

PREFACE

Domestic violence is possibly a relatively new field of study; its causes are still not fully understood. Many researchers have posited that domestic violence is caused by a combination of social and individual factors. Most characterize it as a pattern of behaviour that is learned and chosen by the abuser and encouraged or discouraged by the abuser's social environment. This study depicts the causes leading to domestic violence, taking a small sample and tries to find out the extent of correlation of the factors with domestic violence.

One of the impediments of the study was the shyness of the victims to put forward their reactions openly. It sometimes appeared that the violence was tolerated, or even rewarded. However, it appeared that all the men who are exposed to social attitude that devolve women do not commit acts of violence against their domestic partners. Opportunities for domestic violence occur in environments where it is tolerated. Abusers who believe that they will "get way with" violence against their domestic partners will have no motivation to change their behaviour, particularly if they have learnt that violence is an effective tool for asserting control in their intimate relationships. Indeed, social tolerance for domestic violence reinforces the lessons of violence by allowing abusers to succeed in asserting control over their victims without suffering negative consequences.

It appeared from the instant survey and study that domestic violence occurs in all social groups without regard to the parties' racial ethnic, economic, religious, educational, professional or social backgrounds. It is not restricted to the ranks of the impoverished, unemployed or substance dependent. Because, it often occurs within the privacy of the home, domestic violence may be well hidden from

outside observers, including family members who are not living in the household where the abuse occurs. Indeed, many abusers appear to be devoted to their families and have positive characteristics that mark the injuries they inflict.

Although abusive behaviour occurs because the chooses it many people (including abusers) erroneously characterize domestic violence as out of control behaviour caused by circumstances commonly present in violent households, such as alcohol use, stress, unresolved anger or problems inherent in the relationship. While these factors often accompany domestic abuse and may intensify its severity, they do not cause it.

The instant study also confirms that an abuser's primary motivation is to maintain control over the victim. Abusers are master manipulators who employ physical assault in conjunction with other tactics to achieve their objective. Abusers' tactics have been compared to the brain washing tactics used against prisoners of war, which include isolation, threats, occasional indulgences, demonstrations of omnipotence, degradation and enforcement of trivial demands – abusers may employ similar patterns of physical, sexual, financial and emotional correction to control their victims.

It revealed on study that emotional abuse mostly consists of isolating the victim from family and friends, making degrading remarks to the victim, blaming the victim for the abuser, constantly monitoring the victim's activities, training, playing 'mind games', or threatening suicide if the victim leaves the relationship. An abuse may maintain control in a relationship by limiting the victim's access to the couple's money or by preventing the victim from getting or keeping a job. This interference with the victims economic independence makes financial

abuse a major factor in preventing victims from leaving abusive relationships.

It further revealed that if a female victim believes that the male partner must be the dominated figure in a household, she might regard his abuse as an acceptable extension of his dominance. Under this family concept, she may believe that her efforts to escape are inappropriate or that others in her community will banish her if she attempts to leave.

Interrogation with the victims made it clear that the victims know their abusers better than anyone else and they choose strategies to minimise injury based on past success. Although the strategies above may be ineffective to end the abuse in the long term, many domestic violence victims are so involved in a day-to-day struggle to pressure their own lives and the lives of their children that they cannot focus on the long range effects of the violence or on the possibility of forging a new life apart from the abuse.

To cope with problems related to domestic violence, hence, in recent times, a family centred approach in social work is viewed as significant. This is the systems perspective approach adopted by professional social workers to help an individual bring about a balance between his or her internal or external world, enabling the understanding of the dysfunctions in families and steering the adoptive process by which harmonious family relationships are preserved and promoted. With this in view the Family Counselling Centres(F.C.Cs) were set-up. The counselling services provided by the FCCS have proved to be a boon for families which were in danger for breaking up. In several cases, the family has been greatly strengthened by being able to see problems in a new perspective.