masculinity is societal and cultural interpretation of what it means to be a man or societal expectations and attributes ascribed to real men, or expectations of who a real man should be. Masculine attributes include physical strength, aggression, violence, toughness, success, bravery and power

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

#### **2.1 Literature Review**

##### **2.1.1 Domestic Violence: Definition and forms**

Violence according to Oriseremi (2012) simply involves the use of force to cause injury by a more powerful individual on another. Vries (2002) also defines violence as any, justified or illegitimate use of force whether physically or otherwise by one person on another. This force, however, has been contended by several scholars such as Igwe (2012), as a slippery concept because the stress on physicality ignores its social context. The World Health Organisation, however, acknowledges the physical and psychological dimensions of violence. It thus defines it as the

Intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person or against a group of community that either results in or has the high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation.  
(WHO 2002: 12).

However, WHO's definition though encompassing failed to stress power relations existing between the perpetrator and the victim which is very central to the determinant of violence. The power relations could be as a result of age or gender. Domestic violence cannot be divorced from the entire conceptualization of violence. There have been several definitions of domestic violence against women in literature. These definitions do not agree on exactly what constitutes domestic violence and they differ in time. Thus disagreement exists among scholars and practitioners on exactly what constitutes violence against women (Mouzos and Makkai 2004). A great background to this disagreement lies in the fact that the yardstick for measuring domestic violence against women differ from society to society and from culture to culture and also by time. Hence what constitutes domestic violence in a particular society may not be regarded as abuse in another society and what is acceptable in by a group of people may change over time. As a result of this, the parameters of domestic violence against women keep changing. Oni-Ojo et al., (2014) defines Domestic violence as a pattern of coercive behaviour, including acts or threatened acts, that is used by a perpetrator

to gain power and control over a current or former spouse, family member, intimate partner, or person with whom the perpetrator shares a child in common. The Lagos State DV Laws defines domestic violence as any “violence which occurs in the home or between people who live or have lived together”.. Domestic violence includes, “but is not limited to physical or sexual violence, emotional or psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking, economic control, harassment, physical intimidation, or injury” (Adu-Gyamfi, 2014:4).

The major forms of domestic violence are physical, sexual, psychological or emotional, harmful traditional and cultural practices and economic violence. Sexual violence consists of sexual harassment, incest, rape, forced prostitution, and sexual slavery. Physical violence usually causes visible injury to the victim and involves wife battery, physical assault and female infanticide. Emotional and psychological violence include acts such as threats of violence, insults and name-calling, humiliation, threat, and abandonment. Harmful traditional practices include Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), widowhood rites, witch-hunting, trokosi and forced or early marriage. Socio- economic violence includes economic deprivation or exploitation. Scholars argue that victims of domestic violence usually experience multiple violence. Adayfio-Schandoff and Sam (2001) opine that physical and sexual violence usually results in emotional or psychological. Oni-Ojo et al (2014:189) outlines physical, sexual and psychological violence to consist of “battery, sexual abuse, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women and girls, marital rape, dowry-related violence, incest, non-spousal violence like a son’s violence against his mother and violence related to exploitation and deprivation of freedom.

Domestic violence forms part of the entire parameters of violence against women. It has been observed by several scholars and studies have demonstrated that DV is the major form of violence against women. Oni-Ojo et al.(2014) have ascertained that Domestic abuse is the most prevalent form of gender-based violence which occurs within the families and inside the homes. Violence Against Women (VAW) is defined by the United Nations’ Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW) as

any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or



arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.  
(United Nations, 1993:211)

It has been argued by several scholars that domestic violence is gender-based because it results from unequal power relations between men and women and that women are usually the victims of domestic violence. Gender-based violence is a concept that is attributed to violence suffered by women.

This definition was subsequently affirmed by the Beijing Platform of Action (1995) which elaborated the categories of gender-based violence as domestic violence, community violence, and State violence. It states that gender-based violence shall be understood to encompass but not limited to the following:

Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation, and other traditional practices harmful to women , non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation.

### **2.1.2 Gender dimensions of domestic violence**

The interplay of gender power relations in domestic violence cannot be overemphasised. Although victims of domestic violence could be male or female, extensive research and studies have shown that women suffer more violence domestically than men. A research by the Department of Family Medicine at the University of Port Harcourt in a primary care setting which aimed at assessing the prevalence of domestic violence against men, the socio-demographic characteristics of victims and the pattern of injury sustained revealed that only 0.0023% of men suffered domestic violence and the injuries observed were minor scratches, bruises, welts and scalds (Dienye and Gbeneol, 2008). The same study also revealed that 47.0077% of women were victims of domestic violence and their perpetrators were men who were either family members or those living together in a household. Several other scholars have clearly acknowledged domestic violence to be the most common form of crime and the fact that women are at a higher risk of violence from close family members than strangers. Scholars such as Igwe (2012) and Alemika and Chukwuma (2012)

have together argued that men usually suffer more violence than women, but women suffer more family violence and their perpetrators are often those in close family relations or live together in a household.

Although these studies stress the level of female victimization in the domestic setting, critical analysis further reveals increasing changes in the domestic violence victims in other parts of the world. A study by one of the United Kingdom's leading men's rights campaign group indicated that the number of men attacked by their wives or girlfriends was much higher than was previously thought (The Observer, September 2010). Data from the British Crime Survey and Home Office Statistical Bulletins indicated that 40% of all domestic violence victims from 2004 to 2008 were men (BBC News, February 2012). Scholars such as Abioye and Abiri (2012) opine that official figures underestimate the true number of male victims because they are reluctant to admit abuse by women and do not report while those who report are either ridiculed or ignored by the police. Similarly, a study conducted on domestic violence against men by Maendeleo Ya Wanaumen, a Non-Governmental Organisation which works to stop violence against men in Kenya disclosed that more than 1.5million men in Kenya suffered domestic violence in 2009 (Mwaura, 2012).

Although this number represents a large number of men, it is quite uncertain whether domestic violence is more prevalent among Kenyan men than women because it excluded women. Hence it cannot be emphatically concluded that men suffer more domestic violence than women in Kenya. The survey further cited the economic empowerment of women as the cause of women abusing their husbands which validates the resource theory domestic violence which asserts that the more resources (social, personal, and economic) a person commands, the more power he or she can potentially call on (Smith, 2008). This, therefore, means that people with fewer resources are more likely to be subjected to oppression and violence irrespective of the sex. It can, therefore, be argued that the incidence and dynamics of domestic violence are not solely as a result of gender inequality. Scholars observe that oftentimes the acts perpetrated by women are a response to male violence (Adu-Gyamfi, 2014; Effah-Chukwuma and Nnorom, 2011 and Igwe, 2012 ).

### **2.3 Patriarchy and Domestic Violence**

Domestic Violence is a social phenomenon which is partly rooted in culture. Culture of patriarchy has been argued by feminists to be a major cause of domestic violence. According to Orisaremi (2012), patriarchy is a cultural system where men dominate ownership and control in decision making at all levels of society based on the erroneous belief in male superiority. Hence patriarchy creates unequal gender relations and discrimination, fosters gender inequality which leads to male superiority and female inferiority (Orisaremi, 2012). This gender inequality creates unequal gender power relations which can be used to abuse the weaker sex being the female (Tinkorang, 2014). This has been supported by Ezeh and Gage (1998) who contend that there is increasing evidence to demonstrate that marital violence revolves around cultural definitions of acceptable sex roles, predominantly wifely obedience and domestic service. These scholars explain that the failure of the woman to perform her roles to the satisfaction of her husband oftentimes results in violence against women. Seziafa (2014) also notes that in most African societies including Ghana and Nigeria, the context of domestic abuse is defined by women's societal relations with men. She continues to argue that women are traditionally obliged to surrender their entirety to their husbands in addition to being domestically available to gratify the male partners physical, psychological and sexual desires. The refusal of a woman to perform these expected roles result in her beating and coercion in an attempt to restore traditional gender order and male superiority ( Amoakohene 2004; Tenkorang and Owusu, 2013;Aboagye-Offei, 1994). In Isahakou's study in Northern Ghana in 2013, it was revealed that partner controlling behaviour was a way in which male partners restricted or constrained their spouses' freedom as an exercise of power and control in a male-dominated society. This was a trigger for Intimate Partner Violence(IPV) when the wives protested.

#### **2.1.4 Causes of domestic violence**

Several views and theoretical models have attempted to describe the major reasons underpinning the domestic abuse of women as well as the risk and protective factors. Perhaps one could say that the multifaceted nature of domestic violence is synonymous to its numerous causes. Ranging from behavioural abnormalities to cultural and socio-

economic factors, empirical studies on the causes of domestic violence against women presents four theoretical school of thoughts. These are learned or acquired behaviour, patriarchal structures of gender-based inequalities, subcultural influences and resource factors.

Strauset al. (1980), view domestic violence as a system rather than as a result of individual mental disorder. They describe it as a system of violence that operates at the individual, family, and societal levels and view domestic violence as a learned behaviour, including stereotyped family violence imagery learned in childhood and reaffirmed through social and cultural interactions. This school of thought disputes the fact that violence is the result of personality disorder or biological syndrome. This means that violence is a behaviour that is acquired and learned in the family and society through several mediums such as experiential, observational or indoctrination. It thus argues that no man is born violent but the environment shapes the mind and behaviour of people to be violent. Thus the human mind is tabula rasa and a product of the society. This has been supported by Staats (1994) that human behaviour is a product of his environment. Thus family and society influence human behaviour.

The resource factor of domestic violence asserts that the more resources (social, personal, and economic) a person can command, the more power he or she can potentially call on. The individual who is rich in terms of these resources has more autonomy. This, therefore, means that people with fewer resources are more likely to be subjected to oppression and violence. In this regard, it explains that women's economic capacity is a great determinant to their experience of domestic violence (Isahakou, 2013).

The third school of thought, sub-culturists opine that some groups within society hold values that permit, and even encourage, the use of violence (Okunola and Ojo,2012). Values such as widowhood rites, stereotyped gender roles, male superiority over the female and entire patriarchal culture create a conducive environment that influences the abuse of women. It offers an explanation of why some segments of society and some cultures abuse women more than others. This explains that attitudes about violence are shaped early in life, long before the abusers perpetrate the act.

The fourth school of thought is the feminists who view violence against women as a variety of control tactics meant to control women. Feminists strongly emphasize that patriarchal structures of gender-based inequalities of power in society are at the root of the problem. Thus the violence, rather than being an individual psychological problem, is instead an expression of male domination of females (Aboagye-Offei 1994)

These schools of thoughts critically explain nearly all the factors that influence the abuse of women in the domestic setting. Several other scholars and studies have demonstrated a variety of factors that make women prone to experiencing domestic violence. These include poverty, educational level, patriarchy, alcohol use, intergenerational causes, etc.

The use of alcohol has been strongly associated with the perpetration of domestic violence in several studies. A review of the results of 11 studies found that excessive use of alcohol was associated with a 4.6 times increased risk of exposure to domestic violence compared to mild or no alcohol use (Gil-Gonzalez et al., 2006). Similarly, another study on intimate partner violence in Northern Ghana revealed that alcohol increases the risk of overall violence (Isahakou, 2013). Specifically, respondents whose partners consumed alcohol showed a higher incidence of violence than those who attested their partners were non-alcoholic.

Research across cultures have revealed a number of societal and cultural factors that might give rise to higher levels of violence. For example, Levinson (1989) used statistical analysis of coded ethnographic data from 90 societies to examine the cultural patterns of wife beating, exploring the factors that consistently distinguish societies where wife beating is common from those where the practice is rare or absent. His analysis indicated that wife beating occurs more often in societies in which men have economic and decision-making power in the household, where women do not have easy access to divorce and where adults routinely resort to violence to resolve their conflicts. Similarly, Seziafa (2014) revealed in her study that women from patrilineal societies experienced more violence than women from matrilineal societies in Ghana.

The economic dependence of Ghanaian women on their husbands and male partners contributes to and complicates domestic violence in several ways. First, anxiety about money and resources can result in violence. For example, Cantalupo, Martin, Pak, and Shin (2006) indicated in her study that many interviewees reported that quarrels over maintenance (money that spouses must provide for life necessities such as food and clothing) led men to abuse their wives. In addition, the results of the 2012 national crime victimization survey in Nigeria indicated that unemployed and low-income women experienced more violence from their partners than women who earned high income.

Disparities in educational attainment between male and female partners may also result in higher rates of intimate partner violence (Acker, 2006). Men may use violence to gain power within a relationship in which the woman's level of education is higher. Moreover partnerships with low marital satisfaction, continuous disagreements, and high marital discord are more likely to be associated with intimate partner violence compared to those without (Ellsberg, Jansen, Heike, Watts, and Garcia-Moreno, 2008). Disagreements often occur over traditional gender roles, control in partnerships with status disparities (for example, in income, education or age) and sexual acts or refusals (Isahakou 2013).

Men and women's attitudes towards violence are strongly correlated with exposure to intimate partner violence and sexual violence in terms of victimization and perpetration. Men who believe that it is acceptable to beat their wives have a "two-fold risk of intimate partner violence perpetration" (Abrams, 2016: 12). Widely shared perceptions that women are inferior to men and are obligated to submit to and remain subordinate to men perpetuate domestic violence in Ghana (Ellesberg et al., 2008). In Ghana, like most African societies gender role stereotyping is used to justify domestic violence based on constructions of sexual identity Cantalupo et al., (2006) A study in 17 sub-Saharan African countries showed that intimate partner violence against women was widely accepted under certain circumstances by men and women in all the countries studied (Uthman, Lawoko and Moradi, 2009). Women were more likely to justify it than men. The WHO Multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women found that the percentage

of women who agreed with one or more justifications for “wife beating” varied from 6% to over 65% (Garcia-Moreno, 2005).

### **2.1.5 Effects of domestic violence**

The effects of domestic violence are enormous. Bhatla et al. (2006) have emphasised that domestic violence compromises the security of victims; household security; their economic viability; household income and also increases their risk of destitution while decreasing their access and participation in development programmes. Domestic violence does not only affect the individual victim, but also those who witness it together with the perpetrator all suffer short and long term consequences. Domestic violence has been recognised as a health problem which is a major concern to the World Health Organization. This is because many women suffer health challenges such as physical injury which sometimes lead to permanent disability. Violence against women is as serious a cause of death and incapacity among women of reproductive age as cancer, and a greater cause of ill-health than traffic accidents and malaria combined (World Development Report, 1993). Recent media news in Nigeria indicates a rising incidence of homicide as a result of domestic violence (Daily Independence, October 2016). In a research by Okunola and Ojo (2012), the death of a baby was recorded as a result of widowhood rites in Ikire Area of Osun State, Nigeria.

Domestic violence also affects the psychological health and behaviour of both victims, perpetrators and witnesses. It has been demonstrated that victims of domestic violence tend to have difficulty concentrating, assimilating, suffer depression and are often filled with anger and regrets. In a study by Okunola and Ojo (2012) victims of domestic violence experienced psychological trauma such as depression, anxiety, stress, aggression and low self-esteem. Domestic violence also has a long term negative impact on the behaviour of children who grow up in abusive homes. Research also demonstrates that children who witness domestic violence have a high tendency of being abusers or victims. In addition, domestic violence is one of the leading causes of divorce which leads to broken homes.

The economic impact of domestic violence cannot be over emphasized. Women victims may lose their jobs or be less productive. Attitudes such as lateness, lack of concentration,

absenteeism all limit the economic viability of victims (Oni-Ojo et al., 2014). In addition to these, the family's income could be reduced which could affect the children's education and entire welfare. Also the cost of health care for victims of domestic violence does not only affect the family but the state and society at large. In the United States, billions of dollars are used to provide health care, shelter and social protection for victims (Ellesberg et al., 2008). Domestic violence has also been recognised as a development challenge by the United Nations. High prevalence of domestic violence affects the socio-economic development of a nation. It increases crime and other social vices, affects productivity, exhausts government expenditure, reduces income tax and limits the economic contributions of women.

#### **2.1.6 Social protection and interventions for female victims of domestic violence**

Due to the destructive impact of domestic violence, women survivors require the services of social protection programmes that will help them overcome the traumatic experience and rehabilitate them. Thus the need for effective social protection programmes for women is paramount to the survival of victims. Social protection interventions according to Chetwin (2013) are policies, programmes, and activities designed to prevent domestic violence, protect victims and assist survivors to overcome the impact of domestic violence in order to lead normal lives. Scholars agree that effective social protection interventions for victims of domestic violence is paramount to reducing the reoccurrence of violence, reducing the effects thereby reinstating victims to lead normal lives and finally reducing the overall incidence of domestic violence. Agbitor (2014), Chetwin (2013), Effah-Chukwuma and Nnorom (2011) all agree on the essential role of effective social protection in the physical, psychological and social wellbeing of victims. Effective social protection should, therefore, encompass activities essential to the needs of victims and guarantee their protection, empower them to overcome the trauma resulting from abuse, meet the physical, psychological and strategic needs as well as equip them with practical skills to overcome future violence.

Good social protection interventions should also include punishment and further rehabilitation of offenders in order to prevent impunity and reduce the prevalence of



violence. Chetwin (2013) buttresses this fact by emphasizing that social protection interventions should also hold offenders accountable, rehabilitate offenders, support and protect victims. Also, Effah-Chukwuma and Nnorom (2011) also notes that victims of family violence do not necessarily seek to break their unions, but rather need good and safe relationships. Thus, it is imperative for intervention strategies to also target behavioural change in offenders. Fulu (2014) has ascertained that good social protection interventions address the root causes of violence. He further emphasises that, interventions that have the potential of reducing the prevalence of domestic violence are those that address the direct and indirect root causes. Domestic violence interventions could be categorised into two main components. They are prevention and response measures. Fonteneau et al., (2014) note that prevention measures of social protection entail policies, programs and activities that aim to prevent the occurrence of domestic violence while response measures are programmes that target the protection and rehabilitation of victims of domestic violence.

“The most effective programmes appear to combine both prevention and response measures and it draws on the transformative social protection framework, which adds transformative measures to protection, prevention and promotion measures” (Fonteneau et al, 2014: 12). Protective social protection measures include cash transfers and social services like shelters for survivors of domestic violence and the provision of health and legal aid. These types of programmes tend to be responsive. Transformative social protection measures targeting women survivors of violence include changes to the regulatory frameworks to protect victims of domestic violence and sensitisation campaigns to transform public attitudes and behaviour towards violence against women (Fonteneau et al, 2014). These types of programmes tend to prevent domestic violence from occurring. Transformative social protection aims to change lives through achieving empowerment, equality, social inclusion and the realisation of human rights. Rohwerder (2014) however, is of the view that interventions do not have the same effect on all women experiencing domestic violence but what influences the outcome include: age at marriage, age differential between spouses, levels of education for both men and women, employment status of the husband and overall household well-being.

Fulu (2014) identified six main prevention interventions strategies as advocacy and community mobilization campaign, social and economic empowerment of women and

girls, male-centered strategies, early childhood interventions; and alcohol abuse and depression interventions. In his review of 244 individual cases in Canada, Fulu (2014) observed that effective programmes that break the silence and challenge social norms that tolerate violence have shown tremendous impact in reducing the prevalence of domestic violence. They observe that interventions that aim at changing individual abusive behaviour have not been efficient in resolving the menace of domestic violence, hence a greater emphasis must be placed on a comprehensive, multi-component efforts to change social norms.

Awareness and advocacy campaigns have been identified by several scholars as one of the effective means of changing social norms that encourage domestic violence against women. The major difference between awareness and advocacy campaigns is that while awareness campaign aim at causing people to be conscious and knowledgeable about gender-based violence, laws, policies or services for victims, advocacy campaigns usually involve regional or national coalitions aimed to take action to influence policy changes (Hiese, 2011). They usually involve media interventions and printed publications and they aim to increase knowledge, challenge attitudes and modify behaviour.

Pallurk(2010) opines that marketing social norms is also effective in changing perceptions about attitudes and behaviours considered normal by the society, regenerate positive social norms and discourage harmful ones. There is however minimal evidence that awareness and advocacy campaigns reduce the prevalence of domestic violence, but evidence suggests an increase in the use of referral services by victims. An evaluation of a public health education campaign in a rural county in the USA demonstrated a double increase in the number of victims who called the intervention hotlines (Gadomoski,2001).

### **2.1.7 Elements of Effective Social protection Interventions**

Effective interventions should be tailored to protect victims, prevent violence and promote the entire well-being of victims. Scholars such as Cooper (2013), Effah-Chukwuma and Nnorom (2011), Okunola and Ojo (2012) and Chetwin (2013) have argued that in order for social protection interventions to be efficient in meeting its objective, there should be sound

policies and legal frameworks, programmes should be holistic and comprehensive, ensure economic empowerment, entail effective social services, meet the safety and different needs of women, transform gender power dynamics and build the capacity of both victims and care givers.

#### **2.1.7.1 Holistic comprehensive programmes**

Donor and policy documents suggest that social protection programming should respond holistically to violence against women. The Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F) report which draws lessons from case studies of programmes working towards gender equality calls for ‘comprehensive, holistic and multi-sectoral responses’ to gender-based violence (Cooper et al., 2013). These should develop legal and policy frameworks to prevent and eliminate violence against women, provide quality support services to survivors, and balance the unequal gender power relations that contribute to violence, which combines elements of protective and transformative social protection (Cooper et al., 2013). Lockett and Bishop (2012) advise that prevention and response interventions should be integrated or run concurrently. Chetwin (2013) has also emphasised that services need to be integrated, and be provided with multi-agency coordination or collaboration to be effective in addressing family violence and its impacts.

#### **2.1.7.2 Economic empowerment**

There is a substantial body of evidence that outlines the multiple ways in which poverty and lack of economic autonomy for women, intersects with and reinforces gender inequalities (Jewkes and Morrell, 2012). Economic dependency makes it more difficult for women to exit abusive and violent relationships (Effah-Chukwuma and Nnorom, 2011)

Bhatla et al (2006) and Isahakou (2013) have also gathered evidence to show that poverty and economic crisis within households are factors contributing to domestic violence. Their research revealed that women often stay in abusive situations because they fear the loss of shelter and lack of economic opportunities to provide for themselves and their families. The evidence base for economic empowerment programmes suggests that it can lead to greater voice, power, agency or status of women in their intimate relationships and help women

leave abusive relationships by increasing their options (Amin, 2013). This has been supported by the national crime victimization research in Nigeria which also indicates that economic independence provides women with a degree of protection against domestic violence (Abioye and Abiri, 2012). Social protection measures should thus ‘incorporate elements of both social and economic security’ and allow for wealth creation on the part of women (Bhatla et al, 2006). This also means strengthening community norms and national legal measures which recognise women’s property and inheritance rights (Adeyio-Shandoff and Sam, 2001). An evaluation of the Image project in South Africa which empowered women economically showed a statistically significant 55% reduction in women’s experience of physical and sexual violence (Pronyk et al., 2006).

### **2.1.7.3 Support services**

Good interventions also include care for victims. Survivors of domestic violence require ‘timely access to shelter and medical, psychological, legal, economic and other counselling and support services’ (Cooper et al., 2013:11). There is a need for social protection services to address the various consequences of abuse and help survivors rebuild their lives. Also, service providers should work together in an integrated manner to provide a better response to violence against women (United Nations Women, 2012). In South Africa, Georgia, the Palestinian National Authority, and the Dominican Republic, shelters provide social protection through skills development and income generating efforts and there are multi-sectoral efforts aimed at reintegrating survivors of violence into the labour market (UN Women, 2012). A study by Department for International Development (DFID) on social protection in communities in Africa suggests that women-only safe centres that provide social support and skills training can help build women’s social assets and safety nets (Lockett and Bishop, 2012). Care givers should help the woman feel safe, believed, provide emotional and physical care, identify and provide care for children involved and educate victims also on the use of appropriate services (UN Women, 2012).

### **2.1.7.4 Sound policy and legal framework**

Sound policy and legal frameworks are the very foundation upon which good social protection is built. Fulu (2014) has observed that good laws and policies on domestic violence is a hope for victims. Thus there is the need to first enact legal frameworks that protect the right and safety of women as well as lay sanctions on perpetrators.

Transformative social protection also involves changing the policy and legal environment to better support vulnerable groups (Rohwerder, 2014). Amin, (2013) opines that while laws alone cannot reduce or prevent domestic violence, they are important for bringing the issue out in the open and making clear what is socially acceptable. National action plans should have a human rights-based approach (UN Women, 2012).

Another logical and important effect of adopting a bill is the possibilities it opens up in the area of law enforcement. There are various models for this in different countries. In many cases, new police units are created to deal specifically with issues of domestic violence such as the Domestic Violence Victims' Support Unit (DOVVSU) in Ghana and the Family Support Unit within the Nigeria Police Force.

Thus laws on domestic violence must be holistic, realistic and address the underlining causes of violence. Also, the State and other stakeholders must be committed to ensuring its full implementation. In an evaluation of the domestic violence law in Ghana, Ellesberg (2008) reveals that there is a lack of necessary apparatus and funding needed for its full implementation. Hence the positive effects of the law has not yet been fully realised.

#### **2.1.7.5 Transforming gender power and safety**

As part of the transformative element of intervention programmes, efforts must be made to transform attitudes and behaviour towards violence against women as well as preventing violence against women from occurring.

In recognition that violence against women is ‘a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women’, programmes must seek to transform the social and cultural norms which influence the power dynamics between men and women (Abioye and Abiri, 2012). Violence prevention strategies do this by “challenging gender-based

stereotypes and sociocultural patterns of behaviour that legitimise, exacerbate or tolerate violence against women' (Cooper et al, 2013:9).

In addition, programmes should aim to promote women's empowerment and human rights (UN Women, 2012: 11). "Men and boys should be engaged and focus should be on changing the attitudes and behaviour of individual men and should enlist men as allies in women's rights advocacy" (Amin, 2013:25). The interventions to prevent violence against women that are directed at men have gained a momentum in the last decade. Interventions with men are firstly based on the premises they are the ones who perpetrate this violence. Secondly, constructions of masculinity – the social norms associated with manhood and the social organisation of men's lives and relations play a crucial role in shaping violence against women.

Path study in Kenya showed declines in all types of violence perpetration, and significant declines in three types of violence perpetration in 12 months after the male centred interventions programmes were implemented (Rehwerder, 2012).

Some general lessons emerge from the literature that highlight issues which are important to keep in mind when creating programmes for women survivors of domestic violence. It is important for programmes to put in place strategies which ensure the safety of the women involved (UN Women, 2012). The location, outreach and timing of programme activities should minimise risk of further violence (Amin, 2013.). Risk factors to survivors seeking services, such as community punishment for women seeking support or abusive police, should be identified and mitigated (Lockett and Bishop, 2012). Minimum standards for all interventions should include basic ethics regarding 'confidentiality, informed consent, appropriate treatment of children/legal minors, safety and security, and upholding the rights, dignity, and choice of survivors' (Lockett and Bishop, 2012:23).

Intervention programmes need to be tailored to meet the needs of women of 'different ages, marital status, disability and social class (Lockett and Bishop, 2012). Victims of domestic violence have both short-term and long term needs that must be met if domestic violence interventions are to be effective in reducing and preventing violence. Health, shelter,

education, material and economic support, counselling and rehabilitation/ reintegration needs of victims are important to the survival of victims (Agbitor, 2014).

### **2.1.8 Police and Policing**

Police play a critical role in the society without which the maintenance of order and legality cannot be achieved. Leha (2013:3) defines policing as:

An act of enforcing law and order, protecting lives and property and reducing civil order. Policing (also) refers to the functions and institutions associated with the legitimate exercise or threat of force that is invoked to ensure compliance in matters of criminal law enforcement and order maintenance.

Policing refers to “securing compliance with existing laws and conformity with precepts of social order” (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2004). Policing is necessary in all societies for the maintenance of peace, security and social order. Scholars such as (Keelin et al., 2015 and Mustapha, 2013) agree that the act and process of policing go beyond the work of the police. Thus, Police are not the only agency involved in policing. Other agencies such as military and para-military agencies also engage in some form of policing. However, police according to Reiner (2000) refers to a composition of men who have been enlisted, trained and paid by the State for the maintenance of law and order. Keeling, Warner and Taylor (2015) note that Police refers to a State Institution mainly charged with the responsibility of enforcing criminal laws and maintaining order. Although policing has long existed in human societies, Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) contend that the emergence of police is more contemporary in human history. Young cited in Aning(2006: 6) defines a police officer as

a citizen serving the office of a constable, thereby having certain powers and being liable to certain responsibilities. He serves as the sovereign and is a servant of the State exercising authority.

Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) observe that traditionally policing was the responsibilities of all adults living in the community. However, the evolution of State and Nations which came with huge ‘bureaucracies’ which were driven by ‘centralization’ and ‘hierarchical

powers' changed the traditional concept of policing as a communal responsibility (Weber, 1968). The use of force or coerciveness is a primary feature of modern police institutions. Martin (1990) and Bitner (1970) both contend that the universal characteristics of all police institutions is their mandate and the use of coercive means to control violence and maintain order. Alemika and Chukwuma (2012) also reveal that the main responsibility of modern police forces is to enforce law and order. They contend that the formation and tannates of modern police tend to protect the interest of dominant and upper-class members of society. Consequently, the significance of police as facilitators of pro-feminist and pro-poor initiatives largely becomes inconsequential in patriarchal and capitalist societies. Alemika and Chukwuma (2012) also argue that because police are State agents, they often act in consonance to the interest of the superiors in society. As a result, their roles, activities, and priorities are often influenced and determined by the social and political compositions of the society. In other words, police mirror the ethos of the society and vice-versa.

#### **2.1.9 History, colonization and policing in Ghana and Nigeria**

The historical background of Nigeria and Ghana Police is traced to the advent of colonisation. Although the police was established for the maintenance of law and order, Scholars such as Aning (2006), Leha, (2013) and Mustapha (2013), and argue that the principal aim of the formation of the Nigeria and Ghana Police was to protect colonial interest and powers. Police was used to conquer nationalities and maintain British colonial rule and for the British and not necessarily for the protection of the vulnerable in the society. Alemika and Chukwuma (2004) note that 'violence' and 'fraud' were utilised in the conquest of nationalities by the British and the Nigeria Police Force was formed and used as an instrument of oppression and violence against the native population. This culture of violence and oppression, unfortunately, continue to be a dominant practice of most police organizations in Africa, including Ghana and Nigeria. The British Colonization of Nigeria begun in 1861 from Lagos territory until 1960 when Nigeria gained independence (Alemika and Agugua, 2001). According to Leha (2013), the Nigeria Police Force was established by the British government in 1930. The main duties of the Nigeria Police Force are stated in



section 4 of Police Act (CAP 329 of the Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 1990) and Decree No. 23 of 1979:

The Police shall be employed for the prevention and detection of crime, apprehension of offenders, the preservation of law and order, the protection of life and property, the due enforcement of all laws and regulations with which they are directly charged, and perform such military duties within or without Nigeria as may be required of them by, or under the Authority of this or any other Act.

The history of the Ghana Police Service dates back as far as the 1800s. Aning (2006) posits that the Ghana Police was formed in 1831 by Governor George MaCclean to enforce the 'treaty of peace' the British colonial masters signed with the King of Ashanti and the Coastal Chiefs. In similar vein, the Police in Ghana was established to enforce British rule. The main duties of the Ghana Police Service are stipulated in Section I of the Police Service Act 1970 (Act 350), which states that:

It shall be the duty of the Police to prevent, detect crime, apprehend offenders, and to maintain public order and safety of persons and property

#### **2.1.10 Structure of the Ghana and Nigeria Police**

Nigeria currently has a centralized or national Police Force and the 1979 and 1999 Constitutions explicitly prohibits the establishment of any Force other than the Nigeria Police Force. The Nigeria Police Force is made up of 37 Commands and the Force headquarters. The Force headquarters, situated in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja, is the office of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) who is appointed by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The entire Force is under the command of the Inspector General of Police. He is assisted by a Deputy Inspector General and seven Assistant Inspectors General of Police in charge of A, B, C, D, E, F and G departments. The task of the Force is carried out through seven departments: Administration and Finance (A), Operations (B), Logistics and Supply (C), Criminal Investigation Department (D), Training (E), and Research and Planning (F) (Leha,2013). Each of the departments is headed by an Assistant Inspector General of Police. The 37 State Police Commands are further broken

down into 12 Zonal Commands. The Zonal Commands are under the command of Assistant Inspectors General, while Commissioners of Police are in charge of State Commands. The State Commands are further divided into Area Commands headed by Assistant Commissioners of Police, which are also broken down into Divisional Police headquarters headed by Divisional Police Officers (DPO). The Divisional Police headquarters have several Police Stations in the divisional areas with Village Police Posts being the least.

Although the Ghana Police Service inherited its structure and practices from the Gold Coast Constabulary, it upholds civil police duties as its core functions (Ghana Police Service Act). The Ghana Police retains a centralized organizational structure, comprising 12 administrative Regions: 10 covering the 10 administrative Regions of Ghana, one assigned to the seaport and industrial areas of Tema, and the other covering the railway, ports, and harbours (Ghana Police Service, 2018). The 12 Regions are further broken down into 51 Divisions, 179 Districts, and 651 Stations across the nation . The Police headquarters is located in Accra and is headed by the Inspector General of Police (IGP) who is appointed by the President of the Ghana. Following the IGP in hierarchy are the Deputy Inspector General and the Director General of the Police who assist the IGP in supervising the operations of the entire Service across the nation. Each of the 12 administrative Regions is headed by a Regional Commander who is also assisted by the Regional Operational Commander and the Deputy Regional Commander. The administrative Regions are further divided into Divisions, with each headed by a Divisional Commander. The police divisions are further divided into districts, with district commanders reporting directly to the Divisional Commander. Finally, there are several Police Stations having limited control in each district. These Stations are mostly headed by Chief Inspectors, who report to the District Commanders relating to affairs within their limited. The Ghana police is further classified into Units to facilitate its operations (Ghana Police Service, 2018). The Units which are present in each Regional Command include:

Criminal Investigation Department

Motto Traffic and Transport Unit

Anti- Armed Robbery Squad

Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit

Information Communication Technology Directorate  
Special Weapons and Tactics  
Operations Directorate  
Financial Forensic Unit  
Railway and Port Marine  
Commercial Crime Unit  
Drug Law Enforcement Unit  
Anti-Human Trafficking Unit  
Central Firearms Registry  
Financial Forensic Unit Homicide Unit  
Public Relations Department  
Community Policing

#### **2.1.11 Challenges of Policing in Ghana and Nigeria**

Ghana Police Service, like all other public institutions in Ghana have challenges. Aning (2006:24) contends that “if people get the leaders they choose, then one can argue that Ghana has gotten the Police Service it deserves because external pressure, conditions and circumstances count”. Thus, the challenges facing the Ghana police is not devoid of the social, cultural and economic context. One major challenge facing the Ghana is the lack of adequate logistics and resources to enable it perform its functions effectively. “Aning (2006) identified the lack of telecommunication and transportation as a critical problems facing the Ghana Police. Boateng and Darko (2016) argue that the current atmosphere of policing in Ghana is characterized by a police culture that is corrupt, brutal, unaccountable, and repressive, and a police service that performs poorly. Another major challenge is inadequate police personnel to handle security challenges in the Ghanaian community. The Ghana police employs 30,000 officers (Buzz Ghana, 2018) and serves a population of 29.6 million which is grossly below the United Nations standards for ideal police staffing. The Ghana Police Service officer-to-citizen ratio is 1 to 987, compared with the United Nations recommended ratio of 1 to 450. Therefore, it is apparently logical for the police to be incapacitated in effectively securing live and property. Like most law enforcement institutions, the Ghana police faces serious allegations of corruption. A study on public

perception about the police by the University of Ghana in 2001 found that the Ghana Police Service was perceived to be the most corrupt institution by the people of Ghana (Aning, 2006). Like their counterparts in other parts of the world, the police in Ghana have not been spared the unpleasant indictment of alleged brutalities, improper arrests, unlawful detentions, the conduct of illegal searches, unjustifiable use of force and firearms, oppression and other forms of high-handedness which are patently inimical to the protection of civil liberties (Aning, 2006)

Various factors have been blamed as constituting a stumbling block to the effective administration of justice and efficient maintenance of law and order in Nigeria. Often cited factors include, “god fatherism”, nepotism, ethnicism, early socialization, and language differences (Tamuno, 1970, p.28). Others factors are institutional constraints such as inadequate manpower (both in strength and expertise), insufficient education and training, inadequate equipment, and poor conditions of service of the average policeman popularized by military dictatorships (Onyeozili, 2005). There is also the constitutional problem, as manifested in the Second Republic Nigeria which put the whole country’s police under the presidency. Another important factor that has been neglected for many years, and which was rightly pointed out by Alemika (1988); and Okereke (1995), is the perception of the Police Force itself by the police officers and the community they serve. Public perception about the Nigeria Police Force continues to be negative and this has created a tension of mutual suspicion between the police and the public. As a result, the cooperation needed by the police from the public to effectively fight crime has been compromised. The Nigeria Police Force also face the challenge of corruption. According to the 2013 National Crime Victimization Survey conducted by CLEEN Foundation in Nigeria, the Nigeria Police Force was found to be the most corrupt institution in Nigeria. Alemika and Chukwuma (2012) also identified acute lack of logistics and facilities the main causes of corruption among in the Nigeria Police Force. Similarly, Otu (2012) discovered the Nigeria Police Force to be heavily under-resourced.

### **2.1.12 Policing Domestic Violence**

The suitability of police involvement in domestic violence where family members are involved has been explored by several scholars. Keeling et. Al (2015) note that there has been a long-standing contestation on whether domestic violence fits into the culture of real policing. Thus the ‘real’ mandate and culture of policing with its oppressive and violence culture creates no space for domestic violence to thrive. Feminists, however, contend that police involvement in domestic violence is key to dealing with the problem of domestic violence against women. Houston (2014) contends that State agencies are major change agents in the fight against domestic violence. Similarly, Delahunty and Crehan (2016), and Effah-Chukwuma and Asiwaju (2006) also argue that police involvement in domestic violence will instil confidence in victims, promote the rights of women and decrease gender inequalities by proclaiming a message that DV is unacceptable. Historically, DV was often considered normal and also private with some State laws permitting its perpetration (Buzawa and Buzawas 1990). For example, in Nigeria, the 1960 Penal Code permitted it. Section 55 (1) (d) of the Nigeria Penal Code states that:

Nothing is an offence which does not amount to inflicting of grievous hurt upon any person and which is done by ... (d) a husband for the purpose of correcting his wife. Such a husband and wife being subject to any natural law or custom in which such correction is recognised as law.

By this, the law permitted spousal abuse by husbands as a means of correcting the wife and what constituted ‘grievous hurt’ was not defined by the law, which made is ambiguous an offence. Effah-Chukwuma and Asiwaju (2006) also revealed that the Nigeria police Force considered DV private and often refused to take action. In similar vein, Straus et al. (1980) also noted that police mostly used their discretions to handle DV cases and these were mainly separation and mediation. Dutton (1995) notes that DV cases were often screened out. Impetus for change were the political pressure from the Bartered Women’s Movement between the 1970s and 1980s, legal liability, research findings, and police reform (Townsend et al., 2011).

Delahunty and Crehan (2016) continue to argue that police interventions facilitate access to justice and further support for direct and indirect victims. Police involvement also creates legal and emotional support to victims. Felson et al., (2002) observes that the major reasons

why victims report to police include the quest for protection, security, and justice. Hester and Westmarland (2005) observed in their study on domestic violence in London that women found it beneficial when police escorted them to the court. Similarly, a study by the Executive Research Forum in the United States of America (USA) in 2015 found that the average percentage of homicide resulting from DV was 4%. Thus, DV was found to be among the leading causes of homicide which made police involvement very imperative in dealing with this social problem. In Nigeria, the results of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) in Nigeria in 2010 revealed that 42% of rape occurred in victim's homes (Orisaremi, 2012). Over the past years social workers, feminists, and the criminal justice system have developed interventions to protect victims, deter abuse and rehabilitate both victims and offenders of domestic violence. Central to these interventions has been the increasing role of the criminal justice system to enforce laws that regard the use of violence against one by a family member as a criminal act. Thus, domestic violence has moved from being viewed as only a social problem to also being viewed as a criminal justice mandate (Fleury-Steiner et al., 2006). The Domestic violence Act 2007 of Ghana and the Lagos State Domestic Violence Law all criminalise DV and make it mandatory for the police to be involved in handling domestic violence cases. The entire criminal justice system is a major stakeholder in both the prevention of domestic violence, protection and promotion of the safety of victims.

The role played by the police are very critical in either preventing domestic violence or further promoting or encouraging it. Markowitz (2001) establishes that the prevalence of domestic violence increases when the perpetrator is further supported by service providers such as the police when they minimize or ignore the abuse or fail to provide consequences. He explains that when this happens, the abuser learns that his behaviour is not only justified but also accepted. Criminologists also argue that punishing offenders help curb future criminality because it serves as a deterrent to others in the society and reaffirms that such behaviours are unacceptable (Karmen 2007). Thus, the involvement and role of police in punishing offenders and protecting victims is very imperative to curbing domestic violence. However, in spite of police necessity, most domestic violence cases go unreported. Some scholars have documented that police involvement was seen as being culturally

unacceptable. A study in Australia revealed that the proportion of DV victims who chose to receive services from other agencies and did not want to report to police was 50% (Birdsey and Snowball, 2013). The results of the National Crime Victimization Survey in Nigeria indicated that between 2007 to 2009, only 22% of DV cases were reported to the police and the percentage reduced to 18% in 2010 (Abioye and Abiri, 2012). In Mogstad et al (2016) study on Khayelitsha, in South Africa, respondents disclosed that because DV was considered private, police involvement was unacceptable, and women who reported abuses to police showed disloyalty to family values and violated culturally correct procedure to handling domestic matters. Also, the respondents also cited fear of societal stigmatisation as the barrier to DV reports to the police.

According to Delahunty and Crehan (2016), the major reasons for victims' refusal to report DV to the police is as a result of fear of further violence, shame and embarrassment as well as trivialisation of their experiences by the police. Sunshine and Tyler (2003) have also explained that the likelihood of victims reporting DV to police increases when police work is conducted fairly and is legitimized in the eyes of the public. Thus, public perception about police and police attitude to victims play a critical role in victims' willingness to report DV to police. Other reasons included police blaming, gender discrimination, disrespectful treatment, fear and bullying (Delahunty and Crehan, 2016). Criminologists and feminist scholars have documented the need for police interventions to adhere to human right standards and practices. Huang (2018) contends that police interventions should aim for trauma recovery and prevention of revictimization. Police interventions should entail counselling, crises interventions, therapy, hotline, follow-up support, trauma recovery, legal assistance, medical aid, financial aid, education and security (Huang, 2018) These services primarily constitute the major needs of victims. Delahunty and Crehan (2016) maintain that in order for police interventions to be successful, there is the need for Police to follow a fair procedure. The fair procedure manifest in four components and these are "trustworthiness, respectful treatment, neutrality and voice" (Delahunty and Crehan, 2016: 404).

### **2.1.13 Victims' needs**

Victimologists have identified three most important needs of all victims of crime including domestic violence and these are punishment, rehabilitation and restitution (Karmen,2007). They claim that punishment of offenders not only limits crime and prevents impunity but it also satisfies the thirst of revenge for angry victims. However, there are instances where victims do not necessarily seek revenge by tormenting law breakers but rather require a professional and an expert to help the wrongdoer to become decent, productive and law abiding (Karmen 2007). Such victims rather seek rehabilitation for themselves and even the offender through counselling and behaviour modification. The final need being restitution is the need for the police to ensure that all damages and anything lost as a result of the abuse is restored (Karmen 2007). As the representative of State authority, victims look up to the police with high hopes for protection, liberation and support. Not only are they needed in arresting and bringing the perpetrators to justice, the police are also ideally placed to activate a chain of referral services including medical attention, counselling services, legal advice/aid; and shelter for victims and in creating awareness about gender based crimes among the general population (Effah-Chukwuma and Asiwaju, 2006). Also, loosed criminal justice system breeds impunity and increases crime. In the incidence of domestic violence, the criminal justice system, especially the police is supposed to serve as the first line of defence for innocent law abiding citizens. Karmen (2007) opines that the police ought to work to help victims recover from the harm inflicted upon them by offenders. It is upon these premises that Ghana's domestic violence law gave sovereign powers to the police to apprehend offenders and protect victims of domestic violence.

### **2.1.14 Police Intervention Strategies**

Research on the effectiveness of police intervention strategies in domestic violence against women has yielded mixed results. While some studies reveal positive results, others indicate police interventions have created more problems. Therefore, there is no clear conclusion that police interventions have been entirely positive or negative in reducing the prevalence of DV. The effectiveness of interventions usually depended on the intervention strategy and the geographical setting. A research in Canada revealed that police involvement in family violence has been viewed as largely unhelpful and ineffective



(Keeling et al, 2015). However, Cho and Wilke (2010) found in their study that arrest of perpetrators was effective in reducing victimization. Arrest is a major strategy of policing domestic violence. According to Cho and Wilke (2010), DV laws have caused a significant increase in arrest rate. They reveal that the rationale behind arrest is that it sends a signal that domestic violence is considered a serious crime by the police and this acts as a deterrence to offenders and potential offenders in the society. Therefore, police failure to arrest puts victims at a higher risk of being abused (ACPO/NPAI, 2008).

Again Cho and Wilke (2010) found in their study on the effectiveness of arrest that, victims whose partners were arrested were 43.2% less likely to be revictimized than victims whose partners had never been arrested. Hoyle and Sanders (2000) however contend that the assertion that arrest empowers women is naïve. They found in their study of 33 victims in Thames Valley Police that arrest and prosecution did not empower women to end DV, rather support for victims did. Also contrary to the results of the Minneapolis research findings in 1989 by Sherman and Cohn which found arrest to be effective in reducing revictimization and prevalence of DV in the USA, Iyenga (2007) found that arrest increased partner homicides. His study found that homicides resulting from IPV increased by 60% in States with mandatory arrest policies. It is, however, difficult to conclude if arrest was the main cause of the increased percentage in homicide as the main cause of the homicide could not be established in the study. Thus, homicides could be caused by other factors such as alcohol, drugs, poverty among others. Other intervention strategies are prosecution and investigation. Effective investigation requires development of policy file, victim care, risk assessment, witness management plan, surveillance and suspect management. (ACPO/NPIA, 2008). All these provide critical information to the cause and establish the right approach to handle the problem.

Police interventions have also been successful in awareness creation and an increase in the number of people who seek police service in some countries such as Ghana and the United States. Studies reveal that there has been a significant increase in people's awareness and consciousness of domestic violence and victims who use police protection in Ghana since the passage of the DV law and subsequent establishment of the DOVVSU (Adu-Gyamfi,

2014; Fundar, 2015 and Agbitor 2014). Statistical report from the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police indicated that 15,495 cases of battered women were reported in 2011 and 17,655 cases in 2014 (Daily Graphic, March 2015). The results of a six months study in Minneapolis, USA also found police arrest of perpetrators to be the most effective police response because it reduced the prevalence of re-victimization by 50% (Farea, 2015). Some experts are of the opinion that reports to police are only a fraction of the entire number of people who actually experience DV and that larger number of cases go unreported (Effah-Chukwuma and Nnorom 2011). Evidence in Nigeria shows a decline in the number of victims who seek police support. Another study in Sango-Ota in Ogun State, Nigeria indicated that only 4% of the respondents who experienced domestic violence reported to the police (Olujide et al., 2011). Awareness of DV as a result of police interventions is yet to be established in Nigeria.

### **2.13 Challenges of policing domestic violence**

Karmen (2007) observes that although police are the first contacts for victims, they have received several criticisms from feminists, human rights activists, and victim advocates as being ineffective. Reports from research and Ghanaian media indicate more emphasis is put on the criminal approach to domestic violence which sometimes leads to secondary victimisation of victims of domestic violence (Agbitor, 2014 and Adu-Gyamfi, 2014). Scholars identify two schools of thoughts that explain how police officials handle domestic violence. These are the functionalist and conflict perspectives (Karmen, 2007). The conflict perspective argues that police officials act on their own behalf and follow their own interest or the interest of the powerful group that dominate society when cases of domestic violence are reported to them (Karmen, 2007). Thus, the sovereign will of the police and those with authority and power dictate how DV is handled. The conflict perspective gives an underlining insight into how gender relations influence police response. Considering the fact that the police profession is traditionally masculine and male dominated, the interest of men who are usually the abusers could influence police attitude to domestic violence victims. This has been supported by arguments by several other scholars such as Okenyodo and Abioye (2011), and Alemika and Agugua (2001) who all opine that there are heavy

unequal gender relations and discrimination within the Nigeria Police Force and these to a large extent translate into their policing strategies and services for women.

Alemika and Agugua (2001) specifically reveal that the female police officer is seen as a second-class officer and the Police Act itself restricts the professional advancement of the women within the force through discriminatory recruitment policies, promotion policies and regulations on assignment. They critically argue that until these discriminatory policies and practices are eliminated, policing of vulnerable people like women will continue to be a challenge in the Nigeria Police Force. Fries (2008) also argues that gender and the gender believe of police agencies is important because it could affect efforts in changing social structure and responding to gender-based crimes. Although the Ghana government is making efforts by producing legislative instruments that protect the rights of women, institutions that are more masculinised such as the police are still less sympathetic of female victims of gender-based crime (Fundar, 2015).

The 2010 National Crime Victimization Survey in Nigeria further revealed that 41% of the victims who sought police response were not satisfied with police interventions and among the reasons for dissatisfaction were:

police lack of sensitivity to the specific needs of the victims;  
police continuous demand for money; inability of the police  
to do anything; ridiculing victims by the police; and  
inadequate protection in cases where the perpetrators are  
living with the victims  
(Abioye and Abiri, 2012: 135).

Some scholars are of the view that police insensitivity to victims of domestic violence is in itself another crime. The painful, wrongful and insensitivity of the police as well as the callousness with which the justice system again victimises those who have been abused is the most unnoticed but grievous crime (Heinze, 1982 in Karmen 2007). Asiwaju and Effah-Chukwuma (2006) opine that there are three major consequences of the insensitive response to reported cases of gender-based violence. These are under-reporting, health problems and death.

A study on domestic violence in Osun State Nigeria, revealed that:

In area of violence from the state agents, only three women in the main town had been physically and sexually assaulted by police officers and no official reports were made against the police officers involved. (Okunola and Ojo 2012:143).

Although this offence shows the abuse of power by police officers and very grievous an offense to the victims the police are supposed to protect, the authors trivialised this offence with the word 'only three' which portrays an insignificant number and incident. Perhaps the authors were expecting a huge figure significant enough to trigger a debate. However, numbers are not always the determinants of the gravity of an offence; especially in violence against women every punch counts. Effah-Chuckwuma and Nnorom (2011) in their research on violence against women in South West Nigeria also reported police ridiculing, sexually and verbally assaulting victims. Again Okunola and Ojo (2012) also note that law enforcement officials intimidated female victims which usually resulted in fear and decrease in cases reported to the police. Karmen (2007) has also observed that victims' refusal to use police services is usually as a result of fear of psychological brutality by the police.

Other challenges of police social protection mechanisms are impunity and lack of effective police internal control mechanism to punish offending police officers (Alemika and Ckukwuma 2012). In addition to this, research on police interventions show there is lack of trust in the police and this affects reporting rate of domestic violence cases. The 2010 National Crime Victimization Survey in Nigeria indicated that 57% of victims of domestic violence did not trust the police (Abiri and Abioye, 2012). Another study in Malawi revealed that only 4% of women sought help from the police, and most received a service that differed significantly from protocol (Pelser et al.,2005). In similar vein, Delahunty and Crehan (2016) outlined the challenges of policing domestic violence to include police insensitivity, fear of victimization by police, lack of knowledge on relevant laws and incongruent administrative process for handling DV. Anning (2006) found the lack of logistics, corruption, telecommunication facilities, information technology, patrol cars, poor attitude and lack of training on modern standards of policing as the main challenges facing the Ghana Police Service including the policing of DV. Agbitor (2014) also

identified lack of funding and training, inadequate access to shelter and material support for victims as the main challenges of policing DV in Ghana.

### **2.1.16 Gender, masculinity and policing**

“Most police forces continue today as semi-military, strictly hierarchical organisation with deeply sexist views about women” (Niland, 1996:2). Gender is simply a socially constructed attributes and roles of men and women. According to Mari (2017:2)

Gender conceived of as masculinity and femininity is superimposed upon the ‘coat-rack’ of sex as each society imposes on sexed bodies their cultural conceptions of how males and females should behave. This socially constructs gender differences – or the amount of femininity/masculinity of a person – upon our sexed bodies. That is, according to this interpretation, all humans are either male or female; their sex is fixed. But cultures interpret sexed bodies differently and project different norms on those bodies thereby creating feminine and masculine persons.

Unlike sex which is biological, gender is socially constructed and relative. Thus, what constitutes feminine in one society may be considered masculine in another society. Masculinity, on the other hand, can be explained as the societal expectations and attributes ascribed to real men, or expectations of who a real man should be. Attributes of masculinity include toughness, power, strength, aggression, energy, and willingness to take risks (Bem, 1974). Like gender, masculinity is also socially constructed and relative to time, culture and society.

Police has long been considered a masculine job where masculinity is celebrated. “Policing is one of the world’s most masculine jobs” (Niland, 1996:2). He contends that even when women were recruited, they are enculturated to accept their supporting duties. Potgieter (2012) reveal a masculinised occupation usually demand physical strength and entails danger. The representation of women in policing is very minute because police is considered a masculine job and not a domain for women. Aning (2006) revealed that women were not admitted into the Ghana Police until 1952, when the committee established by the British government to advise them on better policing strategies made a recommendation on including women. He notes that the Colonial masters then formed a

Special Squad made of 12 women and their mandate was to deal with juvenile delinquency and women offenders. The quest for a better policing of women led to the establishment of the Women and Juvenile Unit in 1998 to handle all cases of violence against women and children (Agbitor, 2014). Aning (2006) also notes that little had been done to advance the course of women in policing, from recruitment to training and promotion. The statistic indicates that police women only make 26% of the total number of police officers in Ghana (Daily Graphic, 2018). In Nigeria, the representation of women in the police is still problematic. Idowu (2016) reveal that women only make 10% of the entire police personnel in Nigeria. Alemika and Agugua (2001) argue that the rationale behind the low recruitment of women into the Nigeria Police Force is based on patriarchal ideologies that women are weak and unfit for the police job. Women were therefore prohibited from being enlisted in the Nigeria Police Force until 1955 (Idowu, 2016). Masculinisation of police is, therefore, a product of societal stereotyped roles for women and men. Women in the Nigeria Police Force are not only discriminated in terms of promotion, enlistment, deployment, and fairness, they are often relegated to the background.

Potgieter (2012) also indicates that masculinity is a social construct which reveals and reinforces gender systems where men are expected to dominate and women to submit. Thus, in masculine occupations like the police, men dominate and women submit. Police as a masculine operation requires strength, toughness and bravery, entails danger and involves aggressiveness (Martin, 1999). In explaining why policing demands masculine attributes, Martin (1999:115) posits that “the association of catching criminals with danger and bravery is what marks police as men’s work. Alemika and Agugua (2001) however argue that masculinisation of the police is inherent into the social and cultural conceptualisation of gender. Women are perceived as fragile, soft and weak while men are seen as strong, tough, powerful and successful.

### **2.1.17 Gaps in literature**

Literature on police interventions in domestic violence such Sherman and Cohn (1989), Delahunty and Crehan (2016), Iyenga (2007) among many others centres more on arrest and prosecution with little knowledge on other interventions strategies such as mediation,

caution, monetary compensations, invitation and negotiation which are peculiar to the African policing concept. There is therefore a paucity of literature that examines the effectiveness of these intervention strategies in policing domestic violence. Also, the literature that examines the effectiveness of arrest in reducing offender recidivism has been contested and well documented in Europe, Asia and America. There is no literature that interrogates how the use of arrest in policing DV has been effective in Ghana and Nigeria. This study will therefore create knowledge to fill in these scholarly gaps.

All throughout literature, no study has critically examined the effectiveness of police interventions in meeting the needs of victims in Southern Ghana and Lagos Nigeria. Studies on police interventions have focused on their functions and duties, gender inequalities in the police. There is a paucity of knowledge on the effectiveness of police interventions in meeting the needs of female victims of domestic violence

There are sufficient scholarships that buttress the argument on the problems of the culture of patriarchy in the lives of African women. As a matter of fact, feminists even argue that violence against women originates from patriarchy. However, there is little literature that investigates the status and experiences of battered women in matriarchal societies and how the culture of patriarchy shape women's experiences of domestic violence. Is patriarchy the solution to women's plight? Literature does not explain how patriarchy also affects police interventions and whether police interventions in matriarchal societies are more gender sensitive than in patriarchal societies. There is the need to investigate the experiences of women in both matriarchal and patriarchal societies in order to conclude the explosive argument on the ill effects of patriarchy in the lives of the African woman. No scholar had documented the similarities and differences in police intervention strategies by the Ghana Police Service and the Nigeria Police Force. This research fills in the gap of identifying peculiar differences. By comparing policing interventions in Southern Ghana (more matriarchal) and Lagos State (heavily patriarchal), this study gives a critical insight into culture, policing and domestic violence.

Finally, scholarship on masculinity and policing in Ghana and Nigeria only concentrated on the general elements of masculinity in police culture and its impact on women. There is no literature that examines the impact of police masculinity on policing domestic violence in the study areas. This study, therefore, aims to fill in these gaps in literature



## **2.2 Theoretical Framework**

This study was guided by three theories. These are the empowerment theory, radical feminist theory, and the deterrence theories.

### **2.2.1 Empowerment Theory**

The empowerment theory evolved in the early 1970s through social work theorists such as Barbara Solomon and Paulo Freire (Calvès, 2009 and Teater, 2010) . The empowerment theory is “based on the assumption that the capacity of people to improve their lives is determined by their ability to control or have power” (Hansfeild, 1987:478). The theory is rooted in three important elements: power, powerlessness, and oppression (Guttierrez, 1990). Thus the theory recognises domestic violence as a product of power inequalities in society. The empowerment theory postulates that problem of power and powerlessness are essential to the experience of domestic violence. According to Cattaneo and Goodman (2015:84), empowerment is articulated:

as a meaningful shift in the experience of power attained through interaction in the social world, and describes the process of building empowerment as an iterative one, in which a person takes action toward personally meaningful goals; draws on community supports, skill, knowledge, and self-efficacy to move toward those goals; and observes the extent to which those actions result in progress.

It aims to resolve the problems faced by female victims of domestic violence through the increasing of their power. Epstein and Goodman (2008) contend that empowering survivors of DV is a core element in the fight against domestic violence and women’s liberation. Empowerment by definition is the process of increasing personal, interpersonal or political power so that individuals can take action to improve their lives’ situation (Hudson and Lee, 1996).

It, therefore, aims to shift power from the abuser to the abused. This power shift in the central argument of the empowerment theorist such as Solomon (1977). These powers could be physical, financial, psychological/emotional, resources, gender relations or

culturally rooted. Empowerment theorists argue that sexual assault, physical abuse, economic deprivation and all other forms of domestic violence stem from one person's power over the other. As a result, the theory stresses the importance of engaging in activities to reduce the powerlessness and help the powerless regain greater power and control (Hudson and Lee, 1996). Empowerment theorists believe that interventions for victims of domestic violence must focus on empowering them to overcome the effects of DV and also reduce re-occurrence of DV. Consciousness and awareness on the rights and needs of victims are elements advocated by the empowerment theorist. The theory also recognises discrimination, poverty, and oppression as factors that aggravate women's experiences of victimization from the spouses and therefore advocates for financial, psychological and institutional empowerment Cattaneo and Goodman (2015). They believe that powerless individuals or groups become empowered when they gain power and access resources (Bookman and Morgan, 1998). Epstein and Goodman (2008) describe intervention methods of empowerment as accepting victims' definition of the problem, maintaining trust and share of power, identifying victims weaknesses and strengths, awareness and consciousness-raising, financial and emotional support.

Although critiques of empowerment theory such as Aiken and Goldwasser (2010) have contended that the theory is inefficient in reducing the overall prevalence of domestic violence because it emphasizes victim empowerment, Lee and Hudson (1996) have argued that individual empowerment can contribute to group empowerment. The empowerment theory is based on a conflict model that assumes that a society consists of separate groups possessing different levels of power and control. Social problems stem not from individual deficits, but rather from the failure of society to meet the needs of all its members (Fay 1987). The potential for positive change, therefore, exists in everyone. The process of empowerment occurs on the individual, interpersonal and group levels. Empowerment theorists advocate for four major elements in domestic violence interventions for female victims. These are Increasing self-efficacy, developing group consciousness, reducing self-blame and assuming personal responsibility (Hudson and Lee, 1996)

Self-efficacy believes in one's ability to produce and regulate events in one's life (Hudson and Lee, 1996). This requires tailored services to meet the needs of individual victims (Epstein and Goodman, 2008). They contend that this could be achieved through the strengthening of victims ego, helping victims to develop a sense of power and strength and mastery. Developing group consciousness involves building the capacity of institutions, creating awareness on the effects of domestic violence on the individual and society. Reducing self-blame aims to improve the psychological wellbeing of victims by attributing their problems to the existing power arrangements in society. This frees victims from feeling responsible for their negative situation. This is because self-blame has been associated with feelings of depression and immobilization. The final element which is assuming personal responsibility for change is based on the assumption that if victims do not feel responsible for change they may be adamant in taking the initiative to end abuse. This is similar to Friere's notion of being a subject or an active participant in society rather than remaining a powerless object (Friere, 1973). The theory is relevant to this study because it provides principles needed for effective interventions in female victims which aim to empower them to prevent future abuse and also overcome the present effects. Empowerment theory does not only focus on individual empowerment but also on institutional empowerment. Institutions providing support for victims of domestic violence such as the police and traditional justice must be equally empowered to provide effective services that are relevant to the needs victims and minimise violence

### **2.2.2 Radical Feminist Theory of Domestic Violence**

The radical feminist theory of domestic violence has its historical background in second wave feminism where violence against women was a major struggle by the feminist movement. The radical feminist theorists argue that patriarchy and subordination of women are the major causes of domestic violence. Feminist scholars such as Stark and Flitcraft (1996) argue that the etiology of male dominance is hinged on patriarchal structure of the society that is built on male superiority, female subordination, sex stereotypes roles and expectations including occupations. According to radical feminists, domestic violence springs from the male oppression of women which results from patriarchy whereby men are the primary perpetrators of violence and women the primary

victims (Dobash and Dobash,1979 and Walker,1979). Radical feminists hold that patriarchy reinforces male superiority and female subordination which condone men's use of abuse as a means of controlling and maintaining male authority. Therefore, gender socialization patterns, the privacy of marriage, sexism as well as the failure of the criminal justice system to effectively protect and support abused women are all reflections of patriarchal ideologies that reinforce domestic violence (Dobash and Dobash 1979). Feminist theorists view stereotyped socialization of men and women as elements of patriarchy that promote the abuse of women.Potgieter (2012) has noted that masculinity as a social construct reveals and reinforces gender systems where men dominate and women submit. As a result, they challenge gender socialisation stereotypes and contend that what is learned can also be unlearned (Miedzian, 1991).

The privacy of marriage is challenged through the feminist slogan 'the personal is political' (Millet, 1971), and demand public solutions which should encompass treatment and support services for women as well as the need for the criminal justice system to hold perpetrators accountable. Police intervention was among the major mechanisms for making the private public.

One argument of feminist theory is that male domination and power is not only inherent in physical strength but also in institutions and structures (Bograd, 1988). Male dominated institutions are implicated in structural violence and reinforce coercive control. Bowman (2003) contend that States are patriarchal and laws, cultures, and norms favour men and reinforce power over women. Therefore, instead of targeting gender equality, historical response to domestic violence was rather policing masculinity (Abrams, 2016). Feminist theorists therefore view combating male dominance in institutions and society as the solution to domestic violence. Major feminist strategies included leaving abusive relationships, the transformation of the criminal justice to hold perpetrators accountable through punitive measures and to meet the needs of victims. The State is considered a major agency for change and advocate for a shift of power bestowed in male institutions to women (Houston, 2014). Feminists also argue for women's control of the criminal justice system contending that women's control in the criminal justice system is imperative for

women's liberation (Brownmiller, 1975). They hold that the criminal justice system's failure to effectively respond to DV indicated men and masculine ideals controlled the system's institution. Woods (2001) contend that men abuse women because society and its institutions endorsed it. She, therefore, argued that the best solution to dealing with DV was to challenge social sanctions that permit and condone violence. Therefore, radical feminists argued for increased arrest, prosecution, conviction and sentencing of perpetrators (Woods, 2001). This proposition was based on the premises that when men perceive they will be arrested or prosecuted for acts of domestic violence, they will desist and until such actions are taken, domestic violence will persist. They also contend that police failure to arrest and take action is based on patriarchal beliefs that women are private properties of men and should be subjected to male superiority. Fighting domestic violence was, therefore, a means of combating male dominance. Feminists opine criminal justice interventions was preferable to non-criminal interventions. The feminist theory is adopted as the framework for this study because the argument of this study is consistent with the feminist theory. Its position on gender inequality, power relations, patriarchy, and masculinity is crucial in understating women's experiences of DV and police involvement in DV.

### **2.2.3 The Deterrence Theory**

The deterrence theory of punishment originated from the works of classical philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes (1588–1678), Cesare Beccaria (1738–1794), and Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832). The deterrence theory argues that people will refrain from committing crime if they are punished for their offences. The theory advocates for punishment as the primary solution to crime prevention. Beccaria (1963) explains that when individuals know they will be punished for their undesirable acts they will refrain from offending in the future. He argues that the punishment should be swift and proportional to the offence opining that excessive punishments could hamper deterrence. In order words, crime thrives in societies where offenders are not punished. According to William (2005), the theory of deterrence is dependent on three elements: severity, certainty, and severity. The severity of punishment will deter offenders and potential offenders. Empowerment theorist argues that the more severe a punishment is, the higher the possibility that a rational human being will desist

from criminal acts. Beccaria (1963) calls for punishments to be swift and certain to effectively prevent and control crime.

Proponents of the deterrence theory argue that when police impose a substantial reward or punishment for domestic violence, offenders will be deterred from perpetrating it (William, 2005). They argue that offenders refrain from abuse because of the sanctions involved. People choose to obey the law after calculating the consequences of their actions and the sanctions involved in violating the law. Wright (2010) argue that the certainty of punishments and apprehension deters potential offenders which promotes compliance to laws. In similar vein, Hobbes in William (2005) contends that the cost and pain of the punishment must exceed the benefits derived from the offence. Proponents of the deterrence theory categorise the deterrence into two types, namely general and specific deterrence. While the general deterrence punishment for offenders deters the general public and those who have not be punished, specific deterrence reduces offender recidivism in those punished or prevents punished offenders from offending in the future (Gibbs, 1985). Thus, when the State holds perpetrators of crime accountable and punishment them, it prevents impunity and other members of the society from committing crime. On the other hand, when perpetrators are not punished, crime multiplies. This theory is adopted for this research because emphasises the importance holding perpetrators accountable and exerting the required punishment to reduce the prevalence of DV which is considered a crime.

#### **2.2.4 Study Framework**

The study applies the deterrence, empowerment and feminist theories to explain the concept of policing domestic violence. Considering the holistic nature of each theory, the study adopts specific aspects of the theories to unravel all the nuances of the research problem. Specifically, the concept of punishment for offenders, its swiftness and proportionality as well as the specific and general deterrence aspect of the deterrence theory is adopted to explain the rationale for police involvement in domestic violence and to analyse the intervention strategies adopted by the police in handling DV. The concept of

power, powerlessness, and oppression advocated by the empowerment theorists are also used to examine women's experiences of domestic violence and to critically interrogate the effectiveness of police interventions in meeting the needs of victims. The elements of increasing self-efficacy, developing group consciousness, reducing self-blame, assuming personal responsibility are specifically adopted to further examine police involvement and its impact on victims while the institutional empowerment is adopted to interrogate institutional challenges within the Ghana and Nigeria police that could hamper their role in providing effective assistance to victims. The feminist concept of patriarchy and its replicating effect on institutions is adopted to analyse structural and institutional injustice against women and women issues. The study also adopts the Feminists stand on the role of the criminal justice system in the struggle against domestic violence.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research design**

Research design aims to ensure the data generated enables the researcher to logically and unambiguously address the research problem. This study employed the use of the exploratory research design. Exploratory research design explores a phenomenon which has not been adequately investigated in previous research with the purpose of gaining more insight into the research topic and problem (Michael, 2002). The exploratory research design was adopted for this study because the effectiveness of police intervention in domestic violence in the Southern Ghana and Lagos State has largely been unexplored. This granted the researcher an ability to provide a well-grounded picture on police intervention strategies and its effectiveness in meeting the needs of the victims. The qualitative research methodology was used to collect and analyse data. Qualitative research according to Creswell (2014) is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. “The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures; collecting data in the participants’ setting; analysing the data inductively, building from particulars to general themes; and making interpretations of the meaning of the data” (Creswell, 2014:293-294). The qualitative research method was deemed highly appropriate for this research because it assisted the researcher to acquire in-depth information on the experiences of victims with regards to their experiences with police in their quest for police services. Data was collected through interviews with victims of domestic violence who had sought police assistance, police officers handling domestic violence, key informants, complainants and non-participant observations in courts and police stations over a period of one year and one month.

#### **3.2 Study Area**

The study was conducted in four Regions in Southern Ghana (Greater Accra, Eastern, Western, and Central Regions) and four Local Government Areas in Lagos State, Nigeria (Odi-OlowoOjuwoye Local Government, Agege Local Government, Kosofe Local



government and Ikeja Local Government Areas). In Southern Ghana, the study was conducted in five police stations with Domestic Violence and Victims Support Units (DOVVSU). These are the Greater Accra Regional DOVVSU headquarters in Accra Central police station, DOVVSU units in Nsawam police Station in the Eastern Region, Central Regional DOVVSU headquarters in Cape Coast in Central Region, DOVVSU unit in Takoradi Central Police Station and the Western Regional DOVVSU headquarters in Sekondi all in the Western Region. The justification for the selected police stations was the high number of cases handled in these stations. In Lagos State, the study was conducted in the Family Support Units of Ilupeju Police State in Odi-Olowo Ojuwoye local government, Isokoko police station in Agege Local Government, Ketu police station in Kosofe local government, Ikeja Police Station and the Gender Office of the Lagos State Police Command all in Ikeja Local Government. These police stations were selected because they had special units for handling domestic violence cases and also received a high number of cases.

### **3.3 Study population**

The target population consisted of female victims of domestic violence who had sought police assistance as well as complainants who reported cases of abuse to the police. This explored their experiences and views on police interventions and how it has been successful in minimising their experiences of abuse and meeting their needs. In addition, police officials who also handled domestic violence were also interviewed to ascertain how the police operate as well as how they work to ensure the needs of victims of domestic violence are met. Key informants who directly or indirectly worked with the police and had in-depth knowledge of police interventions and domestic violence were interviewed. These were social workers, NGO workers, and human rights activists. In addition informal interactions were made with perpetrators, family members of victims and perpetrators and other police personnel during observations in the police Stations. Their views were very important in further validating the views of victims and police personnel.

### **3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

The study employed the use of purposive and snowball sampling method to select interviewees. The purposive sampling method was adopted to identify and choose the right interviewees needed for the research. Purposive sampling method is most important and useful in ensuring that right and required source of data and informants are selected for the research (Given, 2008). It was therefore deemed appropriate in selecting victims, police, key informants and complainants who had significant experience and information on the research topic to be interviewed in order to help the researcher acquire relevant and adequate data to answer the research questions. Creswell (2014:239) contends that “the idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or sites (or documents or visual material) that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question”. He further stresses that it does not have to be random sampling but a selection of participants that the researcher considers germane to unravelling the research topic. Since the study aimed at examining the effectiveness of police interventions in meeting victims’ needs, the researcher identified, searched and purposively selected interviewees whom the researcher deemed had significant experience and information to address the research problem. Hence domestic violence victims who had experienced physical, sexual and economic violence and had reported their cases were chosen. Also, police officers who worked in the DV units and had significant experience in domestic violence, complainants who had reported cases of abuse to the police and key informants whose work involved interaction with police or work on domestic violence were purposively selected. The snowball sampling technique was used to further identify respondents who were not easily available to the researcher through the key informants, police officers and other victims. Most of the informants were accessed through referrals and recommendations from social workers and some police personnel while some victims and some police officers were also accessed through referrals from other victims and police personnel. Interviews were conducted for 60 victims of domestic violence in Lagos State and 60 victims in Southern Ghana who were reporting or had reported their experiences of DV to the police. Specifically, 15 victims in Nsawam police station (five physical violence, five sexual violence and five economic violence victims), 20 victims in Greater Accra DOVVSU Headquarters in Accra Central Police Station (seven physical, seven sexual and

six economic violence victims) and 25 victims in Western Regional DOVVSU headquarters in Sekondi (eight physical violence, eight sexual violence and nine economic violence victims) were interviewed. Altogether, 20 victims of physical violence, 20 victims of sexual violence and 20 victims of economic violence were interviewed in Southern Ghana. In Lagos State, interviews were conducted with 12 victims in Ilupeju Police Station (six physical violence, one sexual violence victims, five economic violence victims), 27 victims in Isokoko Police Station (eight physical violence, 11 sexual violence and eight economic violence) and 21 victims in Gender Office (Six physical violence, eight sexual violence and seven economic violence victims). In total, 20 victims of physical violence, 20 victims of sexual violence and 20 victims of economic violence were interviewed in Lagos State, Nigeria. In addition, thirty (30) police officers (15 in Southern Ghana and 15 in Lagos State) were interviewed. Specifically, interviews were conducted with three police officers in Nsawam Police Station (one police women and two policemen), four police officers in Accra Regional DOVVSU headquarters in Accra Central Police Station (two policewomen and three policemen) and six police officers in Western Regional DOVVSU headquarters in Sekondi (three policewomen and four policemen). In addition, one policewoman in Central Regional DOVVSU headquarters in Cape Coast and one policewoman in Takoradi Central Police Station were interviewed because of their in-depth experience in policing domestic violence. In Lagos State, interviews were conducted with two policewomen in Ilupeju Police Station, five police officers on Gender Office (four policewomen and one policeman) and six policewomen in Isokoko Police Station. In addition, one policewoman in Ketu Police Station and one policewoman in Ikeja Police Station were interviewed also because of their rich knowledge and experience in policing domestic violence. In addition, four social workers and four human right activists working in Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) were all interviewed. Also, four (4) complainants who were not direct victims but reported cases of abuse were also interviewed which brought the total number of interviewees to one hundred and sixty-two (162). Four (4) ethnographic observations in courts and 20 mediations of cases in the police stations were observed. The choice of this sample size was guided by the concept of saturation—a technique used when the collection of new data does not shed any further light on the issue under investigation. Charmaz (2006) indicates that in qualitative

research, the researcher stops collecting data when the themes are saturated: when the acquisition of fresh data does not spark new insight. Hence the researcher stopped collecting data when the gathering of new data did not disclose new information. This sample size was therefore deemed sufficient to fully reveal all the nuances of police interventions. Data was collected from June 2017 to July 2018. The study covered the activities the domestic violence units between 2007 and 2018.

### **3.5 Methods of Data Collection**

In order to effectively answer the research questions, the study relied on both primary and secondary means of collecting data. The primary source of data used included in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, ethnographic observations and photography. Secondary data collection sources included: domestic violence laws, police regulation acts, newspaper reports, policy documents, journals, dissertations, articles, documents, and textual materials as well as internet sources that were relevant to the study. The instruments for the collection of data included a voice recorder, notebook, pen, interview guide and camera

#### **Primary Sources**

##### **3.5.1 In-depth Interviews**

In-depth interviews were conducted with victims who made formal reports of their experience of domestic violence to the police. A total of one hundred and twenty (120) female victim of domestic violence were interviewed in the two countries under study. Specifically, face to face interviews using a semi-structured interview guide was used. The interviews usually began with the initial stage of complaint making at the police stations and continued until the interventions were completed. This was to ensure accuracy in order to acquire in-depth information on victims' experiences throughout the stages of the interventions. Follow-up interviews were also conducted about 3 months after the end of the cases to ascertain the level of success of police interventions and also examine the sustainability of intervention outcomes. A greater number of these victims were located in the police stations when the complaints were being made. Others were identified through referalls from complainants, social workers and police personnel. Apart from this, closed

cases were also studied. Thus, victims whose cases had been handled and were closed were also interviewed through the telephone to measure the impact of police interventions overtime. Majority of the closed cases were between six (6) months and one (1) year. The demography of victims cut across all class of people in the society. They included the poor, rich, middle class, the educated and illiterates as well as the young, middle and the aged, married, single and those in cohabitations. Majority of the interviews with victims were orally recorded with few written by the researcher during the interview process. In Ghana, most interviews with victims were conducted in Akan language with few in English while in Nigeria, the main language used was English with few interviews in Pidgin English. In addition, personal face to face interviews were also conducted for thirty (30) police officials who were directly involved with the handling of domestic violence using a semi-structured interview guide. A greater part of the interview for police officers was written by the researcher while conducting the interview. The average duration of interviews with victims was one hour and thirty minutes while interviews with police personnel usually lasted for about one hour.

### **3.5.2 Key informant interview**

This significant method of data collection was employed for this study. The key informants were those who are not necessarily stakeholders but whose opinion and information were essential in determining the effectiveness of domestic violence interventions of the police institutions. This was because of their involvement in activities that predisposed them to crucial knowledge of police work in domestic violence. Face to face and telephone interviews using a semi-structured interview guide were conducted with one (1) human right lawyers, two (2) social workers and human rights activist working with the Women in Law and Development in Africa, (WiLDAF) Ghana, the leader of Hurds Foundations in Ghana and one (1) human right activist and former social worker working with Amoah-Sakyie Chambers in Ghana. Interviews were conducted for four (4) social workers working with National Agency for Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons, Rape Relief and Cease Why in Nigeria. Finally, four (4) complainants who were not direct victims but reported abuses were also interviewed through a conversational unstructured interview guide. This was mainly to allow the complainants to voluntarily discuss and reveal information freely

without restrictions. The views of these key informants were germane for the study. The duration of interviews for key informants was approximately 40 minutes. Most of the interviews were recorded while a few others were written.

### **3.5.3 Ethnographic observations**

The intent of ethnographic observations is to obtain a holistic picture of the subject of study with emphasis on portraying the everyday experiences of individuals by observing and interviewing them and relevant others (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1990). The ethnographic observations include continual and ongoing observation of a situation (Jacob, 1987). The researcher was physically present in DOVVSU Regional Headquarters in Accra, Cape Coast, Sekondi and the DOVVSU units in Nsawam Police Station and Takoradi Central Police Station as well as the Family Support Units in Isokoko police station, Ilupeju police station, Ikeja police station, Ketu police station and Gender Office in Lagos State Police Command to observe how the police handled domestic violence and everyday practices in the police stations. Ethnographic observations were used to collect information on the procedures of interventions for victims, services available for victims, how domestic violence cases were handled, mediations, police culture, police attitude to the victims, both female and male victims' experiences, perpetrators attitude, arrest of perpetrators and general or everyday practices in the police stations for a period of 11 months. Specific observations were made during mediation of domestic violence cases. Observations on the prosecution of domestic violence were also made in the Accra Circuit Court, the Gender court in Sekondi, Samuel Ilori Magistrate Court in Ogba, Lagos and Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Court in Ikeja, Lagos. In addition, some visits and observations were made to victims' homes in Ghana to ascertain the impact of police interventions while one observation was made in Alakara Juvenile home, the Nigeria Police Force temporary shelter for underage victims in Lagos State. Informal interactions were also made with other police officers, perpetrators and their family members as well as family members of victims the during the research stay in the police stations. This was meant to further ascertain the views of perpetrators, other police officers and their family members on police involvement in domestic violence. This was also meant to validate the data acquired from

the interviews. The researcher took notes during all observations which were used to further validate data from the interviewees.

#### **3.5.4 Photographs**

Photographs demonstrating the work and success of the domestic violence units, as well as visual materials in the form of posters and flyers for public sensitisations on domestic violence, the work of the police and the forms of domestic violence were also collected and analysed. These photographs complimented the data from the interviews and observations.

#### **3.6 Method of Data Analysis**

Data collected from in-depth interviews, key informant interviews and ethnographic observations were transcribed, translated from Akan to English, and analysed using the thematic analysis technique. The data was grouped into emerging themes and sub-themes according to the research questions. Also, the secondary sources collected were analysed in similar manner. Photographs were visually analysed and compared with primary data to complement and validate the findings.

#### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Domestic violence against women is a very sensitive phenomenon in our society because of the stigma attached to victims of this type of human right abuse. It is considered private and as a result research on domestic violence demands a high level of privacy and anonymity. Hence the researcher observed the highest possible ethical considerations. The consent of respondents was sought and the information gathered were anonymous. Letter of introduction indicating the purpose of the research was presented to the Ghana Police Service and the Nigeria police for authorisation. Authorisation letters were granted by the Ghana Police headquarters and the Lagos State Police Command, in Ikeja. Furthermore, all stakeholders were adequately informed about the purpose of the research.

#### **3.8 Limitations of the study**

During the data collection process, the researcher confronted some problems related to interviewing victims of domestic violence. The researcher found that victims were not very

open in discussing their experiences with the police when interviews were conducted at police stations. The researcher however overcame this through the follow up interviews on phone and in victims' homes. In addition, the study relied on qualitative research methodology and therefore the results of the study cannot be generalised for all DOVVSU and Family Support Units in Nigeria. It however gives an in-dept analysis of police interventions in domestic violence in the study areas.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Police intervention strategies**

The study examined the intervention strategies used by the police to deal with domestic violence in Southern Ghana and Lagos State, Nigeria. The appropriateness of the Police units selected for the study was first established. The Family Support Unit of the Nigeria Police Force and the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service were the main units handling domestic violence in Lagos State and Southern Ghana respectively. In order to effectively address the research objective, it was also imperative to explore the manifestations of domestic violence the police deal with as well as the intervention strategies adopted by the police. Thematic analysis revealed two main categories of strategies that were employed by the police in dealing with domestic violence in Lagos State and Southern Ghana. These are the prevention strategies and responding strategies. Fonteneau et al, (2014) affirm that prevention strategy entails policies, programs and activities that aim to prevent the occurrence of domestic violence while response mechanisms involve the provision of support services for women who have already become victims of domestic violence which has a long-term aim of reducing its general prevalence. It was however noted that all the strategies used by the police aimed to reduce the prevalence of domestic violence either through a collaborative effort with the community, providing supportive services or punishing perpetrators.

##### **4.1.1 Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit of the Ghana Police Service**

The Domestic Violence Act 2007 (Act 732) mandated the establishment of the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) within the Ghana Police Service to ensure the implementation and enforcement of the law. The Unit was also formed to respond to the increasing rate of domestic violence in Ghana. Prior to its establishment, the Women and Juvenile Unit (WAJU) established in 1998, performed similar functions. WAJU worked to

protect and prevent women and children from being abused as well as to safeguard their rights and freedom. WAJU was thus women and children centered, limiting the experience of domestic violence to only women and children. Abused men were thus neglected and deprived of protection and services. This necessitated the establishment of DOVVSU by the Domestic Violence Act to protect and provide support for all victims of domestic violence including men. It was also born out of a model of successful police interventions in domestic violence in Namibia. DOVVSU thus follows the model of Namibia Police in its operations. The principal roles of DOVVSU are to protect the rights of vulnerable citizens against all forms of abuse, offer free support services for victims of domestic violence, prevention and the prosecution of offenders. The general aim of these measures is mainly to reduce the prevalence of domestic violence and provide effective response where there are victims. With its headquarters in Accra, DOVVSU presently has 110 offices in Ghana.

#### **4.1.2 Family Support Unit of the Nigeria Police Force (FSU)**

In Nigeria, the Family Support Unit (FSU) emerged out of consistent Civil Society and public outcry on incessant brutalities and violence against Nigerian women by family members and police indifference to these brutalities as being family matters. Of a particular remark was the case of Titilayo Omozoje, a banker who was murdered in cold blood by her husband on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2011 in Isolo, Lagos State. This incident stimulated public demand for police to take domestic violence cases serious which necessitated the Lagos State Government and the British Council to reform the police to handle cases related to domestic violence. Before the emergence of the Family Support Unit, the Nigeria Police Force had the Juvenile Welfare Centre which primarily dealt with juvenile crime and violence. The primary role of the Juvenile Welfare Centre was offering support for neglected children, physically abused children and lost children.

In 2012, the British Council under the Justice for All Programme initiated the community policing project which also targeted the reformation of the Juvenile Welfare Centre. The Isokoko Police station was selected as a case study for the pilot project. A total of eight police officers working in the Juvenile Welfare Centre were trained by retired British police officers and domestic violence experts from Britain on how to investigate cases of sexual

abuse, modalities for handling domestic violence, police support services for victims of domestic violence, child abuse, and gender-based violence. With the support of the Lagos State Government, the Family Support Unit was created in 2013 in Isokoko Police Station. The primary role of the family support unit is to handle all cases of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual abuse, and gender-based violence. Thus its jurisdiction was expanded to include women and men as well as support for the entire family. The success of the FSU in Isokoko police station necessitated its replication in 10 other police stations in the state: The Ilupeju Police Station; Alakoko Police Station; Ketu Police Station; Ikeja Police Station; Ikotun police station; Festac Police Station; Ajah Police Station; Badagry Police Station and Ikorodu Police Station. In 2015, the Gender Office in the Lagos State Police Command was created to oversee the entire work of the FSU.

#### **4.1.3 Manifestations of domestic violence reported to the Police**

The Family Support Unit (FSU) of the Nigeria Police Force and the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service received diverse complaints of domestic violence from victims, complainants, NGOs, witnesses and other stakeholders including community leaders. According to WHO (2012), sexual violence includes sexual acts, attempts to obtain sexual acts and unwanted sexual advances or acts directed against a person's sexuality using coercion. The findings of the study revealed that the manifestations of sexual violence reported to the police included rape, attempted rape, incest, defilement, anal sex, inserting objects into the vagina and fingering. In this vein, Adayfio-Schandoff and Sam (2001), observe physical violence as acts that cause visible injury to the victim.

The study identified family and in-law battering; assault; slapping; biting; removal of teeth and causing injury; willful infection of HIV/AIDS; acid bath; murder; attempted murder; as among the manifestations of physical violence reported to the police. Emotional and psychological violence include acts that affected the psychological wellbeing of a person (Adu-Gyamfi, 2014). Typical forms of such acts reported included infidelity of women; husband snatching; sexual starvation; refusal to eat wife's food; in-law problems; barrenness; promise and failure to marry. The major cases of economic violence were a

failure to maintain children, economic deprivation and laziness of men to work to support their wives. Some cultural practices such as forced and early marriages were also reported to the police for intervention.

The observed trend in the data revealed the non-maintenance of children as the dominant abuse reported in Southern Ghana. This could be as a result of the matrilineal system of inheritance practiced by the Akans who are the dominant tribe in Southern Ghana. The matrilineal inheritance according to Opong (2001) confers inheritance and kinship through the maternal lineage. It is considered the oldest kinship relations in Ghana which is practiced by the Akans, the dominant tribal group in Ghana (Gocking, 2005). Matriliney grants women some form of power and autonomy which is usually exerted through ownership of children and inheritance right as well as other social and economic benefits. This power creates a reluctance in men in caring for their children because they do not own them. The common slogan by men in Akan “*woyeyie a wodekɔwomaameɛbusuamu*” (when you prosper you take it to your mother’s family) depicts the ideological status of men concerning their children. Therefore neglecting to cater for their children was a way of punishing women for the possession of ownership power of the children.

In Lagos State however, the dominant abuse observed was sexual violence - rape and defilement to be precise. This also critically reveals the subjugation of women which is an emblem of patriarchy practiced in Nigeria. Tinkorang and Owusu (2014) and Orisaremi, (2012) in explaining some basic rationale of sexual violence, state that it is a tool to exhibit power and portray dominance over the opposite gender which is an element of patriarchy. These trends indicate a reflection of the socio-cultural context under which the police operate.

#### **4.1.4 Public sensitisation**

The main prevention mechanism used by the police is public education on domestic violence. Heisse (2011) notes that awareness campaigns aim to create consciousness and knowledge of people on gender-based violence, laws, policies or services for victims. According to police respondents in Ghana, they employ the use of media to carry out

educative programmes and visit schools, community centres, market places and churches to sensitize the public. Public sensitizations centered on the forms of domestic violence, the causes, how it can be prevented, punishment for perpetrators, how and when victims should seek help, the role of the police as well as services available for victims. A police officer explaining the need for sensitization stated:

Most people are ignorant of the law. Even there was a time a lawyer inflicted injury on his spouse and children and said he can do anything he likes to them. So if a lawyer who should know the law is ignorant then what happens to the masses.  
(4/05/2018, Ilupeju Police Station)

In Lagos State, the major educational programme carried out was through the Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC) meetings which were held twice in a month in the police stations. The PCRC is a committee of police officers and community leaders and elders tasked with promoting police public relations and community policing to fight crime. During these meetings, the police enlighten members on domestic violence, statistics of domestic violence in the community and encourage community leaders to report such crimes. The police also collaborated with Civil society groups, NGOs and the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team to conduct educational programmes on domestic violence for the public. In addition to public sensitisation, the Family Support Units in Lagos also conduct in-house training for both junior and senior police officers in the Lagos State Police Command to ensure a better understanding of domestic violence and how these officers can contribute to reducing the rate of domestic violence by practice and also by enforcing the law. One major trend in the data indicated that public education by police in Lagos State focused more on juvenile crimes than domestic violence against women which indicated that there is still a lack of seriousness and commitment to the abuse of women by the police. It also reflects the fact that the Family Support Unit emerged out of the Juvenile Welfare Centre which worked on juvenile crime.

The use of visual objects with inscriptions in the form of posters and flyers with pictures depicting the ill effects of domestic violence in English, Yoruba (in Lagos) and Akan (in Ghana) languages were also used to educate the public. The pictures below attested the fact.



Fig. 1. Poster on DV in DOVVSU, Sekondi, Photograph taken by Researcher (January, 2018)



**Fig. 2. Poster on Domestic Violence, FSU Ikeja, Photograph taken by Researcher (April, 2018)**

It was however observed in general that in Lagos State the posters were fewer and were usually made and supplied by the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team as well as other NGOs. In some instances where police had no access to posters, they wrote them by hand. This, as illustrated below indicated the lack of support and commitment to domestic violence by the Nigeria Police Force. A police officer noted:

The NGOs recognise us well than the police self (themselves).  
They (NGOs) know our value and importance. They (NGOs) also know the work we are doing here is very tedious work.  
Sic. They have been supporting us. (Police, Lagos)

The Ghana data indicated that public education raised awareness on women's rights which empowered them to resist abuse and seek help whenever it occurred. In an interview with a police officer in Ghana, she revealed that "after public education, many women are aware of their rights and do not condone abuse again". Almost all the 60 victims interviewed attested they became aware of DOVVSU's work and the need to report through sensitisation programmes on radio and television stations. Although, 2017 data on DV reports to police was not available at the time of research, the available data revealed that DV reports to DOVVSU increased from 15,495 in 2011 to 17,655 cases in 2014 (Daily Graphic, March 2015).

The psychological empowerment was also depicted in the mediation of physical violence when a victim challenged a police officer on her rights and the right approach to handling her case in Ghana. This proved successful as the officer in charge was compelled to follow the right procedure.

In an interview with a victim of domestic violence she noted:

I heard it in the radio station that the man will be committed to sign a bonding paper that he will not beat me again, ... so why are they being reluctant in making him sign the bond? Even the policeman is saying I'm a difficult woman, it's not right. (Victim of marital violence Ghana)

The position of the empowerment theory as explained by Hansfeld (1987) that the capacity of people to improve their lives is determined by their ability to have control is vividly validated in this study. The theory recognises that domestic violence is a product of power



inequalities in society. The empowerment theory, therefore, emphasizes the need for consciousness and awareness on victims' rights.

There was a general consensus among police respondents that public sensitization was the best strategy in preventing and reducing the overall prevalence of domestic violence. This corroborates Niratunga and Stern's (2017) findings on the review of the *Indashyikirwa* that public education on the consequences of DV, risk factors and ill effects of gender inequality was effective in preventing domestic violence in Rwanda. In a response to a follow-up question on why public sensitisation is the best strategy, a police officer disclosed.:

The major reason why people beat their wives is because of ignorance. Many people are ignorant about domestic violence. Even educated people. Even some police officers are ignorant. You know in our Africa here people don't see anything wrong in beating their wife, they think that it is normal. Sensitisation makes people to learn that DV is a crime and they will not do it. (Police Officer, Ghana)

The above illustration affirms Fonteneau et al, (2014) position that sensitisation campaigns transform public attitudes and behaviour towards violence against women.

The sensitisation programmes were also very positive in increasing the reporting rate and decreasing crime. In Ghana, respondents revealed they sought police help as a result of radio and television programmes. Although the entire statistics of DV cases handled by the police was not available, Police respondents revealed a general increase in reporting rate after sensitisation programmes and a decrease in DV also as a result of awareness creation. Regarding the increase in report rate and a decrease in crime, the officer in Charge of FSU Isokoko revealed:

Initially, when the FSU was set up, people were not coming out to report because rape victims were stigmatised. But when we started the sensitisation, we saw drastic change, many people started coming out to report. We were receiving more than 50 cases in a week mainly on sexual violence. Now it has totally reduced in Isokoko area, we don't even get up to 50 cases in a month. Majority of the cases we are dealing with are referrals from the Lagos State Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team and other police stations. (Police Officer, Isokoko Division).

The findings of this study is also in line with the discovery of Noughani and Mohtashami (2014) study on the effects of education on the prevention of domestic violence The researchers also found that the prevalence of domestic violence decreased by 5.7% after education on domestic violence in Iran.

Sensitization also enhanced good policepublic relationship which influenced the quest to seek help from the police.

Some people too they fear the police. (sic). So when we go out we try to be friendly to them so it encourages them to come to police for help. (Police Officer, Ghana)

When we sensitized people in Accra here, were received lots of call, anything they will call us. We gave our personal numbers to them and they call us for advice etc. so as for the sensitisation it really works (Police, Ghana)

The data revealed public sensitisation in Lagos State however omitted procedures of response, victims' rights, and privileges. Victims thus depicted ignorance of the services and the procedures as well as their rights when they sought police assistance. As a result of this, there were several cases of averted justice and non-application of the law to domestic violence cases. During an interview with a victim of gang rape, she revealed that:

Na their fault ooh, if they (perpetrators) do what the DPO tell them they (police) no go carry them go court na. DPO say make them bring ₦100,000 so they go settle everything here, the family sayna only ₦30,000 they get, the DPO now vex. (sic) say they go carry them go court. (Victim of Sexual Violence, Lagos)

The above response indicates that the victim is ignorant of the fact that the perpetrator must be prosecuted and not fined by a police officer. Also, victims and key informants enumerated a contrast between police sensitisations and actual service delivery in Ghana.

On the television, they were saying sweet words that when you come to report they will not collect any money, everything is free, but they are collecting money (Victim, Ghana )

On the television and radio, you will hear wee tweet things. They will tell you they will help you, support you to have justice. Don't mind them, they are only there for the rich, when poor people go to report they don't get their support. They will just brush the case under the carpet and try to settle it. Even rape cases. They don't do what they say at all. (Key Informant, Ghana)

The study found that although public sensitization was beneficial in the prevention of domestic violence, police efforts on public education was minimal. In the DOVVSU Regional headquarters in Accra, no sensitisation programme had been done in the last six months. Also, in DOVVSU Regional headquarters in Sekondi, none had been done in the last one year while in Nsawam police stations, officers could not remember the last time a sensitization programme was held for the public. The situation was similar in the selected police stations in Lagos State.

#### **4.1.5 Arrest and detention**

The criminalisation of domestic violence made the arrest of perpetrators mandatory (Hyunkag and Wilk, 2010). As a matter of fact, the warrantless arrest and pro-arrest policies have increased arrest rate in many countries including Ghana and Nigeria. In the United State of America, arrest rate increased by 70% from 1984 to 1989 (Bauma, Felson and Mesner, 2003). While the same percentage could not be said for the study areas, there was a general consensus among police respondents that the domestic violence laws were equally pro-arrest and hence has increased the arrest rate.

Arrest and detention is one of the traditional practices affiliated with policing (Weisburd and Eck, 2004). FSU and DOVVSU employed the use of arrest and detention mainly in major grievous offences such as sexual violence, harmful assault with severe visible

wounds, homicide and in cases where the life of the victim was threatened, as well as non-maintenance cases where the use of persuasion had failed. Arrest and detention was believed to protect and secure the lives of the victims and to prevent perpetrators from eloping. Arrest is necessary to protect the vulnerable; prevent suspect causing harm and allow for the prompt and effective investigation of the offence (ACPO/NPIA 2008).

The data revealed that arrest and detention was successful in reducing offender recidivism, instilling fear in perpetrators and the public on the seriousness of DV thereby deterring other members of the society from perpetrating DV. It proved effective in ending physical violence and sexual violence but less effective in providing a sustainable solution to economic violence. Victims in Ghana attested that the abuse stopped after perpetrators were arrested. Cho and Wilke (2010) note that arrest signals the seriousness of domestic violence as a social menace and the police' position on it. When asked if arrest and detention change the attitude of perpetrators and prevented revictimization, a police respondent noted that:

Sometimes we have had reports where people begged when they were arrested they beg they will not do it again and truly they don't. You know many people are ignorant of the law (sic) they don't even know that what they are doing is the wrong thing and an offence. (Sic). When we arrest them they sit up and know the gravity and seriousness of the offence. (Police officer, Lagos)

The traditional method of policing is more effective, arrest. Sic. The person needs to undergo torture to reform. Arrest deter criminals. Democratic policing is not good for us because in democracy people don't fear the cells and crime continues. (Police, Ghana)

Another victim affirmed this and revealed that:

When they (police) detained him in the cell, he immediately called his family to bring money for the children's maintenance so that he can be released. But after that, he didn't continue caring for the children (Victim, Ghana)

The researcher also observed that perpetrators who were arrested and detained regretted their actions after spending a day in the cell. The results of the study affirm the position of the deterrence theory which argues that when police impose a substantial reward or punishment for domestic violence, offenders will be deterred from perpetrating it (William, 2005). Thus, deterrence occurs when offenders and potential offenders refrain from crime in order to avoid the legal punishment associated with it. The study results specifically proved the specific deterrence aspect of the theory of deterrence where arrest changed offenders' behaviour and minimised their possibility of committing the offence.

The findings of the study revealed that arrest and detention of family members irrespective of the type of abuse, often breaks family unity, causing more separation and long-term family disputes. The victims are sometimes rejected, blamed and ostracised which results in psychological abuse. A major reason behind this could be pointed to the fact that arrest and detention are perceived as shameful in the African culture. Hence its appropriateness for domestic violence in the African setting where family unity is most cherished is a dilemma. As a result of this, arrests were minimally used by DOVVSU and FSU as police being members of the society were fully aware of such cultural values.

Regarding victims' preference for arrest, sexually abused victims, non-maintenance and women who had divorced, separated, those looking for an escape out of their marriages as well as those who felt collapse of the marriage or relationship will not affect them preferred arrest to other methods of response. The following narration by a victim buttresses the point.

This is not the first time he has beaten me, (sic)I didn't want them to arrest him because at that time I was living with him and I was afraid he will leave me if they arrested him. Besides I didn't want to have children with different men so I endured it. But now we are no more together so I want them to arrest him. (Physical Abused victim, Sekondi).

This illustration confirms the fact that victims were well disposed to the effects of arrest. This has been corroborated by Iyengar (2007) study on the impact of police arrest in intimate partner violence in the USA. His research discovered that the reporting rate of

intimate partner violence declined as a result of the perverse effect of mandatory arrest policies. Thus, victims were unwilling to report abuse because of the fear of police arresting their spouses.

Also, women who were economically and emotionally dependent on their spouses rejected arrest for fear of losing their spouses. The study also observed that Nigerian women generally rejected arrest than Ghanaian women. Apart from victims of sexual abuse, many victims interviewed in Nigeria did not want their perpetrators to be arrested for fear of societal stigmatization, broken family relationship, and traumatising. This could probably be due to two main factors: the effects of the long period of sensitisation and work of DOVVSU in Ghana (20 years) and secondly the liberation and autonomy of women that comes with the matrilineal system of inheritance in Southern Ghana, where male dominance and superiority over women is mild as compared to the patriarchal nature of Nigeria.

The result of the study is consistent with the results of an experimental study by Cho and Wilke (2010) who found that arrest of perpetrators was effective in reducing revictimization. They affirm that the odds of revictimization for victims whose partners were arrested were 43.2% less than those whose partners had not been arrested. Similarly, Maxwell et al., (2001) also found in their analysis of data from domestic violence arrest experiment that, arrest reduced perpetrators' recidivism. These studies, however, did not consider other forms of revictimization such as psychological or emotional abuse resulting from arrest. This research found that although arrest stopped the particular abuse reported to the police, it exposed victims to more revictimization in terms of psychological and economic abuse. Furthermore, arrest and detention was primarily effective in physical and sexual abuse but proved less effective in economic abuse. The study results on economic abuse, therefore, disproved the deterrence theory that offenders refrain from abuse because of the sanctions involved. It was however discovered that perpetrators of economic violence were not deterred by the punishment given them as there were several cases where these individuals continued to neglect their financial responsibilities after the arrest. This study, therefore, found that the willingness to commit a crime doesn't always come by

choice as argued by the deterrent theorist, but sometimes by the social, cultural and economic conditions that people find themselves, as is the case of most economic violence.

#### **4.1.6 Investigation**

Proactive investigation is always a requirement in policing domestic violence (ACPO, 2008). Investigation is the primary duty of the police in the response process to ensure justice. The receipt of a report of domestic violence is the beginning of the investigation (NPIA, 2008). Respondents unanimously revealed that investigation entails the gathering of all evidence and proofs to ascertain the actual occurrence of the abuse. “An effective investigation requires the development of policy file; disclosure plan; surveillance plan; victim care plan; witness management plan and suspect management plan” and the failure of an investigator in any of these elements compromise the safety of the victim (ACPO, 2008).

The data revealed seven stages of investigating domestic violence cases which begun with the statement writing; acquisition of medical proofs or report; arresting perpetrators; witnesses reports; the visit of the crime scene and gathering of evidential materials; pictures and preparation of case files or dockets.

The study found that good investigation was efficient in bringing perpetrators to admit committing the crime which was very imperative in establishing how the abuse could be ended as well as for a successful prosecution. It was also a determinant of victims’ satisfaction with the police response which influenced their likelihood of seeking police assistance in the future. On the other hand; poor investigation led to averted justice which increased the vulnerability of victims. Cho and Wilke (2010) contend that victims’ dissatisfaction with police involvement will decrease their likelihood of reporting abuse to the police and may lead to more revictimization.

The study also discovered that lack of logistics; laziness of some police officials; bribery and corruption; lack of interest in the policing job and poor remuneration negatively affected effective investigation which eventually hampered the justice victims desired.

In addition, victims revealed that the investigation was timeconsuming and expensive. In Ghana, poor women could not have access to justice because they were unable to afford the cost of obtaining a medical report costing between ₵100 to ₵200 which was mandatory for successful investigation and police response. Also, the cost of transport for both arrest and visit to the crime scene, photocopies, pictures, the filing of the cases to court and the transporting of perpetrators were all paid by the victim in both Ghana and Lagos State. The cost of processing a case to court in Lagos State is an average of ₦7,000 which most victims claimed was too expensive.

#### **4.1.7 The notion of minor punishment**

The use of minor punishment was one of the strategies of dealing with domestic violence adopted by DOVVSU and FSU. According to police officers who were interviewed, minor punishment of abusers dissuaded offenders from repeating the abuse and also served as a deterrent to other members of the community.

The study identified the main minor punishment used included fines to compensate victim especially of physical abuse, payment for all loss suffered by the victim as a result of the abuse, all costs of medical reports and care, cost of the police investigation, transportation and expenses incurred by the victim in the police station. The payment of bail although was considered to be an unlawful practice, was successful in deterring poor men from repeating the offence. Other punishments included requests for frequent visits to the police station to waste the time, money and energy of perpetrators. In response to a case of physical abuse, a police commander instructed:

*Twa no kɔɔ bra kɔ bra saabeyɛ one week. One week no beso no nawesuanyansa.* (Make him be going and coming for about one week. By the end of the one week, he would have learned his lessons). (Police Officer, Ghana)

Another account of a police officer corroborates:

Most victims especially the poor or majority of people who report, they want police to intervene, show the law to make the offender pacify or compensate them. (Police, Lagos)



Few minutes in detention cells, restriction of movement, threats, verbal harassment, insults and ridiculing of perpetrators were among the minor punishments used.

The study revealed that some of the abusers regretted their actions and changed after experiencing such minor punishments while some family members showed displeasure and hatred of having to deal with the police because of these punishments.

During mediations, a family member noted:

You see it is because of all these that I don't want to get issue with the police at all, all your money will be wasted, your time and energy. Since morning we have been sitting here. For the past one week I have left all my business and walking on this matter. I have vowed never to touch a woman no matter how she provokes me. (To perpetrator) Learn from it. (Sekondi, DOVVSU)

Many of the victims of physical and economic abuse expressed the effectiveness of minor punishments in ending the abuse, causing abusers to respect their rights and making them more responsible. Chetwin (2013) contends that good social protecting interventions should hold offenders accountable to prevent impunity. As discovered in the study, the minor punishments used by the police succeeded in making perpetrator realise the gravity of their offences which caused them to desist from offending in the future.

The findings of this study align with the argument of the deterrence theory that people choose to obey the law after calculating the consequences of their actions and the sanctions involved in violating the law. The position of the deterrence theory as explained by Beccaria (1963) states that when people recognize that their undesirable behaviors will be punished, they will desist from offending in the future. He stressed that punishment must be swift and proportionate in order to deter crime and that excessive punishment does not necessarily deter offenders. Thus, the quicker the punishment, the higher the probability of its deterrence. The position of the efficacy of the swiftness and moderation of punishment in deterring crime is clearly demonstrated in this study as minor punishments (being swift and moderate) proved effective in deterring both offenders and potential offenders. It was however revealed that some victims (marital violence) lost their relationships because perpetrators felt they had been punished and viewed victims as enemies rather than lovers.

My husband has now allowed me to do my business but told his family members that I have taken him to the police station and all of them are now fighting me. His attitude to me has changed. He doesn't show any interest in me again. In fact, it has worsened my marriage. (Victim, Lagos)

This could stem from a cultural and traditional perception of associating policing with enmity in African society. Alemika and Chukwuma (2012) found in their study on policing in Nigeria that the public viewed police as corrupt, mischievous and intimidating and this created a rift between police and the public. Therefore, although police interventions may be beneficial and tremendous in domestic violence, the traditional perception of policing still influences the effects of the intervention on victims.

#### **4.1.8 The concept of invitation**

The concept of invitation is a major unique strategy utilised by the DOVVSU and FSU which differs for the traditional police practices. Letters of invitation are issued to perpetrators to appear in the police station for discussions usually in cases of marital violence of either physical or economic and other non-maintenance cases. Invitations could also be issued through a phone call to the abused. Effah-Chukwuma and Nnorom (2011) and Chetwin (2013) both contend that good social protection measures should involve perpetrators, as many victims in Africa do not seek to break their unions but rather need safe relationships. The study found that invitation minimised the abusive treatment associated with traditional policing to a more friendly and democratic process. The research also discovered that many invitees honoured police invitation. It thus encouraged willingness for participation and resolution from the perpetrators without resulting to the use of force. It was also seen as a form of respect for the perpetrator and was more liberal and friendly to preserving the family union.

Another outstanding revelation of the success of invitation letters was a positive change in perpetrators attitude upon receipt of the invitation letter. According to victims "some perpetrators brought money", some immediately "came with elders to beg" while others "began the resolution process". This came as a result of the fear of possible punishment

from the police as well as the power exerted to victims through police support which the proponents of the empowerment theory such as Solomon (1977) advocates.

A victim of non-maintenance recounting the aftermath of an invitation letter revealed:

When he saw the invitation, he immediately went and brought his uncle to come and beg us that the pregnancy is his. He accepted he will take care of me and the pregnancy until I give birth. He even gave me money. So everything was solved when I gave him the invitation letter from the police. We just came back to remove the case from here to settle at home (police station). (Victim, Cape Coast)

Another victim in Sekondi said “the moment he saw the invitation letter he came with elders to beg me”

However, in marital violence, letters of invitation caused initial conflict and separation among couples and in-laws. The success of the union, therefore, depended on how the case was handled by the police. This speaks to the fact that invitation letters compromised the confidentiality that marital abuse required. In Africa, marital violence is viewed as a private affair. This is consistent with the findings of Tenkorang and Owusu (2013) on domestic and marital violence among three ethnic groups in Nigeria that marital violence is perceived as a private affair in Nigeria.

#### **4.1.10 The concept of prosecution**

Prosecution at the law court is a central focus of police work and also constitutes a major tool in the fight against domestic violence. Every aspect of police work in Ghana and Lagos State, from arrest to detention, the investigation process and deliberation are aimed at ensuring perpetrators are prosecuted at the law court. The primary focus of prosecution was to bring perpetrators to justice. Karmen (2007) opines that the prosecution of offenders does not only limit crime but also satisfies the quest for revenge for angry victims. The study found that the prosecution of offenders depended on the severity of the abuse together with the consent and support of the victim. However, in sexual abuse against children prosecution was mandatory.

The data also revealed a contradicting opinion of justice between victims and police officers in Ghana. While successful prosecution was the yardstick for determining justice by the police; victims considered justice to go beyond prosecution, to having their specific needs met financially, psychologically or physically. There are situations where victims do not necessarily seek to torment lawbreakers, but require a professional to help the offender become decent, productive and law-abiding (Karmen 2007). These victims rejected prosecution because to them, it did not solve the problem.

A victim revealed:

I don't want them to send him to court (sic). If they send him to jail how can he work and take care of the child? I want him to take care of his child that is why I brought him here. (sic). He cannot do that in jail. (Victim, Nsawam)

Preference for prosecution was mainly expressed by victims of sexual violence. They depicted a strong desire for revenge and justice which could only be attained through successful prosecution. This reveals the irreversible and irreparable damage caused by sexual violence. In responding to the question "what do you want police to do for you?" respondent responds "I want him to go to jail. For all that he did to me, he must be punished severely for that. That is what I want".(Victim of Rape, Isokoko). Also, victims of economic violence preferred prosecution only after other intervention strategies proved unsuccessful. Their preference was however based on the assumption that the fear of imprisonment (not imprisonment itself) will compel offenders to provide for their children's financial needs.

I want them to take the case to court. At court, he will have to pay or go to jail. The fear of going to jail will compel him to pay the children's school fees and their upkeep. That is the only solution because he is stubborn. This is the third time I'm bringing him here. (Victim; Ghana)

In Nigeria however, some victims of sexual abuse refused prosecution because their abusers were the breadwinners and close family members and therefore their prosecution will cause more financial havoc. In this case, 'justice' may impede their survival and may also cause them to hesitate before reporting to the police. According to Cho and Wilke

(2010), if the involvement of the police disadvantaged victims they will be less likely to report subsequent abuses.

Others also rejected prosecution for fear of societal stigmatization, cultural values, and family separation or conflict.

I want to withdraw the case. I don't want you to prosecute because the boy in question is my best friend's son. (sic). We have been friends since childhood I don't want to cause separation because of this. (Father of a victim of defilement and sexual molestation pleading with police in Nigeria)

The study also discovered that religious beliefs and doctrines were another major reasons behind the rejection of prosecution by victims in both Ghana and Lagos State which indicates how religiously inclined Africans are. The concept of religious beliefs in faith, persecution, endurance; mercy, submission were defining factors in victims acceptance of abuse which was also sometimes born out patriarchy. During an intervention of a defilement case, a complainant explains to the police:

The bible says we should forgive one another so even though this man has sexually abused my daughter I forgive him. I want to withdraw the case. (Father of Victim of Sexual Abuse; Lagos)

Another victim corroborating the above maintains that:

Vengeance belongs to God. There is no need to prosecute him. I leave him for God to punish him. God's punishment is more grievous than court punishment. (Victim, Ghana)

This confirms the stronghold of religion in issues relating to the prosecution of offenders and as Emile Durkheim's social functionalist theory notes that religion plays a major role in the maintenance of social order and control. If in cases like this where religious beliefs are cited as a reason for allowing perpetrators go free without due process, are we saying there are shortcomings to this assertion or is it the relativity of what true religion means to the individual?

In addition, the study also observed the frequent visits of religious leaders to police stations to admonish victims and police officers on the need for forgiveness and mercy. This

corroborates. Westenbeg (2017) study who also discovered that the probability of Christian women remaining or returning to abusive relationships was higher than non-Christians. Westenbeg (2017) also found that religious languages and virtues of forgiveness, mercy and the value of suffering were used to condone domestic violence.

It was also observed that the police' negative attitude, the long and tedious process of prosecution and the ineffective nature of the entire criminal justice system were some other causes that led victims into assigning their cases to God for judgement. Ojo (2016) notes that when people's needs are unmet by the institutions responsible for its provision they resort to supernatural powers for a solution, in this case, God.

The data in Nigeria also revealed that lack of adequate protection for victims during and after prosecution led to revictimization.

Some victims, prosecution made them more vulnerable. Those tout boys have groups and when they hear about it their group members harm the victim. (Police, Lagos)

Prosecution was also perceived to break the family apart. Culturally, prosecution was seen as an unacceptable way of resolving family problems and victims who opted for that were seen as unreasonable and wicked by some police officers in Nigeria and the society (Ghana and Nigeria alike). Some victims encountered family and societal stigmatization for prosecuting the family members hence, many victims rejected prosecution. The following account by a police officer buttresses the fact.

Because many of the perpetrators are either good neighbours, brothers, uncles, and friends, people in the community or society see such act of prosecution as unthinkable or unjust or act of unforgiveness. So victims and their family members are ostracised. Fear of prosecution is one thing that prevents people from reporting. Many times we have to threaten victims and their families of court punishment before they follow us to court. Also, some married women are afraid of what society or people will tell their children when they grow. Sic. That their mother sent their father to court. The family members will stigmatize the woman for sending her husband to court. (Police, Lagos)

This was corroborated by a key informant who noted that:

I handled a case of defilement in Daboasi where the perpetrator was arrested, prosecuted and imprisoned. After the prosecution, the whole community has now turned against the family that they are wicked. (Ghana)

The severity of the punishment for sexual victims (15 years and 25 years of imprisonment for rape and defilement respectively in Ghana; 25 years and life imprisonment for rape and defilement respectively in Lagos State) was seen as grievous and detrimental to the life of the perpetrator. Victims were thus blamed for destroying the lives of their perpetrators.

Victims and police respondents both agreed that prosecution was successful in increasing the reporting rate and minimizing sexual violence.

When we started prosecuting sexual violence cases many victims were coming out to report (sic) at this point sexual violence has totally reduced.(sic). They know in Isokoko police station we will prosecute them. (Police Officer; Isokoko Police Station)

The findings of this study proved the general deterrence of the deterrence theory. General deterrence holds that punishment for crime deterred potential offenders who have not been legally punished or deterrence of the general public (Gibbs; 1985 and Williams; 2005)

The findings of the study also revealed that the expensive nature of prosecution was a hindrance to many victims. As a result of this poor victims were denied justice. It was also seen as being time-consuming and bureaucratic. In Lagos State, the minimum years of trial for sexual violence were between 2 to 5 years. As a result of this; many victims are discouraged because expenditure on prosecution increased as the time of trial increased. Also, victims attested that the long period of trial affected their economic activities as they had to put all economic activities on hold to attend court sessions. In Ghana, many victims could not afford the payment of medical bill which was mandatory for prosecution. Police corruption and unprofessionalism also affected the success of prosecution. All these led to some victims' abandoning cases in court.

See madam, I don't have money again. I have spent all my money on this case. I had to pay for transport to arrest the boy, transport to hospital and also to take the boy to the court.

At this time I said I don't have any money and the policewoman became angry shouting at me and treating me anyhow. She has now sided with the boy and his family against me and my daughter. Even at the court, she was asking me money for photocopy, files and transport of N7000 to take the boy to Abeokuta correctional centre and when I told her I don't have she became angry. She is rather helping the perpetrator rather than helping me because they have given her money. I have decided to leave everything for God to judge. I will not go to court again am tired" (Mother of Rape Victim,Isokoko)

Furthermore, the court procedures were not explained to victims and their family. Many victims were clueless of what to expect and how it will be done which made them ignorant of the whole process and vulnerable to financial exploitation and sometimes resulted in psychological trauma.

#### **4.1.11 Caution letter**

Caution letter is another strategy adopted by the police officers in handling cases of domestic violence, especially among married couples. According to police respondents, it is meant to instill fear and prevent revictimization without resorting to the use of force or violence. The caution letter contains an undertaking, binding the abuser to refrain from abusing the victim anymore. This study reveals that the concept of caution letter bounded the abusers to be of good behaviour toward the victims and respect their rights. When the agreement in the caution letter was breached the perpetrator would be subjected to arrest and prosecution. Many victims of marital abuse in Lagos and Ghana revealed during the interviews that they sought police assistance mainly for the police to use their authority to force their husbands to stop the abuse. Respondents attested that this strategy was very successful in ending the abuse and also helped to preserve their marital relationship. However, other forms of abuse persisted. Some battered women in Nigeria were of the view that the caution letter was too liberal. Some perpetrators constantly defied the undertaken severally, yet the police failed to prosecute in some cases, this created impunity and gave more power to the abusers.



#### **4.1.12 The concept of mediation**

Thematic analysis of the data revealed mediation as a major policing strategy in handling domestic violence by DOVVSU and FSU. According to police officers interviewed, mediation is not a traditional police role, however, the context of policing the vulnerable and dealing with domestic abuse that involved family ties in the African setting necessitated the adoption of the concept of mediation. There is a typical Akan proverb that says that “Asem baa, anoyiara yedze ka, yemmfa sekan ntwetwa mu” meaning “when there is a problem is the mouth that is used to resolve it, we don’t use cutlass to cut the problem” emphasising the belief in the inappropriateness of using violence to solve the problem of violence. In this study, it was observed that the police, being members of the society also believe in these African values. The police respondents in both DOVVSU and FSU admitted the use of mediation in dealing with domestic violence.

A police officer during an interview noted:

We also use the alternative dispute resolution when we notice that mediation will bring understanding and end the abuse, especially among couples so that we don’t break the marriage. You know this in Africa! We usually do mediation on non-maintenance other economic and minor physical violence. It’s not all cases that arrest and prosecution can solve. So in such cases, we use mediation” (Police Respondents; Isokoko Police Station)

The process of mediation involves the introduction of parties, storytelling by both the victim and abuser, interrogation by the chief police officer to ascertain the criminality of the abuse and the resolution stage which centres on actions that will end the violence. Actions identified in the study included; issuing of caution letter or signing a bond of good behaviour; detaining perpetrator; payment of compensation or fine for medical costs and other losses resulting from the abuse; verbal cautioning; agreement and arrangement on maintenance order is issued by the police. The observed trend revealed caution letter and financial compensations as the dominant actions of resolutions. The study also reveals that in most cases, successful consensuses were reached and parties were united. During mediations, parties were also educated on the law and rights of women and children.

The findings of the study reveal that mediation was successful in resolving marital violence and reducing the enmity between perpetrator and victim. The following accounts buttress the fact:

When we came, the policeman explained the gravity of his actions. He has now agreed to accept the pregnancy, take care of me until I give birth and also see my family for other customary rites. (Victim, Ghana)

Ever since the police invited him and sat on the case he has changed. They warned him not to beat me again, and he vowed he will not beat me again, and he hasn't. (Victim, Ghana)

My husband's family members were causing problems for me and my husband. They got another wife for him and he was not taking care of me and his child again. When I brought the case here, they invited the whole family and my husband to discuss the matter. The police warned them not to interfere in my marriage again and since then, they have not. My husband is now taking care of me now. I'm happy so anytime I come around here, I come to greet them. (Victim, Lagos)

There was a couple who had separated for years and all efforts by pastors, families and community leaders have proved futile. When they came here I did ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) for a whole month. And at the end they reunited and I was so happy. (Police Officer, Lagos)

It was also effective in preventing family disputes and separation that usually resulted from harsh punishments, fostering understanding and mutual agreement to end the abuse. Mediation also proved successful in minor physical abuses; non-maintenance and other economic abuse cases through an understanding and commitment of the perpetrators to taking up their financial responsibilities. Victims' preference for mediation was high because it ensured peace and the procedure was cultural friendly. Mediation also enhanced police-public relations and changed negative public perception of the police.

It was however observed that the root causes of the abuse were not tackled which made resolution unsustainable. Also for victims of repetitive physical violence, mediation proved ineffective. Mediation by police was also characterised by impatience, police dominance, hastiness and patriarchal ideologies which affected its overall success.

## **4.2 Effectiveness of police interventions in meeting victims' need**

The second objective of this study was to examine the effectiveness of police intervention strategies in meeting the needs of female victims of domestic violence who have accessed them. In order to effectively answer the research question, the study began with an examination of the appropriateness of policing domestic violence in the African context and identified the reasons why victims sought police help as well as the causes and effects of domestic violence. The needs of victims were identified and examined in line with the empowerment theory.

### **4.2.1 Conceptualisation of policing domestic violence in the African Setting**

Keeling et al (2015) contend that there has been a long struggle of whether domestic violence fits into the culture of 'real policing' or not. Of a critical consideration are the cultural values placed on sanctity and privacy of family issues especially the ones involved with husband and wife. Tenkorang and Owusu (2014) observe that African culture places a great value on family union, sanctity of marriage and the keeping of family issues private. Thus policing, especially in domestic violence was seen as being alien to the African culture which the society including the police themselves believed in. In an interview with a key informant, he noted:

The moment you invite a man to the police it's seen as a disgrace. Epemasem a nkyænye me kɔr police station? (if you like me would you have taken me to the police station?). Culturally anyone who hears that a matter of marital abuse has been reported to the police knows that the victim is not in for a better resolution. (Social Worker, Ghana)

The above illustration corroborates the findings of Mogstad et al., (2016) study in South Africa where respondents agreed that involving the police in domestic violence is unacceptable and an act of disloyalty. The researchers also discovered that police

involvement was viewed to violate culturally correct procedures. Hence the positioning of police as the central agency for handling domestic violence in a culture that saw policing alien had created huge friction putting many victims and police into a dilemma.

A major reason could be attributed to the political and historical background of police work. Aning (2006) reveals that the formation of the Ghana Police and many other police institutions in Africa by colonial masters were primarily to protect colonial interest and police officers were historically used to suppress the colonies. Alemika and Chukwuma (2012) also argues that militarisation of the Nigeria Police Force was a conscious effort by military governments to sustain military dictatorship and this has created a huge enmity between the populace and the police even in a democratic dispensation. While victims were torn between seeking help and preserving cultural values to avoid societal ostracism, the police were equally wavering between keeping cultural values and meeting State demands. The implications revealed in the Nigeria data was police discouraging victims from reporting cases of domestic violence. During interactions at the police station, a police officer noted:

Sincerely, I will tell you the truth. You shouldn't bring a case against your husband here. I am a police officer but I will not advise you... police is not the solution, send it to your family.  
(Police, Lagos)

Another police officer reiterated:

If you bring it here your family will break. The whole family will turn against you that you have reported family matter to the police. They will arrest him and it will bring problems. So go home and see the family to solve the matter. (Police, Lagos)

However, all victims and a good number of police officers and key informants were of the view that police interventions were very important and critical in dealing with domestic violence. The following illustrations are some of the responses on why police are needed in the fight against domestic violence:

We are needed to protect and ensure the safety of victims. Police is needed because we are the law enforcers. Since DV is criminal, we need the police to prosecute criminal offenders. Also, we use force. Other institutions such as the legal aid, social welfare etc. have been given mandate also by the Attorney General. But our powers include the use of force, arrest, which is very essential in solving the problem of DV. If we don't force people they won't comply to laws. Also arrest puts fear in the person and also the people around which deters others from committing such again.(Police Officer, Ghana).

We are needed for the criminal aspect of domestic violence. We are needed for prosecution. Because many people have been killed. (Police, Lagos)

In the context of the constitution, any criminal act should be taken care of by the police and DV falls under the criminal act so by the mandate of the establishment of the police, DV falls under its domain. Also because they are to protect the public, so regarding DV, if don't see any other institution that can take care of it other than the police. (Key Informant, Ghana)

No citizen can arrest or sanction an offender, we as domestic violence response organisation cannot make arrest, sanction, convict or even question anyone we find guilty of perpetration domestic violence. only the police have that authority. Our work is futile without the collaborative function of the police. (Key Informant, Nigeria)

#### **4.2.2 Causes of Domestic Violence**

Isahakou (2013) opines that domestic violence is caused by a range of behavioural, cultural, social and economic factors. The identified causes of domestic violence in this study were multi-dimensional and interconnected in nature. Thus domestic violence was caused by multiple factors which tended to relate and cut across all the various forms of domestic violence. Hence there was no single cause of victims' experiences. Each victim generally enumerated multiple causes that led to the occurrence of the abuse. These were usually economic, social, cultural, personal and sometimes political in nature resulting from power relations between women and men.

#### 4. 2.2.1 Economic Causes

Cantalupo et al., (2006) has contended that poverty is a major cause of domestic violence. The results from the study revealed that the economic causes of domestic violence were the most common cause of DV in the two countries under study. Thematic analysis revealed that both financial dependence and financial independence of victims exposed them to more abuse. Economic dependence of victims makes it more difficult to quite abusive unions (Effah-Chukwuma and Nnorom, 2011). Both victims, police officials and key informants in Ghana and Lagos State revealed that poverty, women's economic dependence on men caused domestic violence and often made them more vulnerable to abuses. The study also revealed that a good number of victims who experienced severe abuses were unemployed and depended heavily on their husbands for economic survival. In an interview with an unemployed victim, she noted:

I have been living with my boyfriend for years. I have 3 children and I'm pregnant with the fourth baby. sic. Anytime there is a small misunderstanding he will say I should leave his house. He beat me because I asked him for money for antenatal. I met him with a woman in our bedroom. So I asked him why he's taking a woman, that instead of giving money to his new girlfriend he should give me money for hospital, he now beat me. he said I should leave the house when I refused he dragged me outside, pushed me a gutter and began beating me there.(Victim, Ghana)

A Key informants in Ghana also corroborated:

Because of poverty, the dependence on men is so high. Women are made to believe is the man who has to take care of everything. So the men treat them anyhow. Abuse them and because they have nowhere to go they stay in the abuse.

The results of the study corroborate Mann and Takyi (2009) study in Ghana where the researchers discovered women's low economic income was a major cause of their experience of domestic abuse.

This study is consistent with the empowerment theory that postulates that the resource and financial powerlessness of victims cause domestic violence (Solomon 1977). However, the study also revealed that financial independence of victims equally caused domestic

violence which is a contradiction to the argument of the empowerment theory. Contrary to the findings of the 2013 National Crime Victimization Survey in Nigeria that unemployed and women with low income experienced more violence from their partners than women who earned a high income, in this study, some victims confessed that they experienced domestic violence because they were financially independent and their perpetrators abused them because of insecurity. Quoted below are victims response on why they were abused.

Lack of finance caused it, he wasn't financially buoyant so most times he is frustrated thereby venting his anger on me and beating me. (Victim, Nigeria)

He abused me because of insecurity and inferiority complex. I am working and earning a good salary than him. So he feels threatened, he just wants to suppress and control me. (Victim, Ghana).

He startby first stopping me from using his fridge for my zobo business. My neighbour now agree say make I put my zobo for im fridge. My husband now stop customers from coming to my house to buy. When I go out to sell, n im make him beat me this morning say make I no go sell zobo again. He just no want me to make any money. (Victim, Lagos)

#### **4.2.2.2 Spiritual Causes**

Religious belief in disobedience to God's word and spirituality were another unique but principal causes of domestic violence expressed by both victims and police respondents in Ghana and Lagos state. Victims' refusal to pray to God for revelations on marriage was an identified cause. A police officer noted:

They don't pray before marriage. They advise them to pray but they won't. Some of these things they are not ordinary. They rush into marriage to show off to their friends that they are married without praying. (Police Officer, Lagos)

A police officer in Ghana attested *that sometimes the causes of domestic violence is spiritual*. Most interviewees also said witches, wizards, evil powers, evil spirits were the main causes behind their abuse. Others believed it was the work of Satan. They expressed the fact that perpetrators were manipulated by evil spirits who did not want their



relationships to work or who wanted to destroy the lives of perpetrators. A mother of a sexual abuser noted:

My son can never do that. Someone has used charm on him to do that. It is not normal. They just want to destroy him.  
(Mother of Perpetrator, Ghana)

Another victim corroborated:

It is spiritual, I know, it is not normal. they have put something in his food to eat that is why he is doing all this to me.

The researcher also observed most perpetrators believed spiritual forces caused their actions. A perpetrator explained:

*I'm not like that ooh, I don't know what entered into me that made me defile the girl.*

*(Perpetrator: Ghana)*

*I have a wife who is pregnant. I don't know what pushed me to rape that girl. It is not ordinary. (Perpetrator, Lagos)*

This further portrays and reinforces the strong belief and attachments Africans including the police have towards spirituality and the influence of supernatural powers.

#### **4.2.2.3 Women as causes of DV.**

Women were also believed to be indirect perpetrators and a primary cause of domestic violence in the two countries under study. Cantalupo et al., (2006) have observed that society's stereotyping of gender roles in Africa was often time used to justify domestic violence. According to interviewees, women triggered domestic violence by chasing their fellow women's husbands, dressing provocatively, disrespecting their husbands, challenging men and failing to perform their marital roles as wives. This study demonstrated how women have been socialized to accept patriarchal ideologies and their status quo. Alemika and Agugua (2001) have also maintained that patriarchy has succeeded in convincing women to even accept their inferiority and male superiority. It was also observed in the police stations that the police constantly blamed victims for causing

perpetrators to abuse them. This somehow justified perpetrators attitude and defeated the whole purpose of condemning abusive behaviours.

The study also discovered that while patriarchal beliefs was a primary influence behind women's experience of domestic violence in Nigeria, the matrilineal system of inheritance was a leading cultural practice causing economic violence in Southern Ghana. The belief in female subordination, male superiority and rights to control women including their finances, the rights of men to discipline their wives, sexuality rights of men (men justified for having extramarital affairs while women are ostracized for same) were among the various practices that often caused physical, sexual and economic violence in Nigeria. During a mediation on physical violence in Nigeria, a perpetrator inquired:

So don't I have the right to discipline my wife again when she goes wrong, is that what you are saying. I came here upon your invitation because I have not done anything wrong. She did something bad and as a husband I disciplined her, that's all. I have the right to discipline my wife. (12-04-2018, FSU, Lagos)

The above illustration demonstrated the huge belief and impact of patriarchy where the perpetrator, in this case, found nothing wrong with assaulting his wife because he had the right (under patriarchal influence) to discipline her. The results of the study align with Mogstad, Dryding and Fiorotto(2016) study where interviewees believed that women caused domestic violence when they provoked men by shouting or nagging.

#### **4.2.2.4 Police officers as indirect perpetrators**

The study also discovered that police personnel sometimes caused domestic violence. Personal observations in the police stations and interviews with victims revealed that police personnel who responded to domestic violence indirectly perpetrated domestic violence by either condoning abusive behaviours, stigmatizing and blaming victims as well as failing to take effective actions to end the abuse. According to Delahunty and Crehan (2016), respectful treatment of victims is a mandatory requirement for fair procedures in responding to domestic violence. A good number of victims wept, confessed being

psychologically abused and feeling hopeless after their encounter with the police in Southern Ghana and the Gender Unit in Lagos State police command. A victim lamenting on her experience noted:

My sister, the suffering is too much. Na im make me come to the police station for them to settle the matter. The policewoman just dey shout at me say I no go get what I want. Haaahaaa, she no even hear my story, she was just shouting at me say make I commot for her office, she say my husband no go compensate me. (She cries). I go Alausa, na them give me letter say make I come here. Only for them to maltreat me here. (She weeps). (Victim, Lagos)

Another victim corroborated:

The policewoman taking my statement started shouting on me and blaming me. In fact I was deeply hurt. I felt so bad. I felt sorry for going to the police. (Victim, Ghana)

During a report of defilement of a 16-year-old victim, the police officer taking the statement shouted:

Shut up! Bad girl. Instead of you to go to school you are following boys. If you did not like the sex why did you lie down? Bad girl. Get out of my sight if you are not ready to talk. (DOVVSU, 28/01/2018)

Similarly, some of the victims believed police refusal to take effective action caused perpetrators to continue abusing them and the abuse experienced was more severe after police interventions.

Since we left the police station, the abuse has even become worse because they couldn't do anything to him. Instead of them to condemn his behaviour and punish him, they were rather blaming me. (Victim, Ghana)

A survey by Delahunty and Crehan (2016) on police interventions in South Wales made similar conclusions. The researchers discovered police revictimisation of victims and concluded that a major reason for victims' refusal to seek police help was because of fear of retaliatory victimization by the police.

Other causes identified in the study included infidelity of both men and women, illiteracy on domestic violence and its effects, mental health challenges, extended family interferences in marriage, religious difference, tribalism, bareness and common misunderstandings usually resulting from personality differences. It was also noted that women's previous experience of domestic violence made them vulnerable to subsequent abuse.

#### **4.2.3 Effects of domestic violence**

Sullivan (2017) has noted that domestic violence is a pervasive human right abuse with physical, psychological and health consequences. Bhatla et al., (2006) also emphasized that DV compromises victims' security, household security, their economic viability, and household income. Domestic violence according to this study had multiple effects on victims. Thus, the effects of domestic violence on victims were usually multifaceted in nature. Thematic analysis revealed five main effects of domestic violence. These were health, economic, psychological, material and homicide. The economic implications of domestic violence experienced by the victims interviewed included loss of household income, poverty, financial crises, loss of a job as well as loss of profits from business. The health effects were fractures, body wounds, blurred vision, teeth breakage, infertility, miscarriage, stillbirth and other infectious diseases. In an interview with a victim, she noted

He beat me and break my waist. For two years I dey bed. I no fit carry anything for hand again. Person wey treat me collect ₦450,000. Na me pay am. (Victim, Lagos)

Another victim corroborated "he has given me HIV/AIDS which has no cure, (weeping), he has destroyed my future" (Victim, Ghana). The psychological implications experienced by victims were depression, emotional trauma, stigmatization, loss of self-confidence and human dignity, constant thinking, sleeplessness, consistent weeping and loss of concentration. This corroborates the findings of a study by Ojo and Okunola (2012) on violence against women in Osun State, Nigeria where survivors of domestic violence experienced psychological trauma such as depression, anxiety, stress, aggression, and low self-esteem. The study also discovered that domestic violence did not only affect victims but also children and the entire household. Children who experienced or witnessed

domestic violence experienced emotional and psychological disorders, hunger, became school dropouts, health challenges, malnourishment among others.

Domestic violence also caused death. A victim disclosed

my husband drove out the children from his house because of the misunderstanding between us and one of the children fell into a gutter and died. (Victim, Ghana)

A police officer in Ghana also noted:

The perpetrator set the house ablaze and killed the wife. After that, he ran away but he was caught at Elubo trying to run away to Ivory Coast.

The observed trend in the data revealed that psychological consequences of domestic violence were the dominant, experienced by survivors and it cut across all the forms of violence.

#### **4.2.4 Why victims seek police assistance**

Furtherance to answering the research question, the major reasons why victims sought police assistance when domestic violence occurred was explored. Karmen (2007) contends that domestic violence survivors go to the police for three main reasons. These are punishment, rehabilitation, and restitution. Huang (2018) in his study on unmet needs and victims satisfaction in Taiwan also discovered that survivors' recovery correlated with their criminal justice experiences including the police. Thus victims' seeking police help was part of the recovery process. The study first discovered that victims in both countries did not usually report first abuses. Thus apart from sexual violence when most people reported first abuse, many victims had experienced multiple abuses before seeking police assistance. Usually, it is at the peak of the violence when victims' consider their very lives being threatened that they go to the police. During an interview, a victim responded:

"This beating don tire me and I no want to continue like this. I no want die leave my children". (Victim, Lagos)

The major reasons given for delayed report in were fear of societal stigmatization for reporting family matters to the police, general loss of public confidence and trust in the

police, family and religious counsel against police involvement, fear of losing their partners and family breakage that comes with police involvement, the expectancy that their abusers will change, ignorance of police assistance and financial costs of police involvement. The trending reason expressed by Ghanaian women were expectancy for victims to change while in Nigeria general loss of confidence in the police was the trending reason expressed by Nigerian victims for delayed report. Another major result of the study revealed that victims in Nigeria endured more abuse before reporting to police than victims in Ghana. Thus the duration between the occurrence of the first abuse and report to the police was longer among Nigerian women than Ghanaian women. This could be as a result of the general lack of confidence in the Nigeria police. Mogstad et al (2016) also found in their study that victims' negative perception of the police reinforced their unwillingness to report abuse to police. Also, personal observations in the police stations showed more victims sought police assistance in Ghana than in Lagos State as depicted in the number who visited the FSU and DOVVSU in a week. Records from the police dairy in the selected police stations revealed an average of 50 cases in a week, while in Nigeria, the average number of cases recorded in a week was 15. It was observed that the majority of these cases were however referred from the Lagos State Domestic Violence Response Team. Only a few victims walked to the police station to make a direct complaint on DV. The regular use of police services in Ghana could also be due to the level of awareness of police services and victims' confidence in the police. Sunshine and Tyler (2003) argue that when police work was conducted effectively and fairly, it will be legitimised in the eyes of the citizens and this will increase their willingness to use police services. It could thus indicate DV victims' confidence was higher in Ghana police than the Nigeria police. Until 2013, the Nigeria police had no domestic violence unit and were therefore not giving adequate response to domestic violence.

The reasons that compelled victims to seek police assistance from the study included the quest for revenge, fear of death, poverty and hunger, enforcement of the law, reformation of perpetrator and solution to their problems. The table below shows a distribution of reasons for reporting by abuse type.

**Table 1:Reasons for Seeking Police Assistance**

FORM OF ABUSE	REASON
Sexual violence	Justice and prosecution
Physical violence	Security, Safety
Economic violence	Law enforcement and reformation of perpetrators.

Victims' expectations from police included arrest, counselling, application, and enforcement of the law, prosecution, police support, emotional support, warning letters, punishment for abusers and instilling fear in abusers. The trending expectation was police support which included emotional and physical support.

**4.2.5 Victims' needs and satisfaction** The need for domestic violence interventions to meet the diverse needs of victims has been well articulated by several scholars. Huang (2018) contend that meeting the needs of victims should be prioritized in intervention strategies. The results of the study revealed that the negative impact of domestic violence on victims made them vulnerable which required interventions to empower victims to overcome the effects of the abuse.

**4.2.5.1 Psycho-social support**

Haung (2018) describes psycho-social needs to include crises intervention, counseling, therapy, and trauma recovery. The data discovered counselling as the common and most important need expressed by both victims, police personnel and key informants. Nearly all the victims interviewed revealed experiencing psychological trauma in one form or the other as a result of the abuse. A victim of marital violence in Ghana also noted:

I am a fat person. It is thinking that has made me slim like this. Sister, my boyfriend's behavior is affecting me. I'm always thinking and worried. I'm not myself. (Victim, Ghana)

Psychological healing was believed to be the very primary tool and the beginning of the response process of healing and empowerment. Sullivan (2017:126 )contends that

“supportive counselling assures victims they are not alone and are not responsible for their victimization and also creates response to trauma”. In an interview with a police officer, she stressed:

Most of the victims who come here are broken inside. The physical one cannot be compared to the damage inside them. (sic) They need to be mended inside first.(DOVVSU, 3/02/2018)

The results of the study, however, revealed that counselling was not a priority area of work of DOVVSU although the DV law mandates police to offer psycho-social support to victims. There were no formalized counselling provisions for victims. Emphasis was more on dealing with the criminal and visible aspect of domestic violence. Park et al, (2012) and Agbitor (2014) also had similar findings on their studies on the work of DOVVSU in Ghana. These researchers all discovered a lack of psychosocial support of domestic violence victims. A primary reason for this as revealed in the study was the impact of police training and nature of work which dwelt more on evidential gatherings for prosecution. These training were invariably adopted into their work on domestic violence to the neglect of psycho-social support. An informant articulated:

The police by their training itself don't have that capacity to deal with such social issue. How can they solve a situation or a problem they weren't trained to solve?(Key Informant, Ghana)

Psychosocial support according to Keeling et al, (2015) begins with the first contact with a police officer at the counter when a complaint is made. Victims interviewed generally revealed experiencing secondary victimization and more psychological abuse after their encounter with police in Ghana. Police attitude of impatience, blaming of victims, lack of empathy, shouting, extortions, hostility, embarrassment, harassment through interrogations caused more psychological damage to victims. A police officer confessed during an interview that:

Madam am telling you that 80% of the cases which come here can just be solved through counselling but there is no counselling unit. That is why we are failing. Even the way most of these officers talk to victims is enough to cause depression. (Police, DOVVSU)



Another victim stated:

When I reported the case, the policeman said I am lying. He said I should shut up. Sic. I am a bad girl that is why I have been raped. He didn't even want to listen to the whole story, when was just blaming me, saying what did I go to do in the boy's room. Because of his actions, I felt so bad and sorry for reporting this case. (Victim, Ghana).

During personal observations, a police officer's first response to a victim who reported sexual violence case was:

so you guys enjoyed yourselves in the hot afternoon. So when he was having sex with you, you were just shouting I'm enjoying it oh, am enjoying it oh, eh, is that not so? (5-07-2017, DOVVSU)

The study discovered these attitudes increased self-blame and caused depression. Empowerment theorist like Hudson and Lee (1996) contend that increasing self-blame is associated with feelings of depression, and immobilization. It was also discovered that the majority of victims did not return to the police station after the initial reports. A major reason expressed by these victims through the follow-up interviews was their dissatisfaction with police attitude to them after the initial report. It was further discovered that police negative attitude did not only cause victims to abandon their cases but also influenced the general rate of reporting as these victims discouraged other victims from seeking police assistance. This indicates that a reduced reporting rate is not necessarily an indication of reduced prevalence but a lack of victims' satisfaction with police response.

The data in Nigeria, however, showed a similar but differing trend in psychosocial help for victims. While FSU did not have a counselling unit and victims were not taken through a formalized counselling process, police attitude to victims was more empathic, friendly, supportive and patient. Victims were thus more comfortable with the police and attested their friendly and supportive attitude somehow relieved them of post-traumatic stress which psychologically empowered them. During an interview, a victim noted:

The police help me oh, the DPO helped support me. This Aunty (pointing to policewoman) was very helpful. She

always go to my husband and talked to him until they took my baby to the hospital. Although the marriage did not work, their support was very helpful. I have decided to go to nursing school to develop myself. He is now a keke driver. I am now better. They helped me that is why anytime I get to Lagos I will come here to say hello to them. (Victim, FSU)

The result of the study is consistent with the empowerment theory which argues that increasing the self-efficacy of victims by reducing blame and strengthening of victim's ego makes victims to assume personal responsibility to solve the problem. Thus, victims who received psycho-social support developed self-efficacy to solve the problems associated with DV.

It was also observed that psychosocial support and police attitude to victims was mainly influenced by special training received on domestic violence. Thus, police personnel who had received training on domestic violence in Ghana and Lagos State were more supportive than those who had not received training. The lack of training was also evidenced in the differences between the operations of the Gender Unit in Lagos state Police Command and the Family Support Units in Isokoko, Ilupeju, Ketu and Ikeja. While all the police officers in family support unit had received intensive training by the British Council, personnel in Gender Unit were usually untrained, and the duration of training for those who were trained was an average of three days. Their operations were thus strict, hostile, unfriendly as well as unsupportive. Similarly, the majority of police personnel working in DOVVSU said they had not received any training on DV. Thus the traditional method of policing was what they had adopted to policing domestic violence.

#### **4.2.5.2 Shelter**

Shelter was another primary need observed by researcher and expressed by both victims, police personnel and key informants. Cooper et al, (2013) contend that domestic violence survivors need quick access to shelter services. Domestic violence rendered some victims homeless and these victims needed either temporary or permanent shelters. The need for safety and security expressed by victims necessitated their quest for shelter. The findings of the study revealed that there was no assistance for women's access to shelters in both

Ghana and Nigeria. Police assistance for shelter was only for underage victims. In an interview with police personnel in Nigeria, she said:

The shelters provided by the government and police are for victims below 18 years. For women, we don't assist because they are adults. They should fend for themselves.  
(21/03/2018, FSU)

In Ghana, many of the shelters which were by the government and social welfare only offered temporary shelter to the underage victims. Victims were oftentimes returned to their abusers after the temporary shelter elapsed which often compromised their safety, made them more vulnerable to revictimization and hopeless. In a narration of a case involving a 16-year-old victim of physical, sexual abuse and forced marriage by a key informant, it was disclosed that:

She was married off to an old man who beat her up when she refused to have sex with him. When she went to report to her father, her father also beat her until she fainted. It was the neighbours in the house who then came and reported to the police. The police took her to Osu Children's home for only one week and brought the girl back, handed her over to her father. As am speaking to you now the father has returned the girl back to the husband and they have threatened her never to speak to anyone about it. The girl is suffering and needs help.

In an attempt to seek police response on the victim's case, the police investigator handling this case responded:

Where do you want me to house her? The police don't have a house to keep victims and that home is only for a few days. So I have to hand her over to the father because I can't keep her in my house.

It was also revealed that the lack of shelter for women further compromised their security and sometimes caused victims' death. Sullivan (2017) notes that shelter enhances the safety of survivors hence the lack of shelter exposed victims to insecurity. During an interview with a police officer in Ghana, she revealed:

In fact, as for shelter, it is a big problem. The government has not provided shelter for women. I handled a case where the complainant was being threatened by the husband in Agona Nkwanta. Several times she called me that her life was in

danger. One night she called me and sounded fearful. So I asked her to leave the house but she didn't have any place to stay. The husband now left the house so she went back and slept. Around 1:00 am the man came back and used petrol to burn the house. He killed the woman and it pains me anytime I remember it. (DOVVSU, 20/01/2018)

#### **4.2.5.3 Enforceability and justice**

The need for justice and enforcement or application of the law on offenders was another theme which emerged from the data. Huang (2018) observes that vigorously pursuing justice is a way of developing a coping strategy. Justice for victims was provided through investigation and prosecution at the court of law. Hester and Westmarland (2005) found in their study on effective domestic violence intervention that victims need legal support from police and such support was helpful to their recovery. Victims of sexual violence attested being satisfied in their quest for justice than other victims in the two study areas. A major underlining reason for this was because prosecution of sexual offences was mandatory by the DV laws in Lagos State and Ghana. However poor women's access to justice in Ghana was hampered by the expensive cost of medical report and the expenses of the whole investigation and court process. In Lagos State, however, victims access to justice was usually hampered due to police corruption while some others abandoned their pursuit for justice due to the lengthy duration of court proceeding. The study indicated that victims' need for justice was more satisfied by police officers in FSU and Gender Unit in Lagos State than by DOVVSU in Southern Ghana.

Regarding the application or enforcement of the law on offenders, victims who expressed this desire were more satisfied by DOVVSU officers than FSU personnel. A possible reason behind this could be the general operational differences between DOVVSU and FSU which was influenced by the training received. The operational strategy of FSU was more liberal and inclined towards resolution, settlement and family reunion. Thus reconciliation and amicable resolution were preferred to strict enforcement of the law and prosecution. However, for victims who had suffered incessant abuses and were seeking enforcement of the law for freedom, FSU strategies failed them. Most of them abandoned their relationships contrary to police advice and never returned to the police again.

#### **4.2.5.4 Reunion/marriage, peace and love**

Contrary to feminist theory contestations that abused women want to leave abusive relationships, this study revealed that beneath the quest for police assistance was a burning desire for marriage and family reunion, peace and love from perpetrators. Leaving an abusive marriage is what feminist consider as the only way to take a feminist position (George and Stith, 2014).

The quest for reunion, peace, and love was usually expressed by victims in cohabitation and most married women. This is because many women interviewed did not want to leave their marriages because of their children and societal stigmatization for single female parents. Some victim respondents expressed the need for a reunion with their partners. The findings of the study in Ghana revealed that the need for marital reunion and love were usually not met as police interventions emphasized the criminal aspect of the abuse. During mediations when issues associated with victims' quest for marriage, resolution of marital problems arose, victims were sent back home for the family to solve it. The major reason given was that police were not mandated to solve marital issues. Police personnel in an interview noted:

We don't solve marriage problems here. It is not our jurisdiction to do that. When we see that is what is needed, we refer victims to the family to solve such problems. We don't divorce, we don't contract marriage. (Police Officer, DOVVSU).

Responding to a question on how the police have met their needs, a victim disclosed:

I brought the case here for police to solve it, they are now saying I should go and see the family so they can solve it. Is it not because the family could not solve it that is why I brought it here? They are now sending me back to the same family. Aah, I am not happy at all. (Victim, Ghana)

In Nigeria, the study discovered FSU interventions promoted marital reunions but the peace and love did not last as perpetrators often revictimized victims. Family stigmatizations of

victims for sending their husbands to police stations also sometimes negatively influenced perpetrators attitude towards victims which led to psychological abuse.

My husband's family are now fighting me, that I have reported my husband to the police. They have influenced my husband and now he doesn't even want to see my face. In fact, everything has become worse. (Victim, Lagos)

#### **4.2.5.5 End of abuse and reformation of perpetrators**

African women victims of domestic violence are not seeking separation from their husbands, they are just looking for a way to stop the abusive behaviour. Many of the victims interviewed were usually in a quest for an end to the abuse and a reformation of their offenders. These were usually victims of marital violence. Some victims do not necessarily seek to punish offenders of family violence, they only need victims to change their abusive behaviour and be responsible (Karmen, 2007). A victim noted:

I just want him to change and stop beating me. The beating is too much. I am afraid I may die as a result. I don't want him to be jailed, no, we have children. Small counter back is ok and they should threaten him so he will be afraid. He will change and not do that again. (Victim, DOVVSU)

Another victim in Lagos reiterated:

Madam the beating don tire me. I no fit leave because another woman go suffer my children. Make police do something to stop this man from beating me. I no wan die leave my children.

This study revealed that there was no probing into the remote causes of the violence before choosing the response method, hence the interventions only stopped the immediate abuse but later led to complicated revictimization. A victim in Lagos describing her ordeal after police intervention in Lagos noted "madam e be like I dey inside river dey bath, soap dey enter my eyes" (it is like I am bathing in a river, yet soap is entering my eyes). Thus explaining police interventions being incapable of solving her problems.

Another victim in Ghana revealed:

This is the third time I have taken the case to the police. When we come back he will do the same thing, he will be

saying ‘what did they do to me? What did they do to me? They didn’t do anything’. (Victim, Ghana)

Also, police interventions in economic abuse only provided immediate positive results usually when perpetrators were threatened or arrested but its sustainability failed. A major reason was the fact that the causes of economic abuse especially non-maintenance of children were deeply rooted in the culture of the matrilineal system of inheritance. Thus there was a critical need for interventions to target the ideological and character reformation of perpetrators to end such abuse. Observations and interviews responses from victims revealed there was no special programme exclusively set apart for the behavioural transformation of perpetrators.

In the data from Nigeria, it was observed that police intervention granted more power to perpetrators through the enforcement of patriarchal norms. Police personnel usually appealed to perpetrators to stop abuse rather than condemning their attitude. During mediation, police officer stressed:

You know your husband is your oga (master), so obey him simple. If you obey him there will be peace he won’t beat you. (to abuser) Please just have patience for your wife, just try and manage her ooh. Small small oh, ogaplease. If you want to discipline use other means, don’t beat her. (Police, FSU)

This usually made victims more vulnerable and led to revictimization. A victim of marital violence in Lagos, disclosed “*this is the third time am bringing my case to police. After everything, he will still beat me. He hasn’t changed*”.

This discovery is inconsistency with the empowerment theory which posits that domestic violence is the result of the unequal power relations between the abuser and the abused (Gutierrez et. Al, 1995). Hence increasing the power of the offender will make victims more vulnerable and lead to more revictimization. This is in line with the implications of patriarchal policing strategies on victims’ safety and experiences of subsequent abuses. When interventions increase the powerlessness of victims, they are less empowered to be active in changing their situations and the cycle of abuse continues.

#### **4.2.5.6 Health and medical needs**

Cooper et al, (2013) have contended that good interventions must include healthcare for survivors. Health challenges were among some of the impacts of domestic violence on survivors which necessitated intervention programmes to meet their health needs. The provision of medical care was one of the first responses given to victims of domestic violence in Ghana and Lagos State. The results of the study revealed that the medical needs of victims in Lagos State were more fulfilled than victims in Ghana. The issuance of police medical forms to victims entitled them to free healthcare services in the MIRABEL centre in Lagos State University Teaching Hospital (LASUTH). In Ghana, however, the cost of medical care was usually too expensive for most victims to afford. This is consistent with Agbitor (2014) research findings which identified the high cost of medical report a hindrance to victims in Ghana. A major challenge was that the national health insurance scheme did not cover health care and medical report in domestic violence incidents and this often discouraged victim. Moreover, the study discovered the DV Act made free provision of medical care for victims but it was not being implemented. Furthermore, it was revealed that many of the victims did not return to the police after the initial report because of the cost of medical report and care.

#### **4.2.5.7 Financial empowerment**

Jewkes and Morrell, (2012) state that poverty and lack of economic independence for women interlock with and reinforces gender inequality causing domestic violence. Amin (2013) postulates that economic empowerment programmes achieve greater voice, agency, power, and status for women and help them quite abusive relationships by increasing their options. As a result, Bhatla et al, (2006) argue for the need for interventions to ensure economic security. The study revealed a lack of financial independence did not only cause domestic violence but bound women to abusive relationships even when their lives were threatened. Similarly, some men halted women's economic viabilities in order to oppress and abuse them. A victim revealed:

He stop me from working, he stop me from selling. He just keep me for house. Sic.he don't allow me to go out. He beat and maltreat me. He sometimes throw my thing outside. I



don't have any money or job. If to say I have, I for don leave,  
because e wan kill me. (Victim, Lagos)

The above illustration demonstrated that some victims were willing to leave abusive relationships if they were financially independent. It was however observed that victims who were financially independent often insisted on their rights during police interventions and were able to leave abusive relationships. The results of the study prove the argument of the empowerment theory, which states that economic deprivation increases women's oppression and victimization. The theory, therefore, calls for economic empowerment as a solution to women's experiences of domestic violence. Bookman and Morgan (1998) postulate victims access to resources increases their power and makes them assume personal responsibility for change. The data gathered from the interviews indicated victims who were financially dependent also sought police help for financial independence either through compensations in cases of acute abuse or sought police to use force on perpetrators to financially establish them. Some victims were expecting police to dissolve their relationship and force victims to compensate them for wasting their time.

A victim in Ghana said:

I want the police to make him compensate me if he is no more interested in the relationship sic. Because he is maltreating me. I didn't finish secondary school because he impregnated me.

The study found that these expectations and needs of victims were unmet in Lagos and Ghana. Victims who sought financial empowerment were referred back to their families for a solution or advised to go to court for redress which was rather expensive for victims to afford. The major reason explained by police personnel was the fact that their operations were limited by the law. Thus they were not allowed to dissolve relationships and force perpetrators to compensate, neither were they allowed to force offenders to empower victims. They only recommended which was at the discretion of the abuser.

The main success of economic empowerment granted to victims was in non-maintenance of children and victims as well as achieving economic freedom for victims whose abusers were infringing on their economic rights, such as stopping victims from working or engaging in trade. These achievements were rather short-lived.

The study, however, found that the expensive nature of police intervention and corrupt practices rather impoverished victims. A victim disclosed:

I have spent even the little money I have in the police station. Up and down, money for recharge cards. Transport for arrest. Right from Meran police station, they started collecting money. I don't have any money again. (Victim, Lagos)

Another victim in Ghana noted:

Out of the ₵150 I had for chop money, I gave ₵100 to the doctor for a medical report. The policewoman is saying I should bring more money for her transport. Haaa. What will my children eat?

#### **4.2.5.8 Accessibility**

Easy accessibility to police services in incidences of domestic violence was another need identified in the study. The results of the study showed that police services were more accessible to victims in Ghana and Lagos State. The total number of DOVVSU branches and desks in Ghana was 110 serving a population of 29.6 million according to the United Nation's World Population Review Report (2017). In Lagos State, however, there were only 11 FSU units serving the entire population 21 million in Lagos State (Bureau of National Statistics, 2017). Thus the average ratio of victims to DOVVSU was 26,9090 people to 1 DOVVSU unit in Ghana while the ratio in Lagos state was 1,909,090 people to 1 Family Support Unit. It was however observed that DV hotlines were effective in Lagos State than Ghana.

#### **4.2.5.9 Protection and security**

Sullivan (2017) posits that engaging in safety planning with victims must be a common principle in any domestic violence interventions. The two police units studied were found to have derailed from this basic principle. Victims interviewed who needed safety and protection were dissatisfied because they had little or no access to shelters which compromised their safety.

The study also discovered police approach was more reactive than proactive. During personal observations in FSU, police answer to a victim of attempted rape was:

There is nothing we can do for you. The person did not rape you so what do you want us to do to him? We don't have evidence to prosecute him because he did not rape you. Just go home. (FSU, 03/04/2018)

The above illustration illuminates police emphasis on responding to crime rather than protecting the vulnerable.

#### **4.2.5.10 Right based**

“Given that knowledge is power, a primary goal of DV programme should increase survivors knowledge about their rights” (Sullivan, 2017:126). The concept of right based intervention is based on the premises that domestic violence is a violation of women's human right. Thus there is the need for interventions to adopt a right based approach to tackling the domestic violence for its efficiency in meeting victims needs and for a sustainable outcome. The right based approach is also rooted in granting psychological empowerment to victims of domestic violence to which will grant the power and agency to control and transform the abuse themselves (Adu-Gyamfi, 2014). The study revealed that when the rights of victims are emphasized during sensitization programmes and the response process, victims became more empowered and their self-efficacy increased. Emphasis on the rights of victims on heightened their emotions or relieved the psychological trauma and increased victims confidence in the police. Observations of mediations also revealed that when victim's rights were stressed by police officers, it transformed perpetrators into respecting the rights of women in general. The illustration below ascertains this fact:

When I heard about the right of women in the television, I decided to come to the police without telling my family because they will not support me. When we came, the police commander told my husband that he has no right to beat me. He said women have many rights now and when he beats me he has offended the law. He even begged that he didn't know. He has changed his attitude to me now. (Victim, Ghana)

Another victim of economic abuse noted:

The police tell him that I have the right to do my zobo business. Sic. so he cannot stop me. Now am doing my business. (Victim, Lagos)

This again proved the empowerment theory's argument of individual and group consciousness, leading to increased personal efficacy. Increased self-efficacy empowers victims to perform the necessary needed to achieve the goals of importance to them (Bandura, 1977)

Although the right based approach was efficient in empowering victims, the study, however, discovered that police operation did not place much emphasis on victim's right in the two police units. In Nigeria, the rights of victims were subjected to patriarchal beliefs and norm. Thus the rights of women were emphasized by the police only when it did not conflict patriarchal beliefs. Also in a bid to promote the rights of women under the DV law, FSU and Gender Unit officials discouraged perpetrators from using physical violence but encouraged the use of psychological violence to discipline their wives to avoid offending the law. This emphasized police strong believe and attachment to husbands' right to discipline erring wives which was a grand patriarchal norm.

#### **4.2.5.11 Victims' confidence and trust in the police**

The trust and confidence of victims in the police is very important in determining victims' use of police services and decreasing the prevalence of domestic violence. The data revealed that victims' confidence and trust in the police was determined by victims experience with police and the success of their cases.

The trend in the interviews revealed that in general victims of sexual abuse had more confidence and trust in police ability to handle domestic violence than victims of physical and economic abuse in both Ghana and Lagos State. The major reasons enumerated by victim respondents for their lack of trust were partiality, bribery and corruption, blaming, inefficiency, hostility, unsuccessful intervention and expensive nature of cases.

Lack of trust and confidence affected their willingness to use police services again. In answering a question on trust for police, a victim said:

Another victim corroborated:

I don't trust them because their action on the case doesn't yield any result. I have decided not to take it to the police station again. Instead of them to arrest him and give him a warning letter they just keep talking to him. (Victim, Ghana)

Victim's lack of trust and confidence in the police was listed as a reason why some victims did not seek police assistance again.

#### **4.2.6 Monitoring**

Finally, a good intervention should establish a follow-up mechanism according to Sullivan (2017) to monitor victims' wellbeing and safety. The two police organizations studied were found to have defied this because there were no monitoring strategies to check the effectiveness of the intervention on victims. A police officer noted:

For monitoring you see we don't follow up, rather we believe when they are having problems they will come back. And some come back when they have problems, we don't go looking for them. It is not our duty to call them and monitor cases or check on the victims  
( Police Officer, Lagos)

The primary objective of monitoring is to ensure what police response targeted to achieve was not reversed. Responses from the interviews conducted by the researcher for some of the victims whose cases had been closed indicated that no follow up had been made by the police since the cases ended.

### **4.3 Similarities and differences between police interventions in Southern Ghana and Lagos State**

The third research objective aimed to compare and contrast police intervention strategies in Southern Ghana and Lagos state. The Ghana Police Service and the Nigeria Police Force were both established by the British Colonial Masters to primarily to protect colonial interest and subsequently to promote security and order in the society. As a result, both police institutions have similar operational procedures and perform similar policing functions. However, regarding operations in domestic violence, this study discovered that the two police institutions differ more than being similar.

#### **4.3.1 Similarities**

A major similarity between the operations of the Ghana Police Service and the Nigeria police Force is the fact that both institutions have established special units exclusively responsible for handling domestic violence. These units are the Domestic Violence Victims Support Unit in Ghana and the Family Support Unit in Lagos State. The two institutions also perform similar functions of arresting DV perpetrators, investigating DV offences, offering support to victims, protecting of victims and prosecuting all domestic violence crimes when necessary.

The study also discovered that the procedure for handling domestic violence cases was comparatively the same in the two police institutions under study. The procedure first begun with an initial complain at the counter and followed by the assigning of the victim to an investigator who issues a medical form for cases of physical and sexual violence and then takes victim's statement. The victim statement followed a similar pattern of self-introduction, a brief description of the crime and initial action taken by the victim. The police officer in charge proceeded with carrying out investigations which first begun with an invitation to the perpetrator in a case of minor offences or immediate arrest of the perpetrator in sexual violence cases. The Investigation procedure also followed a similar pattern of gathering evidential materials through visits to the crime scenes, interviewing of witnesses and ended with the preparation of investigation findings and case files. The case file together with the victims is presented to the officer in charge of the unit to deliberate and take the necessary action based on the law.

Police officers working in both DOVSSU and FSU did not wear police uniform. The police indicated that it was a means to avoid the fear and intimidation associated with the police uniform in order to make victims comfortable.

Like the DOVVSU in Ghana, counseling was not a priority area of the FSU and Gender Unit in Lagos State. Both police units did not have any special provision or section for the counseling of victims. Also, the police units lacked professional counsellors and officers were untrained on counseling of victims. As a result, their operations gave no priority to confidentiality that most victims especially marital and sexual violence required. Victims were interviewed in open spaces together with perpetrators and other visitors. Most victims were shy and unable to fully open up to police officers.

The findings of the study also revealed that the method of policing domestic violence in the two police institutions was masculinized. The procedure from statement writing to investigations to prosecution did not prioritize the emotional wellbeing of victims which is considered to be feminine. This could be as a result of the influence of the general masculinization of policing and the masculinized training police personnel received in the training schools.

The study also found that although the Ghana Police Service and the Nigeria Police Force had established special units to deal with domestic violence, the work of the units was not a priority area of the two police organisations. DOVVSU and FSU were severely under-resourced compared to other police units such as the anti-robbery units, traffic units etc. In the Lagos State Police Command, the Gender Unit was only given one small office while the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) had a whole storey-building for its operations. The DOVVSU and FSU offices were usually small and overcrowded. The two units also lacked the logistics and facilities needed for effective performance and often depended on support from external bodies to operate. The Gender Unit being the headquarters of the Family Support Unit did not have a car and used try-cycle for arrest. It was also observed during data gathering that many police cars were parked on highways with several police officers sleeping in the patrol cars while the FSU and Gender Units had no official vehicles.

It was also observed that some perpetrators absconded during arrests because the tricycles used were not enclosed enough to keep suspects. In an interview with a police officer, she noted:

We don't even have writing materials, we buy them with our own money. Here in this police station, there are four cars but they didn't even give us one. The cars are just packed here.

Similarly, a DOVVSU officer reiterated

We don't have a car to make an arrest. When we have to make arrest, we depend on SWAT(Special Weapons and Tactics unit) for a vehicle to arrest. The Regional commander came here and was shocked to see the conditions under which we work. He promised to send us logistics, up till now nothing.

The study discovered that these challenges hindered the functioning power of police and affected the success of cases. This discovery is in line with the empowerment theory that disempowered institutions become powerless and ineffective dealing with domestic violence. The theory, therefore, called for building the capacity of institutions to empower them to provide effective services that empower victims (Bookman and Morgan, 1998)

Another similarity identified in the study was the minimal use of arrest by both police units in handling domestic violence. The FSU and DOVVSU only made arrests in cases of harmful injuries and sexual violence cases. Also, the two police units were also found to respect the wishes of victims regarding the arrest of perpetrators.

The study also revealed that the operation of the two police units in handling domestic violence was more reactive than proactive. Their operations centered more on responding to an occurrence of domestic abuse than the prevention of DV. As a result, outreach programmes were not priority areas of operations. Similarly, victims who reported threats to their lives, attempted rape, desire for police protection were turned away

Also, both organizations were found to be involved in collaborative work with other government institutions and civil society groups who worked on domestic violence for shelter, legal assistance, public sensitization programmes and support for victims. FSU



collaborated mostly with the Lagos State Domestic Violence Response Team, the social welfare, the human rights commission, family court and other NGOs. In Ghana, DOVVSU collaborated with the social welfare, Ghana legal aid, the commission on human rights and administrative justice and other NGOs.

The study also found that police intervention in domestic violence in both southern Ghana and Lagos State were time consuming and also expensive for most victims to afford. The expensive nature of police interventions were primarily due to the lack of logistics in DOVVSU and FSU and corruption.

Corruption also emerged as a common practice among the two police units working on domestic violence in the study areas. The corrupt practices resulted in victims' loss of trust and confidence in the police interventions, loss of cases in court, averted justice, increased vulnerability and revictimisation, and reduced report rate to police.

The study also found that DOVVSU and FSU were not using the very law that guided their operations. The domestic violence laws of Lagos State and Ghana were not being used by both police units in their operations. DOVVSU predominantly used the Criminal Code of Ghana while the FSU and Gender Unit used the Nigeria Penal Code to operate. A major reason was because unlike the DV Acts, the criminal code formed a compulsory part of the police training curriculum in the police training schools in both Ghana and Nigeria. The study discovered that a lack of training on the DV Acts affected the success of domestic violence cases reported to the police. In an interview, a key informant noted:

Prosecutors should be well trained and you must have the facts and know the law and be well equipped with otherwise if you get a good defence lawyer. He will frustrate you and that could lead to the loss of the case. If the police are to go by the act, there are so many things they can avoid, but the problem is most of them are not conversant with DV Act.

This was demonstrated in a sexual violence case in Lagos where the prosecutor was unaware that the new revised DV did not allow bail for perpetrators of rape and defilement in Lagos State. This ignorance led to the release of the perpetrator on bail.

### **4.3.2 Differences**

An outstanding difference revealed by the study was that DOVVSU was established through the Domestic Violence Act and as a result, had a constitutional regulation that guided its operations. FSU, on the other hand, emerged through British counsel initiative with the Lagos State Government in response to public protest and civil society agitations. As a result, their operations were more haphazard when compared to DOVVSU whose activities and operations were more streamlined and organized. The study found that all DOVVSU offices selected for the study followed a similar pattern in its operations as stipulated by the law, but the operations of FSU were quite different from the Gender Unit. This study discovered that the variations in Lagos State resulted from the differences in the personnel who trained the police officers. A good number of police personnel in the FSU were trained by British Police Officers while the majority of officers working in the Gender Office were trained by either the Lagos State Government or other NGO, by fellow police officers.

Unlike DOVVSU which operated nationwide with 110 units and desks in Ghana, the FSU existed in only 11 police stations and only in Lagos State. The FSU was not present in other States in Nigeria. The FSU was still at its pilot stage and not very accessible to many victims even in Lagos state. The study also discovered that many victims in Lagos State were ignorant of the FSU as only few victims made direct complaints. Majority of the victims became aware of FSU through referrals received from the Lagos State Domestic Violence Response Team. In Ghana, however, all the victims interviewed made direct complaints and were also well disposed on the operations of DOVVSU mainly referred to as WAJU.

The study also discovered that the Family Support Unit was more socially driven and focused more on the reunion of families contrary to DOVVSU who focused more on prosecution. The findings of the study indicated that successful prosecution at the law court was the principal ambition of the Ghana Police Service. This was also emphasised through the flyers and posters on domestic violence which portrayed police arresting and

prosecuting offenders. Police officers in DOVVSU revealed the successful prosecution of offenders as the major height of success and fulfilment in their policing career.

What I consider successful case is when a case I send to court and I win. I win means I have gained prosecution (sic). That's the person who committed the offence is jailed or punished. From the evidence to the investigation expressing my view, through to forwarding the docket to the prosecution office. Sic. When court goes through the case and try the offender and somebody is convicted of the offence I charged to court then I am successful. (Police Officer, Ghana)

In Nigeria however, police officers considered the reunion of marriage and family as their height of success. This was also demonstrated in the pictures of police successful work of family reunion displayed in the FSU offices. In an interview with a police officer, she revealed:

What I consider successful is the unification of partners who have separated or are having problems in their marriages because of domestic violence. There was a couple who had separated for years and all efforts by pastors and family members proved futile. When they came here I did ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) for a whole month. At the end, they joined and were reunited. I was so happy.

A probable reason could be the training received by these two police units working on DV. The police officers in FSU were trained by the British Council and social work specialists whose training tended more to family harmony. The personnel of DOVVSU operated based on the training received in police college which focused on the traditional method of policing which emphasised more fighting crime and prosecuting offenders. Compare with other studies.

Contrary to the DOVVSU that employed the use of both male and female police officers in its operations, only female police officers were allowed to work in the FSU. In an interview with a police officer she noted:

Men cannot work here, because this work is all about women. Many of the victims are women. So a man cannot do this type of work now. (Police, Lagos)

This indicated how domestic violence has been feminized. This study found that a lack of gender balance among police officers working on DV affected the success of interventions. As demonstrated in the FSU, some perpetrators absconded because female officer making the arrest was not physically strong enough to overpower male perpetrators. Similarly, male perpetrators were not persuaded to reform because they felt female victims gained police support based on their common sex. During observations at the police station, a perpetrator noted:

So there is no man here that I can talk to who will understand me. This is not fair ooh. You women have just teamed up to frustrate men. Because you are all women that is why you are supporting her. (Perpetrator, Lagos)

In Ghana, however, the study found that the presence of male officers created gender balance and male officers were first reformed to respect the rights of women through their work and were able to influence male perpetrators into positive behaviors.

Also in Ghana, the emphasis was to some extent on the rights of victims while in Lagos state it was tailored more on patriarchal norms which reinforced male power and domination making women more vulnerable to re-victimization. Male power and female subordination were usually enforced during mediation by the Nigeria police. While it did not break their marriages, victims indicated the abuse did not stop. This could be as a result of cultural difference.

Another outstanding difference in the strategic operations of DOVVSU and FSU was the use of civilians for mediations in the police station by FSU. The Family support unit allowed the use of religious leaders, traditional rulers and family to lead mediations in the police station to resolve domestic violence. In DOVVSU however, only the police commander or the superintendent in charge of the unit was allowed to mediate on cases. The study discovered that the use of civilians to mediate on cases brought varied approaches to resolving the crises and proved more successful, cultural friendly compared to the exclusive use of police officers in Ghana. It also enhanced family understanding of domestic violence and police-community relations. However, when civilians mediated, the process was sometimes endangered by the enforcing of cultural and religious norms. Again,

victims were sometimes compelled to accept the opinion of the mediator out of respect for which may contradict their wishes. A major reason underlining this variation between FSU and DOVVSU the law backing DOVVSU did not allow civilian inclusion. The law was also western based. Funding was also western based while many of the facilities in the FSU and police stations in Lagos were funded by the community. Therefore, the FSU had community engagement and influence on its activities. Thus he who plays the piper calls for the tune.

The study also found some variations in mediation between the Ghana Police Service and the Nigeria Police Force. Mediation by FSU aimed to resolve conflict and reconcile parties. In Ghana however, mediation focused more on deliberations to determine the severity of the case and the type of intervention or action that will be needed to solve the criminal aspect of the case. Mediation, therefore, centred on the criminal aspect of the abuse. A police officer noted:

police don't deal with civil matters of misunderstanding. It's not in our jurisdiction. We are not permitted by law. We deal with only the criminal aspect of the case but we can give advice to families to solve the problem. (Police Officer, Ghana).

The use of *Invisible Arrest* is another strategy employed by DOVVSU officials which the FSU and Gender Unit did not practice. It was used by DOVVSU mainly to instil fear in perpetrators and prevent impunity. It takes a different dimension from the regular arrest where perpetrators are handcuffed by police officers or detained in cells. With *Invisible Arrest*, perpetrators were only quarantined in the DOVVSU offices for a period of about five hours without movement and only released upon signing of a bail bond by a third party. The study revealed that it reduced the family hatred, separation, and conflict between victim and perpetrator/family that often comes with the traditional arrest and detention. It was also successful in minimizing the reoccurrence of abuse and also in economic abuse cases.

The findings of the study also revealed variation in the invitation of perpetrators by DOVVSU and FSU. While invitations from DOVVSU were sealed in envelopes and

handed privately to perpetrators, the invitation from FSU was openly displayed and pasted on perpetrator's house. The private invitation letters used by DOVVSU preserved confidentiality and limited the stigmatization and shamefulness that the society associated with victims who reported domestic abuse to the police. DOVVSU also relied on community leaders and assemblymen to deliver invitation letters but in Lagos, only police officers were allowed to deliver invitation letters.

The study also discovered that DOVVSU was autonomous in its operations but the FSU operated under the authority of the Divisional Police Officers (DPOs) or the commissioner of police. While DOVVSU operated independently, the work of FSU and Gender Unit were subjected to the approval of the DPOs or the Police Commissioners. The study found that the lack of autonomy of the FSU affected its efficiency and the success of its operations. The data revealed that because DPOs and the Commissioners were untrained on Domestic violence, their final decisions of DV cases sometimes affected its optimal success. There was a conflict of operational philosophy between the FSU personnel and the DPO. While the FSU focused more on family welfare and were quite liberal with victims, PDOs were more autocratic in taking decisions and actions on domestic violence. The latter usually prevailed because respect and obedience to authority was a core principle in policing.

In Ghana, payment of maintenance fee for victims was made at the police stations to ensure perpetrators abided by the agreement made during mediations. In Lagos however, perpetrators were just asked to maintain victims without making any arrangement to ensure perpetrators obeyed the orders. Many victims interviewed said perpetrators defaulted in the payment terms. However, one disadvantage of the DOVVSU strategy was the fact that victims were compelled to give part of the money to police officers in appreciation of police efforts.

The study also found that interventions in Ghana were more western influenced than Lagos state. In Ghana, the staunch belief in abortion rights by DOVVSU personnel is a clear indicator of western influence. It was also discovered that training for DOVVSU personnel and a good number of facilities in DOVVSU including refrigerators, fans, were sponsored

by western donors such as the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), United Kingdom Aid (UKAID), United States Aid (USAID) among others. These trainings emphasised western ideologies which manifested in police operations. The FSU however was more culturally driven in its roles. Their work was characterised by belief and enforcement of patriarchal values and norms which represented the dominant Nigeria culture. Unlike DOVVSU, facilities in the FSU were funded by the communities they served. This study therefore concluded that police work on DV were also influenced by the philosophies and culture of agencies sponsoring the police.

Another difference between the police intervention strategies in Ghana and Lagos State is the procedure and duration of prosecution of sexual violence. The study discovered that prosecutions of rape and defilement cases in Lagos State were subjected to the scrutiny and approval of the Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP) before the actual commencement of trial. The duration of scrutiny was not less than one year. This was because sexual violence was considered a capital offence. In Ghana however, the procedure was without the involvement of the Attorney General's Department and the duration of the trial was a maximum 3 months. The gender courts in Ghana were established to offer a speedy trial of domestic violence cases.

Comparative analysis of both institutions revealed the FSU personnel were more trained than DOVVSU personnel which enhanced the support services given to victims.

#### **4.4 Masculinity in the police and its impact on police interventions in domestic violence**

The fourth research objective interrogated how the masculine culture of the police affected their work on domestic violence. The study found elements of masculinity to include crime, training, use of force, emphasis of punishment, less recognition for male victims and feminisation of domestic violence as the major themes derived from the data analysis.

##### **4.4.1 Masculinisation of crime**

Policing, Niland (1998) contends emerged out of military background and is considered among the most masculinised jobs worldwide. Right from the conception of policing in the early nineteenth century (Niland, 1998), it has and continues to be a male dominated job. At the same time, the functions that police perform are also strongly associated with the masculinity. The police are expected to protect the citizens of the country; deal with crime, criminals and unlawfulness; carry guns; wear uniforms and maintain order in society. According to Martin (1999: 115), the “association of catching criminals with danger and bravery is what marks police as men’s work”. Potgieter, (2012) and Niland (1996) reveals a masculinised occupation usually demands physical strength and entails danger while a feminised job requires little or no psychical strength, more emotionally inclined and tender.

Although contemporary policing is recognising the necessity of feminine traits for successful policing, masculinity continues to take a pivotal pre-eminence in police occupation. Leach (1994:36) defines masculinity as a “gender identity constructed socially, historically and politically or the cultural interpretation of maleness, learnt through participation in society and its institutions”. Masculinity, therefore, entails the traits and attributes that are culturally associated with being a man. Bem (1974) lists the attributes of masculinity to include assertiveness, power, forcefulness, aggression, physical strength, energy and willingness to take risk. Unlike sex, masculinity is socially constructed and relative to time, culture and geographical settings. Potgieter (2012) has also noted that



masculinity as a social construct reveals and reinforces gender systems where men dominate and women submit. Masculinisation of police occupation was therefore established on patriarchal beliefs that men go for war and offer protection while women are only good for household related occupations (Alemika and Agugua, 2001, and Idowu, 2016). The study discovered that the masculinization of police influenced how police viewed crime. Crime, in general, was given a masculine figure which consequently manifested in the epistemological rationale for policing. Crime was visualized to hold a masculine figure of strength, vigor, toughness, courageous and insensitive. Thus in order to commit a crime, one needed to be strong, assertive and brave which are all considered masculine attributes. The training content for police personnel was masculine in nature. According to police personnel interviewed, the training aimed to eliminate the civilian attributes and instill in new recruits the masculine attribute of vigor, perseverance, strength, discipline, toughness, courage and assertiveness. A police officer recounted:

The training comprise parade, fatigue like body building, jungle training, early morning rising, lecture, and handling of gun handling of gun. It is meant to toughen you so that you can do the job. (Police, Lagos)

Another police officer corroborated:

When you are not in the police, you are a civilian, at training they make you feel it's not good being a civilian. So when you are there, they train you to delete that civilian life from your mind. Strict time to eat so you can be disciplined, parade, jungle training, body building to make you strong. After that it changes our thinking faculty. (Police. Ghana)

The illustration above exposes the masculinised training given to police personnel and the rationale was the need for masculine attributes to fight crime. This has been reinforced by Westmarland, (2001) who observes that policing necessitates the masculine attributes such as assertiveness, physical strength, and force for efficient fight against crime. This is in line with the argument of feminist such as Daly and Chesney (1998) that the entire study of crime and the criminal justice system is built on male experiences and understandings of the society to the neglect of female experiences.

Thus subsequently, the study found the recruitment of more men and fewer women as a clear consequence of the masculinisation of crime. The percentage of female police officers in both Ghana Police Service and the Nigeria Police Force is minute compared to male police officers. Available statistics in 2018 revealed that women only amounted to 26% of the total number police officers in Ghana (Daily Graphic, 2018) while in Nigeria the percentage of policewomen was 10% in 2003 (Idowu, 2016). A significant reason for women's lower recruitment was based on patriarchy which contested police occupation being traditionally for men and unsuitable for women. Agugua and Alemika (2001) argue that the main reasons for the lesser representation of women in the Nigeria Police Force were based on patriarchal gender roles where women are considered weak and unfit for policing. Brown and Heidensohn, (2000) however contend that the presence of women in the police was envisaged as a threat to the solitary power of men as women would be accorded same powers. Until 1955, women in Nigeria were prohibited from joining the Nigeria Police Force (Idowu, 2016) after its formation in 1861 by the British Colonial government under Captain John Glover (Leha, 2013). In similar vein, Aning (2006) reveals that Ghanaian women were only allowed to join the police in 1952 (122 years after its establishment in 1831). This proves the contestations of feminist theory that patriarchy is the root of women's subjugation in society. Feminist scholars such as Dobash and Dobash (1979), Stark and Flitcraft (1996) argue that the etiology of male dominance is hinged on patriarchal structure of the society that is built on male superiority, female subordination, sex stereotypes roles and expectations including occupations.

This study also discovered that because crime had a masculine figure, perpetrators were consequently assumed to be men. This emerged from the absence of female cells in most police stations chosen for the study. In Ghana, only 2 ( Accra regional headquarters and Takoradi Central Police Station) out of the 5 police stations chosen for the study had female cells, while in Nigeria only 3 (Isokoko, illupeju, and Lagos State Police Command) had female cells. However, all the police stations had male cells. This indicates the masculine attribute given to the perpetrators of crime. There was a general consensus among the police officers interviewed in both countries that men were usually the perpetrators of crime especially domestic violence. Victims were on the other hand considered to be soft,

fragile, helpless, vulnerable and helpless which are feminine attributes. Almost all the police officers interviewed contended that “women are the vulnerables in society” and ‘most victimised’. This has been supported by Young (2011) who also discovered in her study that police considered men to be more apt to commit crime because men have been socialized to be violent. Hatty (2000) also contends that in modern societies, men are more likely to cause more harm than women are.

Also, the visual materials in the police stations used for education and sensitisation of the public validated the masculine attributes given to crime and feminisations of victims. The posters and flyers generally depicted women as victims with men seen as perpetrators. Although domestic violence affects both women and men, boys and girls, women and girls were usually displayed as victims in these posters and billboards. The following pictures elude the fact.



Fig. 3. Poster on domestic violence in DOVVSU Sekondi, Photograph taken by Researcher (January, 2018)





**Fig. 4. A poster on domestic violence in FSU Isokoko, Photograph taken by Researcher (April,2018)**

The above pictures reinforced the gender stereotype associated with crime perpetrators and victims.

#### **4.4.2 Feminization of domestic violence**

Another critical theme that emerged out of the data was the feminisation of domestic violence. The study discovered that domestic violence was given a feminine figure, almost synonymous to women. The socially constructed imagery of the feminine gender as soft, fragile, tender, helpless and weak fitted into the classical attribute of the disadvantaged victim. Consequently, the domestic violence units in the two police organisations were feminised and viewed as a place for women. The billboard of DOVVSU below reinforced the feminisation of the domestic violence unit.



**Fig. 5. A billboard of DOVVSU Sekondi, Photograph taken by Photograph (February, 2018)**

Also following statements from victims, police officers and even perpetrators attested to this fact:

I know that WAJU (now DOVVSU) is there for we the women. Because the government knows that we women are suffering that is why he set us WAJU, so that if your husband is beating you or not looking after the children, when you bring him here they will help you. (Victim, Ghana)

Here we deal mostly with women. because it's the women who are usually the victims, so more or less our work is about women. (Police officer, Ghana)

The nature of our job here is purposely for women. so we are specialists in investigating sexual offences and protecting women. This is the reason why the FSU was set up. That is why we are all women, a man cannot work here because the job is about women. (Police, FSU)

The result of the study is in line with the Mogstad et al (2016) qualitative study on policing domestic violence in South Africa. The researchers found that the South African police held the same attitude towards abuse and victimhood as society. Domestic violence was thus viewed by police as affecting women because of the socially constructed ideology of domestic violence victimhood.

Westmarland (2001) contends that police institutions practice gender stereotypes and segregate women in their operations. The feminisation of domestic violence led to the deployment of more female officers to work in both DOVVSU offices in Ghana (although policemen also worked there). This was based on the premises that since domestic violence affected women, the ideal people to work in DV units were policewomen. Hence their gender was the basis for the role and not their ability. Aning (2006) revealed that women were recruited into the Ghana police purposely to deal with juvenile delinquency and women related offences. In Lagos State, all police officers working in FSU were women while the Gender officer had only 1 male officer out of 6 female officers. Data from key informants and police revealed the feminisation of the DV units hindered most men who



experienced domestic violence to seek help for fear of being stigmatised. A key informant noted:

You see the place is such that it's the domain of women. In fact, it takes a courageous man to go to the DOVVSU, the moment people see you there they will start laughing at you. So that is why most men don't want to go there. (Key Informant, Ghana)

This was corroborated by a police officer who also emphasized:

You see men are very proud and they don't want to be seen as weak. Because this place is generally seen to be for women they (men) don't want to come. (Police, Lagos)

The study found that although police institutions were masculinised, their epistemological rational for policing domestic violence in this regard was somehow based on feminist perspective. Feminist view domestic violence as mainly the misuse of power by men, who believe they have the right to control women through emotional and physical violence (Seelay and Planket 2002). Thus, like feminists, the police believed domestic violence was primarily male violence to women. This therefore creates a philosophical irony. How can a patriarchal and masculinized institution embrace feminist epistemologies rather than opposing it? Does it mean feminist also hold patriarchal ideologies which they are to reject? This answer to this critical question could be traced to the effect of bartered women movement in 1970s on the criminal justice system. One major achievement of feminist movement was influencing the criminal justice system into accepting domestic violence as criminaloffence to women where personal was political and the private public (Hall, 2015).

The masculinisation of the police impacted on the seriousness attached to the DV units by the police institutions in the two countries under study. DOVVSU and FSU were considered the feminine aspect of police work. As a masculinised institution, the police institutions consequently did not prioritize the domestic violence units in its work or administration because it was not considered "real police work". Waddington (1999) maintains that police institutions consider crime fighting to be the very heart of policing. Preference and more attention were given more masculine units such as the Special Anti-

Robbery Squad (SARS), Counter Terrorism Units, Arms and Ammunitions Unit, Highway Patrol Units among others. One argument of feminist theory is that male domination and power is not only inherent in physical strength but also in institutions and structures (Bograd, 1988). During an interview with a police officer in Accra, she noted: *As for us they don't even count us as part of police work. They call us NGOs.*

Another police officer in Lagos State noted:

Although the police administration know our work is important, they really don't care about us. In fact is like we don't even exist. No support from the police administration.

Consequently, masculine units were first considered by the police authorities during the allocation of resources. During personal observations at the police station, the researcher observed that the Highway Patrol Unit of Ilupeju police station had several vehicles and these were often parked by the roadsides with several police officers sleeping in the vehicles while the FSU had no vehicle for its use. In the same vein, the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) in Sekondi had several vehicles while the DOVVSU regional headquarters in Sekond had none. This is inconformity with the findings of Young's study on gender and policing in the United Kingdom in 2011 which also revealed that domestic violence units were devalued mainly because it was seen as a place for women and work for women.

The study also discovered that the police institutions did not give much priority to DV offences by police officers as compared to other offences such as robbery, theft and other misconducts. During an interview with a police officer in DOVVSU, she revealed:

I am currently working on a case where a police officer is the perpetrator. I submitted the docket to the headquarters for approval several months ago, up till now I have not heard from them.

Again, The Police Regulations Act (main law guiding the police institutions) of both Ghana Police Service and Nigeria Police Force do not mention DV as offences neither do they stipulate sanctions for offending police personnel. However, the two Police Acts recognise absenteeism and lateness to duty as grievous offences and punishment for them is dismissal. In an interview with police officer in Lagos on the punishment for perpetrators of DV, she said:

When we get a case where a police officer is the perpetrator, we send the report of our investigation to PROVOST (disciplinary unit of the police) and they will determine the punishment for the police officer. Sic. the punishment is usually fatigue.

The above illustration therefore depicts that lateness was considered more harmful and accorded a severer punishment than DV.

#### **4.4.3 Male victims**

Although this study focused on female victims of domestic violence, a striking theme that emerged from the analysis of the data was male victims and it is considered germane for the critical analysis of how masculinisation of the police affects domestic violence interventions.

Domestic violence against men has been a critical debate by feminist scholars who strongly believe that men are always the perpetrators because of the socio cultural factors that have subjugated women in most societies and also the biological makeup of men which grant them an upper hand in inter-gender experiences of violence. Feminist theorists such as Dobash and Dobash (1979), and Walker (1979) have argued that domestic violence springs from the male oppression of women which results from patriarchy whereby men are the primary perpetrators of violence and women the primary victims. Critical to this is the

societal imagery and expectation of a real man as strong with masculine characteristics of energetic, always in control, successful and powerful making men's victimisation by women sound almost impossible. Dutton (2006) contends that numerous societies were built on a patriarchal belief system where hegemonic masculinity which encouraged hierarchy, dominance and aggression were valued. These beliefs, DeFrancisco et al. (2014) believe could result in societal failure to admit or accept female perpetrated violence. The police, as a masculine institution established on patriarchal ideologies, hold similar views of men's experience of domestic violence.

The study found that interventions for male victims were not a priority of both DOVVSU and FSU. It was almost assumed that male victims were non-existent. In response to the question on the work of DOVVSU and FSU, almost all the 30 police officers interviewed declared they deal with the vulnerable in the society, and these were the women and children. None of the police officers made a spontaneous proclamation about dealing with male victims until specific questions about male victims were asked. This indicated the non-existence of male victims in the sub-consciousness of police personnel. However, during personal observations in the police stations, male victims were discovered to be seeking police assistance. Men's experience of domestic violence in this study refutes the argument of feminist theory that domestic violence against women is usually one way-male violence against women. The study discovered that the number of male victims who reported abuse were very minimal compared with women. During the 12 months observations in the 10 police stations, only 8 male victims reported abuse out of about 500 cases reported by women. 6 in Ghana and 2 in Lagos State.

This study corroborates a study by Mogstad et al (2016) in Cape Town who also discovered that male victims often did not report abuse to the police. However, a good number of men sought police counsel but made no formal complaints. Although the total number is comparatively small, the number of male victims who sought police assistance in Ghana was more than twice the number of male victims who reported abuse to police in Lagos State. This could be as a result of the heavily patriarchal nature of the Nigerian society as compared to the Ghanaian culture which is less patriarchal.

The trend of cases reported by male victims in southern Ghana was predominantly psychological (wives refusing to cook which usually had a background of sexual denial), infidelity of wives, child neglect, custody and assault by family members with husband battering being the least. In Lagos State, the forms of abuse reported were harmful physical assault by wives and infidelity.

This study discovered that a major reason why male victims usually did not seek police interventions was as a result of fear of societal stigmatization for male victims of domestic violence. There was general consensus among all the police officers interviewed that a good number of male victims were experiencing domestic violence but did not report because of their ego and societal stigma for male victims. Hence many male victims suffered in silence. The following illustration by a police officer and key informant attest to the fact.

Generally, the society beliefs that men are strong and women are weak. so if you are a man and you say a woman has beaten you, hmmm, people will laugh at you. They will say 'how can you say a woman has beaten you?', they will laugh at you. (laughing). But the truth is that many men are being abused but they can't come out. They want to be seen as strong. They don't want to compromise their social status. (Key Informant, Ghana)

We are aware that many men also suffer domestic violence, but they don't want to come here (police station) because they are afraid people will laugh at them. (Police, Lagos)

The societal imagery of an ideal man is a tough, bold and strong man and a man's domestic experience of violence is therefore considered a symbol of weakness, and is stigmatised. Therefore, many men chose to rather suffer in silence to maintain the status quo than to face societal stigmatisation. This study therefore reveals the impact of patriarchy and masculinity. Thus, patriarchy does not only subjugate women but also subjugates men who are unable to meet the patriarchal demands and expectations of an ideal man. Reid (2008) argue that most abused men are ashamed to come out because society expects men to be

tough and in control. This has been supported by Mogstad et al (2016), who found in their qualitative study on domestic violence that the cultural values of who a 'real man' was had a strong influence on men's attitude. Their study concluded that men therefore hid their experiences of abuse in order not to be considered weak or 'controlled by women'. In a similar vein, the results of the British Crime Survey (2004 -2005, 2008 – 2009) revealed that men accounted for about 40% of victims of domestic violence in the years under study but were reluctant to admit being abused by women.

The police officers interviewed in this study also revealed that most male victims who made initial reports to the police did not pursue the case because they did not want their cases to be publicised. A police officer said:

Most of the men when they report they don't come back again. Some too will come and withdraw the case. They usually say they don't want the cases to come into public. They don't want people to hear about it. (Police, Ghana)

This could be as a result of the absence of confidentiality in police stations which made male victims more susceptible to societal stigma and this could be a reason for their unwillingness to report. It was observed that most of the male victims who reported demanded special attention and confidentiality which police personnel did not grant. The following dialogue between the police and a male victim attests to this fact.

Male victim: Please I want to speak with you in private. I have a special thing I want to discuss with you.

Police: This is a public place, so we can't give you a special place. There is nothing secrete here. Sit on the chair and talk, am listening.

Also,the majority of the male victims who reported to the domestic violence units in both Ghana and Lagos State sought to speak with male police officers but the absence of policemen in Lagos State got them stunned and some of them left. The following illustration between a male victim and a police officer in Lagos State reiterates the point.

Male Victim: I want to talk to a policeman, please. Is there any policeman working here that I can talk to. Sic. it is about myself but I want to speak to a man

Female officer: We only have one man but he has gone to court, and he is not coming now. But you can talk to me. We all do the same thing. Here we mostly deal with women that is why.

Male Victim: Sorry I prefer a policeman (he leaves)

The illustration above buttresses the feminization of DV units and also reveals the disadvantages of gender imbalance in service delivery. Police attitude toward male victims was based on patriarchal principles and equally problematic. In response to a male victim who came to the FSU to report his case, a police officer sarcastically asked:

*Aah!ogawetin bring you here? Na your wife beat you?* (laughs uncontrollably). (Ah Sir, what brought you here? Did your wife beat you?)

In response to the question, the victim replied: *God forbid. A woman cannot beat me.*

With the above illustration, it could be inferred that the police unconsciously stigmatized male victims and their initial response could prevent victims from opening up to them to seek help. Mogstad et al (2016) also found in their study that male victims feared police ridicule and humiliation when they sought police response. The British Crime Survey (2004 -2005, 2008 – 2009) also showed that men were also not taken seriously by the British Police.

This study also discovered a bias in the law which deprived male victims of sexual violence police support. The Ghana Criminal Offences Act 1960 (Act 29) defines rape as “the carnal knowledge of a female of sixteen years or above without her consent”. In a similar vein, rape is defined in section 357 of the Nigerian Criminal Code as “unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman or a girl without her consent”. The law also specifically requires penetration and sometimes semen for a rape case to be proved in the court of law. The definition of rape automatically excluded men and the requirement of penetration equally neglected the peculiar features of the male sexual organ which could not be penetrated

during intercourse. This automatically nullified male experience of rape denying male victims access to justice. However, interview with police and some extracts from male victims revealed that many men are also raped.

You see the law itself is bias. For rape, the law says there should be penetration. You see the penis cannot be penetrated so it means men cannot be raped. But many men experience rape. Women are raping men. I have experienced it myself. I was raped by a woman. (Police, Ghana)

Another account by a male victim to a police officer in Ghana corroborated it.

I am a victim of rape. Sic. I had this female friend who wanted to have sex with me. She locked me in a room and begun caressing my penis. She now sat on me and made love to me. So it happens.

The results of the study contradict contestations of scholars such as Orisaremi (2012), Effah-Chukwuma and Asiwaju (2006), Adeyio-Shandoff and Sam (2001) that sexual violence, especially rape and defilement is gender-based and affect only women. Brownmiller's (1975) theory of rape contend that rape is a conscious act of intimidation through which all men retain all women under their authority. This study discovered that men were also victims of sexual violence including rape. Several studies such as the Nigeria Crime Victimization survey (2005 – 2013), Domestic violence in Southwest Nigeria (2011), even excluded men from participating in sexual violence research because it was deemed as a crime against women only. This study, therefore, calls for a more critical insight, debate and studies on sexual violence against men.

In addition, the study found that sexual violence always carried a feminine figure which also reinforced the exclusion of men's experience of sexual violence. All visual posters on sexual violence portrayed women as the only victims. The photographs below corroborated to the fact.





**Fig. 6. Poster on sexual violence in Gender Office, Lagos, Photograph by Researcher (June, 2018)**

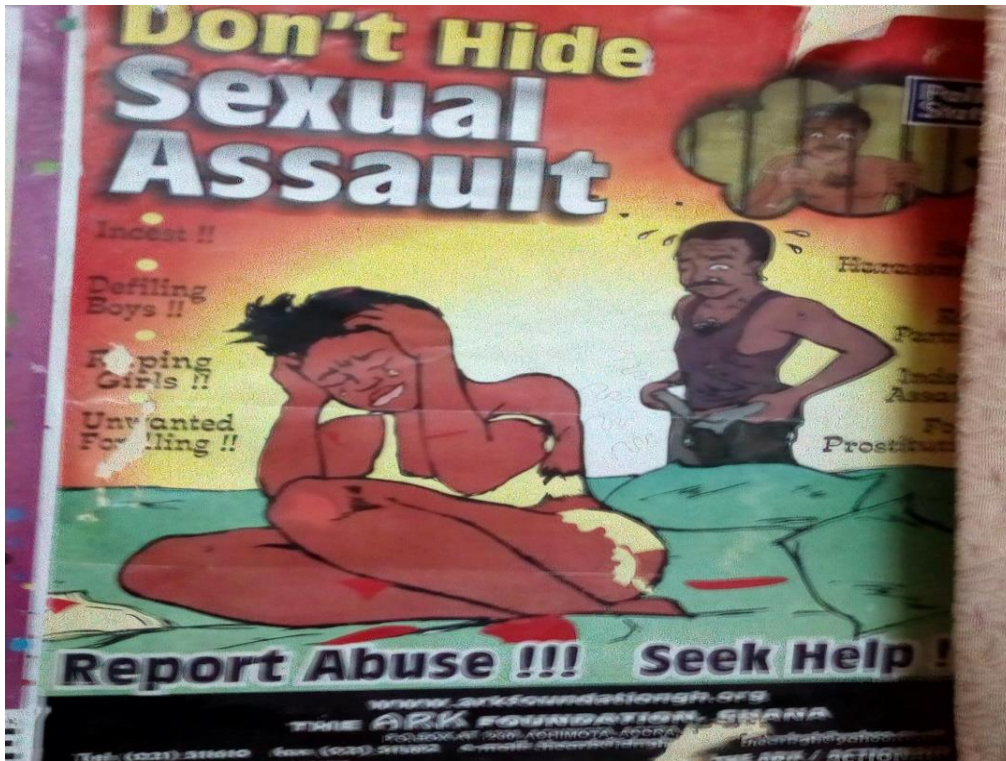


Fig. 7. A poster on sexual violence in DOVVSU Sekondi, Photograph by Researcher (February, 2018)

These findings indicated the lack of/biased services for male victims. This corroborates Perryman and Appleton (2016) study on male victims of domestic abuse which also disclosed that in Britain, there are virtually no support services for male victims of domestic violence other than helplines. Also this contradicts the argument of feminist theory that sexual violence is gender-based. Brownmiller in Bowman, (2003) contends that rape and sexual violence are tools used by men to control women.

#### **4.4.4 Masculinisation of policewomen and feminisation of policemen**

Young (2011) states that the ‘stereotypical view of police officers are men’. Therefore the masculine imagery of an ideal police officer can be said to have a clear linkage on shaping the attitude and behaviour of both policemen and policewomen. Niland (1996) has observed that masculine ideals of hierarchy, toughness, competitiveness, discipline and rule dominate police organisational culture and women and men with such characteristics are favoured while police officers without such attributes are denied promotion. Hence police organisational culture celebrates masculinity. Young (2011) has also revealed that acting strong and authoritative grants police officers a ‘sense of pride’ particularly among their colleagues. It can therefore be argued that acting and being more masculine is a fundamental dream of police officers.

This study found that police officers were masculine in general. However, policewomen were more masculine than male officers working in the domestic violence units of the two police institutions. Female officers observed were more hostile, impatient, insensitive and more aggressive than the policemen working in the domestic violence units. A major reason could be attributed to the masculine training given to the women which had changed their personality and made them see themselves as men. Thus the female police officer has been trained to think, behave, reason and see herself as a man. According to Westmarland (2008), masculine attributes are often acquired during police training. Hemp (2008), in his study on the challenges encountered by female police officers, notes that women negotiated their gender roles through police training in order to be accepted. The second reason could also be connected to the police culture which celebrates masculinity. Rabe-Hemp (2008) discovered that policewomen who did not display masculine personalities of strength and

authority were not respected as police officers, while those who demonstrated more of these masculine attributes were accepted. Niland (1996) also argued that policewomen become more masculine because policeorganisation's operations of rewards and punishments endorse masculine values and policewomen are forced to comply. He also argues that "women have to become more like men to survive and in some instances will survive by adopting strong masculine values".

On the other hand, the policemen interviewed confessed their masculinity had been transformed by the training received on domestic violence and the nature of work in the DV units to be more empathic, humane, patience, sensitive and supportive to women. Some of the policemen confessed being feminists. The following extracts from the data support this fact.

When I was posted here initially I didn't like the job. But after the training I received together with what I saw here, I was touched and I began to develop interest in the job. I now have passion for what am doing and I feel for women. (Policeman, Lagos)

In fact I thank God that I was posted to this unit. If not I would have been in jail by now (sic). The job has taught me how to handle women, respect women and treat women better. (Policeman, Ghana)

You see this is the best unit in the whole police service. When I came here initially I was depressed. I know saw how vulnerable women are and the job has really changed me. Even it has taught me how to relate with my wife better. I can say working in DOVVSU changed my entire attitude in relations with women. (Policeman, Ghana)

Me am working here because I have passion for women. I don't believe women are second class citizens. There is no difference between a man and women. I belief in women

empowerment and should be treated better. Sic. I am a feminist, yes, I consider myself a feminist. (Policeman, Ghana)

This research has demonstrated that masculinity is therefore a social construct which can be acquired and learned. The anatomy of the man did not necessarily make them masculine. Thus an individual can be masculine depending on the culture, environment and socialisation as is the case of female police officers. This is in line with the feminist theory and nurture school of thought which also argues that masculinity is acquired and not biological (Hansen, et al., 2012). Therefore, as a social construct, it can as well be unlearned (Woods 2001, Dobash and Dobash 1979). Training and education on domestic violence was discovered to be a major tool for demasculinisation of police personnel.

The study however discovered that the female police officers in Ghana were more masculine than the female police officers in Nigeria. This could be attributed to the differences in police culture of the two countries. Comparatively, there was some level of gender equality in the Ghana Police Service than the Nigeria Police Force. In Ghana, both male and female police officers are considered and referred to as “men” while in Nigeria women considered women were referred to as women. Similarly, there were several practices of gender inequality in the Nigeria Police Force which did not exist in the Ghana Police Service. The police regulations Act of the Nigeria Police Force (2004) prohibited the recruitment of married women while married men were allowed. Similarly, policewomen who wish to marry were not allowed to marry without the consent of the police commissioner. Again Regulation 127 of the Police Act (2004) stipulates

an unmarried woman police officer who becomes pregnant shall be discharged from the Force and shall not be re-enlisted except with the approval of the IGP”

These inequalities could be traced to behitched on patriarchal beliefs. Feminist scholars such as Dobash and Dobash (1979), and Walker (1979) contend gender inequality and male domination of women is a direct by-product on patriarchy. In this vein the argument of the feminist theory id validated. Feminist theorist such as Woods (2001), Brownmiller (1975) and (Bograd, 1988) view the state and its institutions as very instrumental in the

maintenance of two systems of inequality- class and gender. Agugua and Alemika (2001) in their study on gender relations and discrimination in Nigeria police found that the discriminatory practices against policewomen were products of Nigeria's patriarchal culture which subjugated women and considered them as second class citizens. Holdaway and Parker (1998) also reveal that the wider structures of society flow into policing institutions.

Victims' preference for policewomen to handle their cases was based on the general societal assumption that "a woman was better in handling domestic violence because of the motherly attributes and would understand women better". This also emerges from patriarchal philosophies and societal stereotype that women are more loving, caring, motherly and therefore better in handling cases involving women. Hence a good number of the victims interviewed at the initial stages of intervention preferred police women to handle their cases. The following account by victims attest to the fact.

I prefer a policewoman to handle my case, Sic. Because as a woman she will understand what I am going through and will give me a better support. Women are more sympathetic and motherly. (Victim, Ghana)

You know as a policewoman she will understand me better and feel my pain. Because she is a fellow woman like me. So I prefer a woman to be my IPO (Investigating Police Officer). (Victim Lagos)

However, results of follow up after interventions revealed a lower satisfaction of how policewomen handled cases of domestic violence and a higher preference for policemen.

I initially thought a fellow woman will be sympathetic and supportive. In fact the policewomen worse than the policemen. The policewoman did not even care about me, she just threw me off. The man was even more supportive than the men. (Victim, Lagos)

When I called the policewoman, she was just shouting at me on the phone. Also at the station, she was insulting and rather

blaming me. It was the commander (policeman) who showed me more concern. (Victim, Ghana).

This study therefore found that the presence of female officers did not necessarily guarantee efficient and empathic response as several experts and scholars such as Abioye and Abiri (2012), Effah-Chukwuma and Asiwaju (2006), Alemika and Agugua (2001) contend. As a matter of fact, it could be argued that the presence of more female officers could be detrimental for an effective response to DV. The study has demonstrated that feminism is not based on sex because the men studied were more pro-feminist in their attitude and ideologies than the women. Therefore, the feminist argument that more women in the criminal justice system was key to women's liberation could not be proved in this study as the policewomen suppressed women more than the policemen working in the DOVVSU and Gender Unit. Feminists argue for women's control of the criminal justice system contending that more women in the criminal justice system is imperative for women's liberation (Brownmiller, 1975). The feminist theory did not consider masculinisation of some women as is the case of policewomen studied. This study therefore calls for a critical inquiry and expansion of the feminist theory to take into consideration the facts of masculinised women raised in this study.

The study also revealed policewomen who had experienced domestic violence were more hostile and insensitive to victims than those who had not experienced domestic violence. In a response to a victim, a policewoman said:

When my own happen did I disturb anybody, na me struggle by myself so why are they troubling us. They don't want to struggle, no man go treat you better. I still dey suffer my own.

As illustrated, the policewoman who experienced domestic violence did not seek professional help which could be as a result of the masculine attribute acquired from police training. Thus the women have been trained to be tough, endure and suppress their emotions just as men do. This study found that when DV victims do not receive assistance

and are trained to suppress the trauma, they become more insensitive and resentful instead of empathic and supportive to other victims.

#### **4.4.5 Masculinised operations**

Young (2011:3) notes that “the institution of policing can be examined as a discursive field; the police cultures themselves represent discursive forms, the beliefs, and practices of the institution influence the police officers, and vice versa, the police officers influence the beliefs and practices of the institution.” Thus there is a strong connection between police training and their attitude and these combined are transferred on their operations and work.

The study established that masculinity affected police attitude and the way they handled domestic violence. The major areas identified were hostility and blaming; emphasis on criminality; use of force and punishment; impatience and dominance; corruption and profanity.

#### **4.4.6 Hostility and blaming of victims**

A common attitude of police officers observed was hostility and blaming of victims which were more prevalent in DOVVSU and Gender Office. A good number of police personnel were unfriendly, impatient, unwelcoming, aggressive and intimidating in general which Westmarland (2008) argues emerge as a result of the masculine training giving to police personnel. The study found that these masculine attribute and police occupational culture were adopted in policing domestic violence. Walker (1984) suggests that therapies that do not include a feminist perspective will leave victims/survivors vulnerable to re-victimisation. The hostility and blaming attitude of police officer often terrified victims and made victims accept the blame for their abuse. In addition, police stations were equally an unfriendly environment which was constantly filled with tension. As a result of these, some victims could not open up to police for fear of being punished by the police which sometimes led to the release of perpetrators because the police did not have enough evidence to prosecute perpetrators. The following incidences which occurred during deliberation of sexual violence are germane to this point.



Police officer: Ehe young lady tell us exactly what this man did to you. Go straight to the point.

Victim: (in a tensed voice) He! He used to buy from me. And he was with me. Then when I became pregnant he said I should abort, but I was afraid. So he now forced the medicine on me and locked the door.

Police officer: Is that all? Then there is no case here. At your age, 17 years you can't tell what a man did to you. (Sic) listen (to a family member) I don't think there is any point sending this case to court. We don't have anything to stand on to prosecute the man. She can't even talk here, how will she be able to talk in court.

Family member: (To victim) tell the police what you told us at home. Say everything. Why are you afraid. Say it. (Victim remains silent)

Policeman: I will advise you to just ask the man to compensate your sister and pay her medical bills. You can't win this case.

The following experience of another victim of defilement corroborate the effects of police hostility and blaming.

Police officer: ehe where are you? (Shouting) look at my face. Small girl like you, your mother sent you to school and you chose to go to ayaase school (sexual pleasure school). Akoolabone (bad girl). See your face. Don't come close to me, move back. Akoola bone (bad girl). Tell me what happened so that I will write your statement.(Victim becomes silent)

Police officer: heee! I don't have time for you. Won't you talk?(Victim remains silent)

Policewoman: (shouting) If you will not talk, get out of my face  
(Victim leaves)

The study therefore found that it took the very courageous and daring victims to first report abuses and secondly to pursue their cases for success.

Also, some police officers in DOVVSU were insensitive to victims and mocked them, especially victims of sexual abuse. During the writing of the statement, a policeman satirically said:

Eeeh! Ewaketenamoodimoho (you people were enjoying sex in a hot sunny afternoon). So are you saying you did not enjoy it? Eeeh, moogy moeni die! (You are really enjoying yourself). (Police, Ghana)

Karmen (2007) ,Effah-chukwuma and Asiwaju (2006) have all discovered that police insensitivity to victims of domestic violence is a major problem which leads to under-reporting, health problems, and death.

Police dispositions to the emotional expressions of victims were equally hostile and problematic. Most officers were irritated when victims shed tears during interventions. A police officer reacting to a victim weeping exclaimed:

Madam! keep quiet, you are making noise. We don't cry here. If you want to cry go out and cry. You are making noise. (Police, Ghana)

Stop the crying. This is not the time to cry. Crying will not solve the problem. If you keep crying I will send you out because you are disturbing us. (Police, Lagos)

Victims were therefore obliged to suppress their emotions in a bid to satisfy and persuade police officers to assist them

#### **4.4.7 Emphasis on criminality**

Interventions prioritised the criminal side of to domestic violence with minimal or no regard for the emotional wellbeing of victims which was considered a feminine trait. The complaint procedure which entailed the statement was short and captured only the criminal aspect of victims' experience. Victims were not allowed to pour out their heart and

emotions which Agbitor (2014) contends to be the primary requirement for the recovery process.

#### **4.4.8 Use of punishment and Force**

Bittner (1974: 234) reveals that “the police use force to impose or compel obedience to its own transitory. In similar vein, Junior and Muniz (2006) have also observed that the discretionary power of the police is a direct consequence of this mandate. The preference for punishment and the use of force dominated police operations in dealing with domestic violence. Emphasis was on prosecution, arrest and detention. During interview with police, they noted: *Here we use force. We force them to comply. (Police, Lagos). We will force you. (Police, Ghana)*

Two police Stations (Nsawam and Ketu) had canes to discipline perpetrators and also wayward children.

#### **4.4.9 Impatience and dominance**

The study found that mediations were usually short and police-cantered. In Ghana, the average time for mediation was about 30 minutes per victim while in Nigeria it was about one hour. Police were often impatient and usually police chose how cases should be handled. In response to a question on victims’ choice, a police officer noted:

We choose what should be done, you don’t tell us what we should do. (Police, Ghana)

It is not what they want it is what needs to be done it is what we think you need that is what we give you justice. (Police, DOVVSU)

#### **4.5 Challenges of police interventions in Southern Ghana and Lagos State, Nigeria**

The fifth research objective aimed to identify some of the peculiar challenges of police interventions strategies in Southern Ghana and Lagos State Nigeria. The research discovered that the challenges facing the two Domestic Violence Units in the Ghana Police Service and the Nigeria Police Force were comparatively similar. This is apparently due to the similarities in the historical background of the police organizations in Ghana and Nigeria. Annin (2006) and (Ebai 2012) contend that the culture and practice of police highly influenced by the colonial and political history of a nation. As evident, the two police organisations were all established, trained and operated by the British colonial masters. Thus, the challenges facing the DOVVSU, FSU and Gender were very similar. The study also discovered a few challenges which were quite peculiar to each Domestic Violence unit. The major differences identified were influenced by the different political and administrative practices of the two police organisations after independence which also affected the policing of domestic violence.

##### **4.5.1 Corruption**

Corruption was identified as a major and common challenge militating against effective policing of domestic violence in the two police Units under study. Corruption is defined by the United Nations Programme Against Corruption(2001)as the abuse of power for personal gain. According to Otu (2012), corruption is any act or behaviour (omission or commission) in violation of the legal, ethical and moral rules of public or private offices, and which is aimed at achieving personal gain and which undermine the trust, confidence, integrity, and reverence attached to the occupied position. He stresses that the typology and manifestations of corruption included bribery, extortion, fraud, embezzlement, favouritism,and nepotism. The concept of power and its use or misuse is very imperative in all corrupt practices. In cognisance of the power and authority granted to the police by the state for law enforcement, their operational strategies and the entire policing environment

harbours the practice of corruption. The British colonial masters defined a police officer as a:

A citizen serving the office of a constable, thereby having certain powers and being liable to certain responsibilities. He serves to the sovereign and is a servant of the state exercising original authority (Aning, 2006:3).

Again Otu (2012) argues that “corruption is an unmitigated consequence of a monopolistic tendency to power whereby officials have uncheckable discretions”. The question of ‘who checks the checker’ is apparently a defining requirement for accountable policing. Other scholars like Ebai (2012), have all observed that statutory power and authority bestowed upon the police are often misused to oppress, intimidate and exploit the masses. Corruption was identified to be cultural, ritualistic and acceptable in both police units. As a culture, corruption was a constant and normal practice in which both victims and perpetrators had attributed to the police. Almost all the victims and key informants interviewed mentioned corruption as a normal practice in the two police organisations. This conforms to the findings of the 2009 National Crime Victimization Survey conducted by CLEEN Foundation in Nigeria which also found police to be the most corrupt institution in Nigeria. In similar vein, a study on public perception about the police by the University of Ghana in 2001 found that the Ghana Police Service was perceived to be the most corrupt institution by the people of Ghana (Aning, 2012). This study discovered that the culture of corruption in the police invariably manifested in their operations on domestic violence.

Some police officers in Ghana requested money for food from both victims and perpetrators before attending to them. During an interaction with a perpetrator, a police officer noted, “ehe di kan maame eduane sika, ma emu nnye du” ( first of all, give me money for food, and make it heavy)”. The study found that perpetrators who offered money to police officers were given preferential favour by the police and eluded punishment. The following quotes from victims affirm this claim.

The main problem is corruption, that is why my case was not successful. They collected money from my husband and did the case against me. Even when I told them he had a gun, they didn't do anything to him. They support the person who has money. (Victim, Ghana)

Another victim reiterated:

They don collect my husband statement but me, they never say anything to me. Sebi they suppose to take my statement first. As I show the oga the pictures of my husband's beatings on my bodi and clothes wey e tear, e tell me sayna injection pierce that place. I know sey they collect money from my husband. Because that my husband has money. Because I no get money that is why they deydo that to me. (Victim, Lagos)

Corruption in DOVVSU units manifested in venomous demands for statement writing, police medical forms which ought to be free, arrest, investigations, and prosecution. The following are extracts from interviews from victims which attested their experience of corruption. It was however observed that majority of the victims who experienced corruption were victims who went to the Nsawam police station.

When I came they said I should pay C20 but I had C5(sic). they collected it. Sic. They only gave me a medical form. The money I think it is for the statement they wrote for me at the counter. (Victim, Ghana)

Coming to the police has cost me a lot of money. I even went to borrowed C60 this morning, sic. The police collected C20 for the letter they gave me to give to my husband. (Victim, Ghana).

In Nigeria corruption was observed to be rather intense. It began from the reception through to extortions for phone calls, writing materials, arrest, investigation and prosecution which even included the prosecutors and court officials. The practice of corruption was first experienced by the researcher when police heads questioned 'what is in it for me' (what benefit will I get in terms of money) before an authorization could be granted for the research. Similarly, officers at the counter consistently extorted money from the researcher during the research period either for keeping phones safe or for allowing entry into the DV units (which was meant to be free). During ethnographic observations in the police stations, it was observed that money made from extortions were shared among police officers (including the researcher) and sometimes unequal sharing of the money led to critical

confrontations among the police officers. The following extract from research notes displays the confrontations among police officers over the sharing of money made from extortion.

Police A: What you are saying is wrong, any money we make on any case, we divide and share among ourselves. The person who worked on the case takes the bigger portion. And this is how we have been doing it so why would you say I don't give out the money I make. Eeh why will you say that.? I don't like that attitude. I don't keep anything (sic) stop!

Police B: This should not create a problem, it is what I have observed and it is not good. That is why I complained to Auntie (Officer in Charge of the Unit). That's all

Corruption in Nigeria was extended to the entire prosecution process and involved prosecutors and court officials. During prosecutions, police officers 'performed a ritual' in each unit in the court, by giving out money to these workers to motivate them to either sign, file or act on a document. It was also seen as a way of giving the court officials their own share of the money the police had made on a case. Explaining court procedures and financial demands, a police officer narrated: "*The prosecutor will collect ₦2,000, the court registry collects ₦2000, and 'the black marshal' (prison wardens) collect ₦2000*". (Police, Lagos)

It was however discovered that the official money for filing a case in court to the court registry was ₦200 and that all others were unofficial. All the victims who had been extorted revealed that none of the monies paid to the police in both Ghana and Lagos were receipted. This confirms the unlawful nature of these extortions.

Although the lack of logistics necessitated police reliance on victims for financial support, the study found that the cost or demands were inflated. In Nsawam DOVVSU office in Ghana, for instance, the police charged victims ₦100 for the cost of transport to arrest perpetrators within the same Nsawam town while the regular cab drop in Nsawam township did not cost more than ₦30. The situation was not different in Lagos State. While police charged victims ₦10,000 for cab fare to arrest perpetrators within the community, the

regular cost of cab was not more than 3,000. Similarly, when vehicles going on regular patrol duties were used for arrest, victims were still demanded to pay money as a reward to the police officers. Police assistance were monetised. A police officer explaining the rationale for the demand noted:

You see arresting a perpetrator is dangerous. The life of the police officer making the arrest is in danger, he can be wounded, so in cases where he is injured, he can use the money to treat himself. That is why we charge that. (Police, Ghana)

The above illustration demonstrates that victims are invariably made to pay for police assistance and not for the logistics needed for the job. The question which then comes up is what is the job of the police and why are they paid by the government if not to protect citizens? Contrary to Alemika and Chukwuma (2011) findings that acute lack of logistics and facilities were the main causes of corruption among in the Nigeria Police Force, this study found that the lack of logistics was not necessarily the cause of corruption among the police. Rather, corruption in the police was caused by greed. This is supported by Leite and Weidmann (1999) who also argue that corruption is a by-product of greed. In this vein, Ndiulor (1999) opines that obsession with materialism and affluence are major reasons for corruption.

Victims who were unable to afford the cost of arrest were not granted any consideration and left the police without hope of rescue.

My boyfriend beat me and removed my teeth because I asked him for ₵5 for chop money. When I came to report to the police, they said I should bring ₵100 for them to hire a taxi to arrest him. I don't have. So the police didn't do anything, I have left the case. (Victim, Ghana)

Another victim corroborated:

My husband beat me two times and ceased me from working that is why I came to the police to help me. The officer said I



should bring 10,000 for them to arrest but I don't have, she said I should go and pray for my husband to come by himself if I don't have money. (she cries, and leaves sadly) (Victim, Lagos)

Further findings also revealed that extortion was intentionally used to chase victims away from 'disturbing the police with their personal problem' in both Southern Ghana and Lagos State. A police officer in response to a victim exclaimed:

You and your husband get matter you go come disturb police, everything police, chai police don suffer (when you are your husband have any problem, you will just come and disturb police, every little police, the police are suffering). (Police, Lagos)

During observations in the police stations, it was observed that when police officers were not interested in handling victims case, they demanded huge sums of money to discourage victims from pursuing the case (disturbing them). During observations in DOVVSU, a police officer requested for ₦150 for arrest instead of the normal ₦100 for arrest just to put victim off. Some police officers saw victims quest for assistance as a nuisance. Similarly, another police officer in Nigeria without taking victim's statement demanded ₦10,000 from the victim for arrest in lieu of the fact that the victim was too poor to afford such as amount. This victim left the police station and did return

Compliance to corrupt demands was viewed as a compulsory obligation for victims and their failure to comply sometimes led to police harassments and withdrawal of police support. During the prosecution of sexual violence case in Samuel Illore Magistrate Court in Lagos State, the police officer handling the case withdrew her support for the victim and his family because they could not meet her financial demands. The perpetrator, on the other hand, provided money and he gained the support of the police and was granted bail. At the end of the case, the police officer said:

I really thank God for that magistrate in court 7. He really made everything easy for me by granting this boy bail. He just made everything so easy. In fact, I thank God.

This comment is an expression of achievement. Thus the bail had justified the money collected from the perpetrator. This was reinforced when a perpetrator's family member bought soft drinks for the police. A police officer prayed: "*God will give you favour before the magistrate tomorrow and you will be free ooh.*"

All other police officers shouted: "*Amen! Just like he did for J (name withheld) he'll do for you.*"

These illustrations reveal police support and commitment to perpetrators who gave money to the police. Perpetrators were often willing to meet police demands because it was seen as a shortcut to freedom and success. In view of this Alemika and Chukwuma (2012) opines, a perpetrator who has gone contrary to the law is always willing to meet any demand to prevent punishment.

Further findings revealed that corruption in Ghana was deemed the rights of police and responsibilities of victims. A police officer demanding money from the victim asked:

I'm I the one to call and transport myself to court?, *fa me car akatua ne meduane sika mame. Ye no ntem* (Give me my transportation and feeding money, be fast). (Police, Ghana)

The study also found that bribery and corruption sometimes led to injustice and unsuccessful prosecution. Victims who were unable to meet the financial demands of police were not accorded the dedication and commitment needed for successful prosecutions. In Nigeria, it was observed that the lack of dedication was not only exhibited by the police officer responsible for the case, but also by prosecutors. During an observation of prosecution of a rape case in court, victim's inability to pay for the money to 'grease the palm' of the prosecutor led to a weak defence and perpetrator was granted bail with a condition of only ₦50,000. The perpetrator was shortly released. These diminished victims trust in the police which made the victim to abandon the case. During a follow-up interview, the victim's mother noted:

I am very disappointed in the police. The way the police handled my daughter's case was very bad. Because the boy's family gave her money they released the boy. He is at home now. I will not go to that court again. (Complainant, Lagos)

The result of this study is in line with the findings of the 2011 National Crime Victimization Survey in Nigeria conducted by CLEEN Foundation which also indicated that 51% of domestic violence victims who reported to police were dissatisfied. A major reasons for their dissatisfaction were corruption, police colluding with suspects and police inability to apprehend offenders. Isahakou (2013) also found in his study in Northern Ghana that most victims did not report to police because of police corruption and lack of trust in the police. When police fail to apprehend offenders, it creates impunity making victims more vulnerable to subsequent abuse (Effah-Chukwuma and Asiwaju 2006)

Corruption was sometimes also demanded in kind through sexual demands. One key informant in Lagos revealed how a police officer requested for sexual intercourse from a victim in order to grant her the protection and assistance she needed. The informant noted:

This woman was terribly assaulted and ejected by the husband. She didn't have anywhere to go so she went to report to the police station. When she went they promised her all the support but later in the evening one of the police officers called her and said he is interested in her. He (Police) told her that if she can agree to sleep with him, he will make sure the man is arrested and everything she has lost will be restored. (Informant, Lagos)

The interplay of power dynamics of corruption is vividly depicted in this account. The police who obviously hold much power and authority use this power to exploit the victim who at this state is vulnerable. The result of this study is in line with the report of Project Alert on Violence Against Women title 'No Safe Haven: Reports of Attacks on Women in Nigeria' where some women attested of police requesting for sex in order to assist them (Effah-Chukwuma and Eikhomun, 2009). Similarly, Ojo and Okunola (2012) found in their study on domestic violence in Ikire, Nigeria that 3 women confessed being physically and sexually abused by the police. The police station rather than being a refuge for victims had invariably become a place of terror.

The practice of bribery and corruption had created a silent culture of *importunate financial obligation* which had been registered in the minds of victims. These victims, therefore, gave money to police officers even without police demands and often refused to seek police

assistance in subsequent abuses when they did not have money perform this *financial ritual*. In a follow up interview with a victim, she noted:

The situation never change. But I no fit go to the police like that. At least I am suppose to bring something to give them. That is why I never go (Victim, Lagos)

In Ghana many victims gave police officers some of the money collected as maintenance even without police asking just to appreciate the police. This is what Otu (2012) terms systematic corruptions because it has been socially and culturally accepted as a way of life.

The study, however, discovered corruption was more intense in Lagos State than in Ghana. A major reason which could explain to this difference was that the administrative system and method employed by the Nigeria Police Force bred and endorsed corruption. Unlike the Ghana Police Service which has a centralised system of administration (activities and funding of police activities are provided by the Police headquarters for unit administration), police units in Nigeria including the domestic violence units had been tasked by the Nigeria Police Force with the responsibility of generating their own internal income for the administration of the unit. During the interview, a police officer in Lagos noted:

There is no funding for the Nigeria police if a governor dashes a car yes. But each unit in the police is supposed to generate money to fund its own work and logistics. (Police Officer, Nigeria)

This in a way endorsed corrupt practices as the only way that could be done was the commercialization of their services which was supposed to be free. Critical to that was the fact that there were no oversight monitoring of these activities and no demand for accountability. Otu (2012) contends ‘uncheckable discretion’ as exhibited in police administration in Nigeria is a fundamental ingredient that breeds corruption. This has been supported by Klitgaard, Maclean-Abaroa and Paris (2002) that the driving force for corruption are monopoly of power, discretion and lack of accountability.

Also the difference in the level of corruption between the two police organisations could be an effect of the social, cultural and political system in which the two police organisations

operation. Ebai (2012) argues that police attitude and corruption is a manifestation of the political and socio-cultural conditions of society. Thus police is a reflection of the social, political and cultural status of a state. The 2018 Transparency International global index on corruption ranked Nigeria 148<sup>th</sup> least corrupt country out of 180 countries while Ghana was ranked 84<sup>th</sup> (Transparency International, 2018). Thus the Nigeria Police Force is having its own share of the disease of corruption which has crippled Nigeria. In this vein, Otu (2012) has contended that “there is a corrupt culture which has offered a congenial milieu to many Nigerians to be easily socialised into the offending behaviour of corruption. It is in this vein that Aning (2006) argues that the police culture cannot be transformed “without a change in the broader social and political context”. Again Ebai (2012) observes that the Nigeria police force has been brutally affected by colonialism and the years of military rule. In contrast to Nigeria, Ghana has had a relatively stable democracy which had invariably transformed its institutions including the police. Mustapha (2013) has contended that Ghana’s democratic governance has democratised the police while the long rule of military dictatorship in Nigeria has militarised the police. A militarised police he argues connotes more power and authority which leads to exploitation and abuse of human right.

Also, the poor remuneration and condition of service for the officers in the Nigeria Police Force could explain the higher corruption of police in Nigeria. This has been supported by Alemika and Chukwuma (2012) who have argued that poor remuneration and the conditions under which Nigeria police work also fuel corruption. The study discovered that a police inspector’s salary in Ghana was twice the salary of inspectors in Nigeria. While a Nigerian inspector earned about ₦70,000, a Ghanaian inspector earned about ₵1,700 which is an equivalent of ₦140,000 earned. This was complicated by the delays in salary payment. At the time of research (April 2018), police officers in Lagos were yet to be paid February salaries while their counterparts in Ghana had already received April salaries. The study however found that poor remuneration was sometimes not the reason for police corruption. This was because the Ghana Police still engaged in corrupt practices after the John Evans Atta Mills administration increased their salaries by almost 100% under the Single Spine Salary Structure in 2009. Corruption in this case was caused by mere greed.

#### 4.5.2 Lack of logistics

“If people get the leaders they choose, then one can argue that Ghana has gotten the Police Service it deserves because external pressure, conditions and circumstances count” (Aning, 2006:24). The lack of logistics, resources, and facilities was identified as another principal challenge facing the domestic violence units in both Southern Ghana and Lagos State which limited its ability to provide a timely and effective response to domestic violence. That study found that the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit and Family Support Unit including the Gender Office were all severely under resourced in terms of logistics, facilities and human capacity. Adequate logistics needed for effective functioning of the unit such as vehicles for rescue and arrest, computers, printers, photocopiers, invitation letters, stationaries, cameras for evidential gathering among others were lacking in the units studied. Out of the 10 police stations selected for the study, only the Accra Regional DOVVSU headquarters and the Isokoko FSU had official vehicles. Similarly, only three – Ilupeju FSU, Accra Regional DOOVSU Headquarters and Nsawam DOVVSU desk- out of the 10 police stations had computers to work. In Lagos State, statement forms were not regularly supplied to the FSU and Gender Units. The following quotes from police officers attest to the fact.

But the problem is that we don't have the equipment's needed for the job so you suffer more and under a lot of pressure to get things done. Even when we want to type our reports we have to go to the public internet cafe to do that which is not safe regarding the nature our work. (Police, Ghana)

This was corroborated by another police officer who said:

The main challenge we have is logistics. We don't have what we can use for the job. Also we have a problem with car. We don't have, photocopy machine, even the statement sheets we don't have so we buy them with our own money. The same thing with case file. The stress of the work is too much, sometimes we close by 11pm . When we have cases we travel sometimes to another state without any allowance. (Police, Nigeria)

Similarly, the facilities that were needed for the support of victims were not available. Such facilities as shelters for women, funds to support victims, counselling facilities - a conducive and spacious environment that ensures confidentiality and privacy in dealing

with DV- were all not present. The offices were usually small with several police officers merged into one office. In Lagos State, several police officers did not even have office desks to use. In an interview with a police officer, she disclosed:

Even the environment itself is not conducive for counselling. It needs to be private. But here see the crowd, while counselling, others will be listening to the story and it doesn't create confidentiality and security so they don't open up well. Some cases are not meant for others to hear. Also, some people cry and we need privacy for them to cry, so we can console them. The facilities are not there. (Police, Ghana)

Another police reaffirmed:

We don't even have a car let alone funding. We don't receive any funding from the government let alone the police. For where. With the nature of the job, we are supposed to have a special office for counselling, have money to support victims and care for them. But the facilities are not there. They just created the office without facilities to work with. (Police, Lagos)

These greatly affected the quality of service delivery and quality investigation on DV cases. The study revealed that the lack of adequate logistics slowed down investigations, hampered its quality and thereby affected the success of cases sent for prosecution. In an interview with a police officer, he noted:

Sometimes we lose cases in court because we don't have the logistics to carry out an effective investigation. You need a good investigation report to win a case in court. For instance we need a car to visit the crime scene, collect evidential materials, car to make arrest, we need to type all documents to court except statement, make photocopies etc. if the victim doesn't have money to sponsor us to, we can't do a good investigation and that can make us lose the case. (Police, Ghana)

It frustrates police personnel and kills their morale for the job. The following quotes are extracts from the data to support the effects of lack of logistics and facilities.

As for me this job is a stepping stone so I take my time very well. It's not like before. Most of the time when they call me from my house I won't come. (Police, Ghana)

Another police complimented:

The nature of the job has made many people to leave this unit to another place. Because they can't continue spending their small money on cases. J4A (Justice for All) trained about 7 officers, they have all left. It's left with only the two of us. Even I am planning to leave this office because I can't continue to use my money to run the office and work on cases. I have been working here for 4years now. I have worked in the police for 27years. (Police, Lagos)

Similarly police officers revealed that the lack of logistics and adequate facilities affected their health because they always worked under pressure. During an interview with a police officer in Ghana, he noted that the pressure of the work led to the death of one of their colleagues.

You see this job eh if you don't take your time, (sic). There was a colleague here by name A (name withheld). He worked with pleasure. He will investigate, at every point he is here. He worked so hard so that he will be recommended and indeed they were considering recommending him. But now where is he? He died! He died of cardiac arrest. The pressure of the work killed him. (Police, Ghana)

It also made the police to depend heavily on victims for logistical support which were sometimes viewed as corruption by the mass. Some of the police officers interviewed also revealed they sometimes used their personal money from their meagre salaries to fund investigations and this sometimes hampered their willingness to handle cases. The following quotes demonstrate the fact.

People hear on the radio that when they come to DOVVSU they don't have to pay anything but because of lack of logistics, we have to take some money from them for photocopies, etc, for instance I don't have a computer so I print my documents outside so we sometimes collect money from the victims to do so when we don't have money. Also we use our own money. They will now say 'mebaa police foɔ no ho no, omogyee me sika, (when I came to the police they collected money from me). But we don't have the logistics and the work must be done. (Police, Ghana)

In most cases the victim doesn't have money, so we have to use our own money to prosecute. So if this case it's a burden.



Like now I have received a call from policeman and a social worker that a child is being abused in Mushin. They have called 3 times but I don't want to go. Who will pay for my transport. "with this case now there is no how it will not go to court, which will be my cost. (Police, Lagos)

Similarly, a lost child sent to the FSU in Ketu was returned because the police officer complained the last time such a case came, she spent ₦7,000 in order to return the child. Aning (2006) identified the lack of telecommunication and transportation as a critical problems facing the Ghana Police. Similarly, Otu (2012) discovered the Nigeria Police Force to be heavily under-resourced.

#### **4.5.3 Lack of training on domestic violence**

Further findings revealed the lack of adequate training on DV for police officers to be great impediments to effective DV response. All police respondents from DOVVSU confessed they received no training before being posted to the DOVVSU units to work. Some personnel had worked for 8 years without any training on DV. Similarly, the majority of the personnel working in the gender unit were not adequately trained. The study discovered that untrained personnel were more unprofessional, hostile and unsympathetic to victims. Victims who were handled by untrained personnel were more dissatisfied and traumatized and refused to seek police help again.

#### **4.5.4 Lack of funding to support DV victims**

The lack of funding for DV victims was a major challenge that both militated against effective interventions and increased the vulnerability of victims. The domestic violence fund which was a requirement under the Domestic Violence law had not been set up 11 years after the passage of the law. In Lagos state, although the Lagos state government was making effort in supporting victims with shelter, free access to legal counsel and free medical care, the FSU and Gender Office were highly disempowered.

As a result, the police were incapacitated to provide the needed support for victims because financial empowerment emerged as the primary need of most victims. During an interview with a police officer, he emphasized:

These victims, there is a mentality that when they come, DOVVSU will support them. Their husbands are not taking care of them, they need support and when they get that financial support they will come again. But even though the victim support is part of our work, we can't do it because there is no funds for it. If there is a problem and you want support you won't get it here. They always get discouraged.(Police, Ghana)

This is consistent with the empowerment theory which argues the lack of institutional empowerment leads to victim disempowerment ( Goodman and Epstein 2008).

#### **4.5.5 Evidential priority**

The response procedure and operation mode was found to be problematic. The mechanisms based on visible evidential materials which were hard to prove in certain forms of violence. For example, emotional and psychological violence were difficult to prove empirically. It is purely experiential which is also valid. Similarly, some physical violence did not necessarily leave a visible of the body, and in such cases, they were treated as trivial, while the visible ones were given optimum attention. A police officer revealed:

You see the way the system work is also a problem. It is purely based on evidence so even if you really experienced abuse and you don't have any evidence to prove you can have justice. Even in the court if you don't have your evidence and answer questions appropriately you can loose the case. (Police, Ghana)

It was observed in the police stations that eloquent and smart perpetrators took advantage of this and escaped punishment.

#### **4.5.6 Short duration for investigation**

The study also found the short duration allocated for investigation for investigation affected the quality of investigation and success of DV cases in court. Police officers in Ghana and Nigeria had only 48 hours to complete investigation and prosecute perpetrators. During observations, it was observed that the time was too short for police to visit the crime scene, gather evidential materials, interview witnesses and conclude a viable investigation report

strong enough to win a case. The process was usually hastened and police often ended parading perpetrators to court without carrying out a proper investigations.

This sometimes affected the trial process and the success of the case. During the trial of a rape case in the Gender Court in Sekondi, the presiding judge just ignored police officers inability to visit the crime scene and granted bail to the perpetrator. Although the judge was afraid the perpetrator could elope, she was forced to grant bail because the law must be followed without regard to police inadequacies.

Also in Lagos State, a police officer could not give concrete testimonies in the court to defend a victim because she did not visit the crime scene and was subjected to ridicule by the defence lawyer in the Sexual Offences and Domestic Violence Court in Ikeja.

#### **4.5.7 Lack of interest in the police Job**

Another striking challenge that emerged from the data was the lack of police interest in the job and how it influenced their job performance. Some of the police personnel interviewed noted that they did not like the police job but enlisted into the police because of lack of job opportunities. The following extracts from the transcript of interviews with the police buttress the point.

I never wanted to be a police officer. I did not like the job. I want to be a nurse. But because I was not able to get into the law school and there was not job, so I decided to enter into police.(Police, Ghana)

I didn't want to be a police, lailai (never) but circumstances, no job. When there was no choice for me, so police was the only available choices for me so I decided to join the police. (Police, Lagos)

While some confessed they had developed an interest in the job by time, a few of them still disliked what they were doing. This affected their job performance, attitude to victims and the success of cases. It was observed that police officers who joined the police out of necessity for a job lacked commitment and constantly harassed victims. They often slept on duty, were lazy, often resumed late to work and often intimidated victims.

#### **4.5.8 Peculiar challenges in Ghana**

Among the peculiar challenges of policing domestic violence in Ghana discovered in the study were the political interferences, corruption of judges, ineffectiveness of police hotlines and weaknesses of the police system of administration and operations.

Some police officers attested that they were sometimes intimidated by political leaders to drop cases of domestic violence because they were directly or indirectly involved.

A police officer revealed:

Sometimes we get interferences from outside. Especially the politicians and top top people. They will call the police headquarters and headquarters will call and order us to stop the case. Omo be taa taa wo saa (they will frustrate you). Now if am not allowed to do the right thing, it's a form of corruption. Yet our job is at stake. The powers that be deter us. And when we are doing the right thing we are seen as the devils. (Police, Ghana)

This clearly demonstrates how the very law makers of domestic violence violated and put the law in mockery. It is little wonder their commitment to its full implementation through the provision of facilities and the DV fund is far from reach.

Unlawful decisions by judges were also cited as a major challenge facing DOVVSU.

Sometimes things are not done rightly. For instance, when investigator does what he/she is supposed to do and the case gets up there (court), they hinder its success. For instance, when a case is referred to me, I am not the person with the final say in the case, so I may do whatever is expected of me but when it reaches the head or the top, they may not take a decision that is suitable. (Police, Ghana)

The custodians of the law like legislature were equally involved in suppressing the full functionality of the law. This leads to averted justice and increased impunity.

Many armed robbers are walking the streets free. We caught them and sent them to court but at the end of the day, they were freed. (Police, Ghana)

Similarly, carelessness of prosecutors impeded successful prosecution. A police officer recounting his experienced revealed:

I sent a case to the prosecutor but the prosecutor didn't know that a rape case cannot be sent to the magistrate court so the rape case was thrown out of court. Meaning that the case was discharged and the perpetrator was set free, the victim didn't get justice. When victims don't get justice it makes them lose trust in us. And I feel bad. When you are sending a case to court, it's the court who decides so you can't make assumptions. But when the facts and evidence prove that an offence was committed but justice is not served I feel disappointed. We lose trust in the system. (DOVVSU Sekondi, 07/02/2018)

The study also discovered police hotlines were not functioning and this impeded rescue services for victims who needed emergency rescue. Unfortunately, the police did not see anything wrong with this and felt justified. She noted "We had emergency lines before but most people called us to insult us so we cut it". (DOVSSU, Accra: 20/07/2017)

The study also discovered the police administration and operations of the Ghana police Service to be problematic. The police system was strict and purely based on superiority and obedience to superior orders. The system, therefore, did not allow police officers to engage in any other duty outside official duty even though their engagement was helpful in the fight against domestic violence. The following account by a police officer attested to it.

I started educating women by going on my friend's show on radio to talk about women's right. But at the end of the day I looked at the fact that it's not official. So unless I get a consent from the leaders, I will have to stop and they won't give that consent except you are a PRO (Public Relations Officer). As the PR for this DOVVSU you can do that willingly, but if you are not the PR you can't. so I stopped. (DOVVSU, Sekondi, 07/02/2018)

#### **4.5.9 Peculiar challenges in Nigeria**

The study identified five main challenges with policing domestic violence in Lagos State. These were regular transfer of trained officers, unrealistic approaches, discrepancies and mistrust for medical report, superwoman and old wives tales, and patriarchal policing.

The data in Lagos state discovered the transfer of trained police personnel from the DV units negatively affected the quality of service and efficiency of the unit. A good number of police personnel trained in Ilupeju, Isokoko , and gender office were transferred to work in

other units and were often replaced by untrained personnel who resumed with the traditional method of policing to handling domestic violence. Consequently, it diminished the impact of the efforts and work of the British council in transforming the FSU into a more responsive unit. The following account from police officers demonstrated the point.

Many of the DPOs who were trained have been transferred. The new ones don't have any training on domestic violence and is a problem. The same thing with those in FSU. Although some run away, some also were transferred to other states. (Police, Lagos)

We were more than this they trained and posted here ooh. They are no more working here. They are working in other units.(Police, Lagos)

Discrepancies and mistrust for the medical reports issued by the MIRABEL Center (the only accepted medical centre for sexual violence examination) as a major challenge in the study. There was a consensus among police officers interviewed about their doubts on the truthfulness of the medical report and contended it was purely based on the account of victims and not the outcome of the medical examination. As a result, they believed most innocent victims were being imprisoned.

The account below attested to the point.

They report based on sympathy and what the victims say and not what they find after the medical examination. Even when the hymen is untampered and intact, they will base their judgement on what victim and complainant say. I have taken my time to go through the case files and have observed all reports are based on victim experience. They wrote normal on all the report, yet at the end they will state that it (vagina) was penetrated. (Gender Unit, 9/06/2018)

The study also found police interventions to be unrealistic in solving social problems in the society. The prosecution of offenders sometimes created more problems than solving victims' problems. The following account by a complainant affirmed it.

The boy (25 years of age) is my junior sister's boyfriend. He impregnated her and when I called him he denied the pregnancy. I begged him and warned him but he didn't accept that is why I brought him to the police station. Sic. That they will make him accept the pregnancy. Now he has accepted it but the police are saying because my sister is 16 years they are sending the boy to jail. Sic. now who will take care of my sister and the baby? (Complainant, Lagos)

The above account apparently indicated the limitations of police response and the weakness of the law in advancing societal progress and empowering the very victims the law was made for.

The study observed a good number of policewomen working in FSU carried *old wives' tales* and *superwoman* ideologies of perfectionism and idealism who saw domestic violence as a product of women's negative attitude and lack of submission to men. They consequently blamed women but never castigated men for their actions. These were demonstrated in expressions such as 'he is your oga (master)', 'they are our heads and you don't have to challenge him', 'you must obey him', "as a man he has every right to correct you". During mediations the police reinforced these ideologies by pleading with the abusers to exercise leniency towards the victims because the Lagos State Law protected women. It was however observed that the female officers working in the DV units were more patriarchal than the male officer working there. While women often emphasized patriarchal norms, the male officer challenged these patriarchal beliefs and firmly supported women's rights. This was as a result of the training received and the influence of the job. During an interview, the male police officer noted:

As a man when I started it was initially difficult for me. But though the training the work I developed interest. I decided to commit and dedicate myself. (Police Officer, Lagos)

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Summary

The study was designed to critically interrogate police intervention strategies in domestic violence and examine how the identified strategies meet the needs of female victims of domestic violence. Some of the critical themes which emerged out of the data analysis were the various mechanisms employed by police personnel in dealing with domestic violence, the implications of police interventions on both victims and perpetrators, victims met and unmet needs, differences and similarities in the operational strategies of Ghana Police Service and Nigeria Police Force, the impediments to effective policing of domestic violence and how patriarchy and masculinity affects domestic violence interventions in the two study areas.

The traditional and regular policing methods were found to have been transferred into policing domestic violence in the two police institutions. These were arrest and detention, investigation, prosecution, punishment and caution letter. Other culturally sensitive methods which were not typical of policing such as mediation were adopted by the domestic violence units and proved to be more successful because it was cultural friendly. Public sensitization was found to be the most effective in reducing the prevalence of domestic violence but was less utilized by police because of a lack of funds. Religion was a key factor in victims' perception of abuse and willingness to accept the prosecution of offenders. Also, the study established that victims' whose financial dependency on perpetrators were high were less likely to seek prosecution.

The needs of domestic violence victims were diverse and also intertwined. Psycho-social need was the dominant need expressed by all victims because all forms of domestic violence affected victims psychologically. Unfortunately, police interventions emphasized the criminal aspect of domestic violence to the neglect of victims' psychosocial need. As a result, victims' psychosocial needs were the most unmet. The major reason why victims sought police assistance was to seek an end to the abuse but a good number of victims experienced re-victimization first by the police and subsequently by their abusers after



reporting to the police, thereby creating a cycle of violence.. The study also found that police officers indirectly perpetrated domestic violence by condoning abusive behaviours, stigmatizing and blaming victims.

The FSU and DOVVSU had the same mandate handling domestic violence. The common similarities identified were the methodological approach and procedures in responding to domestic violence. The major differences between the two police organisations were to a large extent a reflection of the cultural, political and historical terrain served by each police institution. Hence police disposition and operations in DV in Lagos were more patriarchal than Ghana. Unlike DOVVSU which used both policewomen and men, only women police officers were allowed to work in FSU, Lagos.

Masculinized police culture manifested in the epistemological rationale for policing and masculinization of crime which consequently affected the training given to police officers. The study found that these masculinized training and policing was transferred into policing domestic violence. This manifested in the use of force, impatience, dominance, emphasis on punishment and feminization of domestic violence. The masculinization of police, which was based on patriarchal stereotypes did not only affected women but also had negative consequences on men who experienced domestic violence. Male victims experienced stigmatization and were given less consideration.

Corruption was a major impediment to victims' access to police services and also successful domestic violence interventions. Corruption was cultural and ritualistic in nature. Several victims were denied police services because of their inability to perform this *ritual*. Bribery and corruption impoverished victims and increased their vulnerability to subsequent abuses. Other impediments were lack of interest in the policing job, lack of facilities and funding.

## 5.2 Conclusions

The following deductions resulted from the study;

This study was able to establish that holding perpetrators accountable and condemning domestic abuse through punishment changed offenders' behavior and deterred future offenders. For example, in line with the deterrence theory, as argued by Beccaria (1963) that people will abstain from offending when punished, the use arrest, prosecution and of minor punishments by police proved effective in deterring both the abuser and potential abusers. The study, however, found that the willingness to commit a crime does not always come by choice, but are sometimes influenced by the social, cultural and economic conditions people find themselves in, making punishment less effective in deterring perpetrators of economic abuse.

In support of the empowerment theory as explained by Solomon (1977), the study established that resource and financial powerlessness increases victims' vulnerability to domestic violence. As demonstrated in the study, poverty and financial dependence on men were major causes of domestic violence. The empowerment theory postulates that domestic violence results from abuser's power over the victim and that reducing the powerlessness of victims and helping them to exert greater power will curtail the abuse. Indeed, the stress of victims' rights and psychological empowerment, as well as financial empowerment, greatly minimized domestic violence. However the study found that in some cases access to power caused domestic violence. This study partially proved that powerlessness does not always cause abuse but sometimes women's possession of financial or socio-cultural power could cause domestic violence. Some victims were abused because their financial independence threatened the dominance or authority of their partners. Also Ghanaian women's powers under the matrilineal system of inheritance influenced the powerless (Akan men) to abuse them as a way of revenge.

Finally, the study is in agreement with the contestations of the feminist theory that women's subjugation is rooted in patriarchal structure of the society. Dobash and Dobash (1979) argue that such patriarchal beliefs included sex stereotyped roles. The study found police culture to be heavily patriarchal and masculinised which limited women's

recruitment and police commitment to domestic violence. Also, the argument of the feminist that the entire study and conceptualisation of crime was based on the experiences of men and their understandings of society to the neglect of women was clearly demonstrated in this study. Crime was therefore visualised as masculine with DV perpetrators generally stereotyped as men. The experience of male victims of domestic violence in this study, however, contradicted the postulations of feminist theory that men were the perpetrators and women were the victims in domestic violence.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher makes the following recommendations for effective and improved domestic violence interventions by the Ghana Police Service and Nigeria Police Force.

The Ghana and Nigeria police should restructure the police training and curriculum to include gender sensitivity and effective handling of domestic violence in the police colleges. Training on domestic violence should be made a compulsory part of the police training. This will improve police skills in handling domestic violence as every police personnel would have been trained on policing domestic violence. The police institutions should also organise adequate in-service training for all police personnel working in the domestic violence units periodically. In addition, police personnel must be adequately trained before being posted to work in domestic violence units.

The Nigeria and Ghana government, as well as the Police institutions, should provide funding for the police units dealing with domestic violence. DOVVSU and FSU should be provided with adequate logistics such as computers, vehicles, conducive offices and facilities to enhance their work. The government should provide more shelters to serve as an interim refuge for victims whose lives are being threatened by their abusers. The study also recommends the use of clinical psychologists and counsellors as primary caregivers in all domestic violence units. Considering the fact that all the victims of domestic violence suffered psychological abuse, clinical services and counselling should be a primary and basic service for all victims.

Furthermore, the Ghana government should implement the legislative instrument and provide the special funds for victims mandated by the DV law.

Police personnel should be adequately trained on customer care and responsive services for victims who seek assistance. Police should be enlightened on the negative effects of hostility and blaming of victims.

Also police interventions should be proactive in nature. The police units should organise more sensitisation programmes to educate the public on domestic violence, the rights of women and also emphasise the rights of victims, what victims should expect upon reports, the various forms of interventions and services available to them, and what victims should do upon police misconduct. In addition, the police should take threats and sexual harassment cases seriously to avoid its occurrence. The Ghana police should activate the hotlines for victims to help rescue victims in danger.

In addition, the police institutions should strengthen the internal and external control mechanisms of police personnel. Thus the study recommends strong monitoring of police work by oversight bodies and police misconducts should be adequately punished. There should also be sanctions for police perpetrators of DV.

With great consideration to the African culture and the dynamic nature of domestic violence, this study recommends that the police team on DV interventions should encompass a broad range of specialists and personnel. Thus a comprehensive approach which includes social workers, counsellors, educationists, traditional and community leaders, religious leaders and lawyers should join the police team in responding to DV. These actors are necessary for complementing the work of police and providing holistic interventions that will meet the needs of victims and be more sustainable.

The study also recommends the constant monitoring of victims wellbeing after police interventions to break the cycle of abuse. This is because most victims often experienced re-victimization and the lack of monitoring of victims by the police made them ignorant of

the effects of their operations and approaches making them less likely to re-strategize. It will also spark hope in victims who experience re-victimization to seek for help.

Again, more policemen should be deployed to work in the domestic violence units in Lagos State to create gender balance for effective response.

The Nigeria police service should extend the Family Support Unit to all police stations in the country to ensure easy accessibility by victims.

The study also recommends that the Nigeria Police Force should eliminate gender biases and discrimination against police women in the Police Regulations Act. A gender friendly police is a step towards a less patriarchal and masculine policing.

In addition, the domestic violence units should be situated outside the police stations to minimise the fear in victims and societal stigma attached to victims who report abuse.

Finally the study recommends that the domestic violence units should emphasise their services and support for male victims to encourage them to seek police assistance.

#### **5.4 Contribution to knowledge**

The primary aim of the researcher in this study was to compare mechanisms employed by police in dealing with domestic violence and examine how the approaches used met the needs of female victims in Southern Ghana and Lagos State Nigeria. This study adds to literature on domestic violence and intervention practices of police institutions. The major contribution to knowledge achieved by this study is the ascertainment of the effectiveness of police intervention strategies in working for Ghanaian and Nigerian women and determined the compliance of interventions to theory.

Furthermore, the study also tested the potency of the deterrence theory as preventing abuse among Nigerians and Ghanaians and established that unlike previous studies that proved the use of arrest as effective in stopping abuse, this study found that though arrest was effective in stopping the particular abuse, it exposed victims to more psychological and economic abuse. Thus generating new knowledge on the effectiveness of arrest in the African context.

This study has also expanded literature on how culture influences police interventions in domestic violence through an analysis of the differences in the police approaches in the two different cultural settings.

Also, this research opened a divergent perspective to the argument of the feminist theory on the ill effects of patriarchy in contributing to women's experience of domestic violence by expanding the knowledge on the experiences of women in matrilineal societies and how their culturally powerful status equally caused their experience of abuse.

The study has opened a new vista of opportunity for future scholars who would want to consider studying police interventions in domestic violence against men has been opened by this study.

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## **Appendix I: Interview Questions for Victims**

1. Can you please, describe the abuse you suffered or what case did you reported to the police?
2. How did Domestic Violence affect you? Or what problems did it cause for you?
3. Why did you report or not previous abuse to the police, please, explain ?
4. What kind of services did the police give you, would you say the Police are?
5. Please, tell me all that happened immediately you went to the police to report your case?
6. How was your case handled? Please, explain the procedure used in handling your case (from statement taken to the end of case)
7. Did the Police render any help to help you overcome the effects of the abuse? Please, explain how?
8. If you are to choose between policeman and police woman to handle your case, whom will you choose, and why?
9. Did the police meet your expectation? Please, explain how they met or did not meet your expectation?
10. Were you allowed to choose how your case should be handled or the police chose for you?
11. Did you like their choice? Please explain why?
12. Do you think the services provided by the police empowered you to prevent similar abuse from happening in the future? Why did you say so?
13. Do you think your case was successfully handled by police? How satisfied are you: Why did you say so?
14. Are you satisfied with how your case was handled? Why do you say so?
15. How much do you trust the police in handling Domestic Violence case?
16. Will you recommend a friend in such a similar situation to seek help from police? Why?
17. From your experience and opinion, Do you think female officers are better in handling Domestic Violence cases? Why do you say so?
18. Did you receive any material resource from police? financial, medical, counseling, shelter? If yes in what form



19. Did the police provide any training program for your family members and also for the person who abused you? How did they do it?
20. Did you feel police empathised with you? Why do you say so?
21. Describe how you were initially treated when you reported your case?
22. Are there challenges that hampered the success of your case? Explain them. How did it affect you?
23. What do you think are the main problems facing the police in responding to domestic violence effectively?
24. How has it affected the success of your case?
25. How can these challenges be solved?
26. What is your opinion on the way police handle Domestic Violence cases?
27. What do you like or dislike about the police in handling Domestic Violence cases?

## **Appendix II: Interview Guide for Police Officers**



1. Could you please describe the various services you provide for female victims of domestic violence who come here to report their cases of abuse?
2. In general, how do you work to prevent and respond to domestic violence in general?
3. Could you tell and explain the various strategies adopted by the Ghana Police Service to curb domestic violence?
4. Could you please explain how?
5. Which strategy do you consider most effective? Why?
6. What other activities does this Unit carry out in respect to responding to DV
7. Can you describe on a normal day the practices and activities that go on in this Unit?
8. Why do you think police is needed to curb domestic violence?
9. What is your personal opinion on domestic violence against women? Why do you think women are victimized? What causes DV.
10. Did you receive any training on handling DV? How were you trained and what exactly were you trained on? Is it part of the police training or a special course? Are all officers in this unit trained?
11. Could you describe what you consider a successful intervention for victims?
12. What do you think are the peculiar needs of female victims?
13. How do you work to meet these needs?
14. Could you explain how you work to meet the following needs of victims (Material and financial needs/ empowerment, reduce powerlessness, reduce recurrence of abuse,
15. Do you engage in any collaboration? How and why do you do so and with whom?
16. Please describe the general procedure for handling DV.
17. What is the position of the police authority regarding domestic violence against women?
18. What are some of the challenges you face in effectively responding to DV in this Unit?

19. Could you explain why these challenges exist?
20. How has it affected your work in providing effective intervention for female victims of domestic violence
21. How can these challenges be surmounted?
22. What other things would you need for successful intervention?
23. What other factors affect the quality of DOVVSU/FSU service delivery?

### **Appendix III: Interview questions for key Informants**

1. Please could you describe your experience or engagement with the police in the course of your work.
2. Please explain why you think police are needed in the fight against domestic violence.
3. From your experience and interaction with victims, why do victims seek police assistance and what do they hope to get from police.
4. Do you think their hopes and needs are met by the police? Explain why
5. What's your opinion on how or the way cases are handled by the police.
6. Do you think police interventions has helped in reducing domestic violence? Please explain why you think so.
7. What kind of challenges do victims encounter at the police station?
8. How does it affect them (victims)?
9. In your opinion or experience would you say female police officers are better in handling domestic violence than male officers? Why do you say so?
10. What are the main challenges facing the police as an institution with respect to responding to domestic violence?
11. What can be done to solve these challenges?
12. What should the police do more to ensure effective response for victims of domestic violence?
13. Please state any other opinion or perception on police intervention in domestic violence.

## Appendix 1V: Institutional Letter of Support



**UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IBADAN, NIGERIA**  
**INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES**

Dr. O. I. Pogoson  
Ag. Director  
Tel: 0705 644 8444 | E-mail: ibafstud@gmail.com

Secretary  
Tel: 0705 645 6444  
E-mail: secretarviasuis@gmail.com

15<sup>th</sup> June 2017

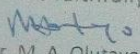
To Whom It May Concern

**DOCTORAL RESEARCH SUPPORT FOR MS. ABENA ASEFUABA YALLEY**

Ms. Yalley is a doctoral student of the Institute of African Studies in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. As part of her academic programme, she is conducting a research on domestic violence in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in Gender Studies.

The purpose of this research is entirely for academic purpose and I will be most grateful if you could render her all the assistance needed for the success of her research.

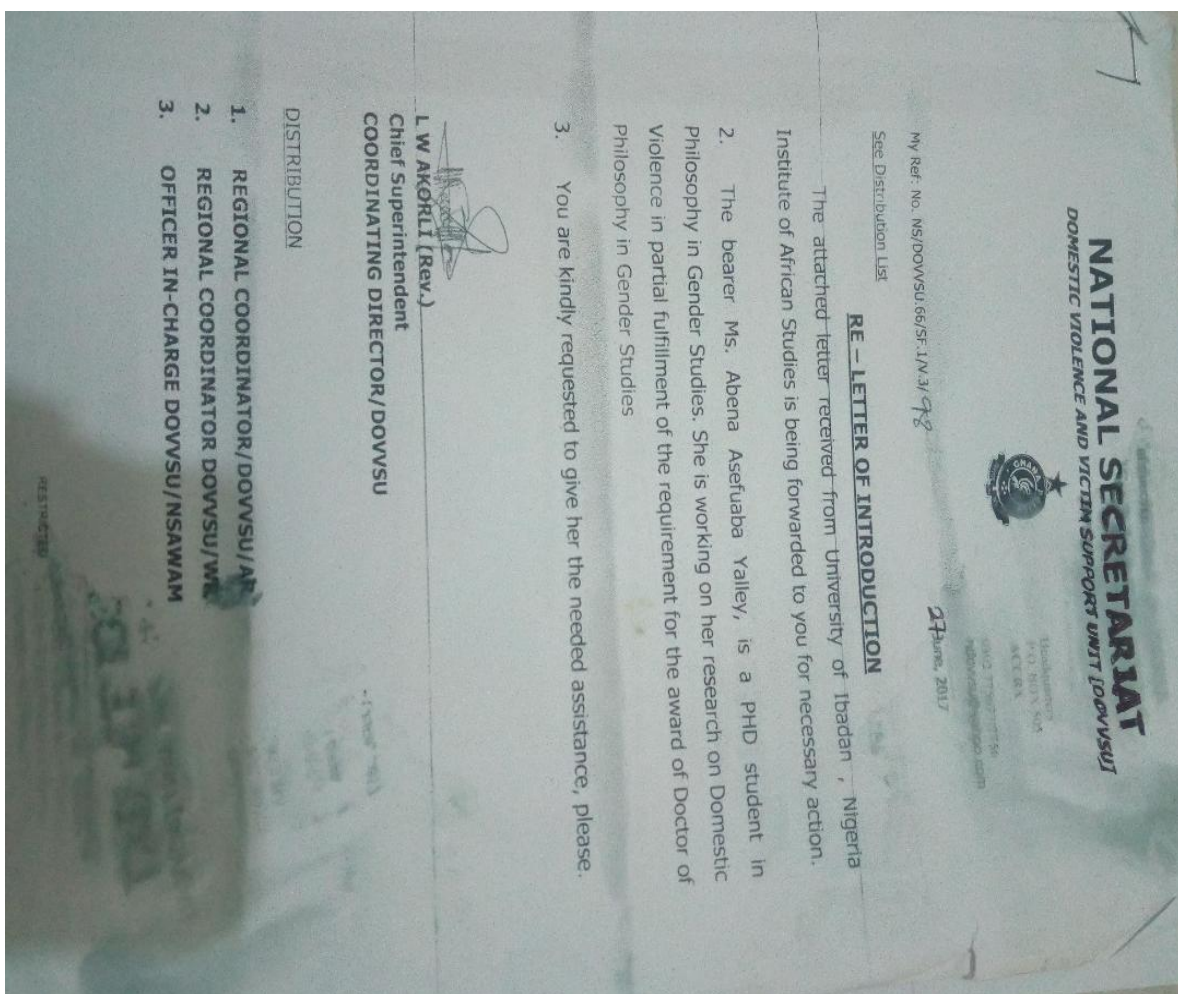
Thank you very much for the anticipated assistance.

Yours faithfully  
  
Dr. M. A. Olutayo  
Supervisor (+234 812 945 2707)

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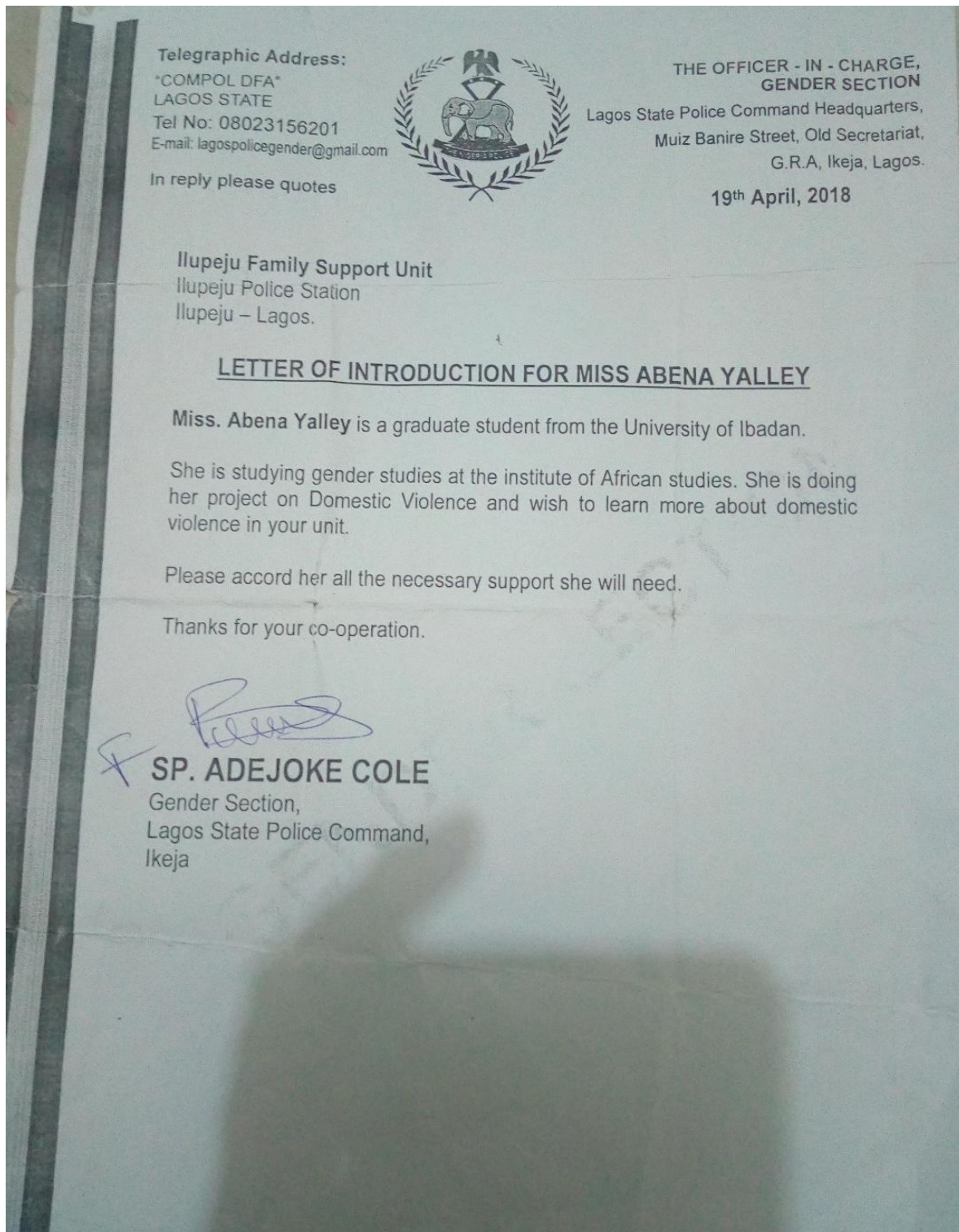
• Anthropology • African History • African Music • African Law • African Visual Arts • Gender Studies  
• Ethnomedicine, Religion and Belief Systems • Cultural and Media Studies • Diaspora and Transnational Studies  
• Arabic Documentation Centre • International Centre for African Music and Dance  
• Museum of the Institute • Traditional Medicine Documentation and Research Centre

**Appendix V: Letter of authorisation by Ghana Police Service**





**Appendix VI: Letter of authorisation by Nigeria Police Force**





Researcher with an Interviewee, Nigeria Police Officer





Researcher in DOVVSU Western Regional Headquarters, Sekondi, Ghana



Picture showing successful unification of families by FSU, Isokoko



Researcher in Sexual Offences and Domestic violence court in Ikeja, Lagos