# VID

**Combatting Domestic Violence: The (Baptist/Methodist) churches as instruments of empowerment in the Jamaican context.**

Arlene Antoinette Henry

VID Specialized University

Oslo

Master's Thesis

Master's Degree in Diakonia and Christian Social Practice

Word count: 30,047

May 15, 2019

**Abstract**

Described as a global emergency, the issue of domestic violence (DV) is a stark reality that affects millions of women, men and children. In recent years one can almost say that use of the word domestic violence has been replaced by the term intimate partner violence (IPV), the most prevalent form of domestic violence. This study aims to answer the question "What are the (Baptist and Methodist) churches in Jamaica doing to help combat domestic violence and empower victims?". The research explores the nature and impacts of IPV, looking at those who provide care and support and more importantly an overview of how the churches can be instruments in combatting DV and empowering victims.

This thesis through the lenses of three theories – ecclesiology and gender, power and social dominance, as well as empowerment through diakonia, explores how churches are responding to victims of DV/IPV in the Jamaican context. The research was conducted with the help of interviews with 16 participants; Baptist and Methodist church leaders, leaders of organisations related to DV, as well as victims. During the study a very pertinent and relevant resource was shared which proved to be very insightful in this research. That of the Women's Health Survey 2016, which was published in June 2018, which surveys IPV in Jamaica.

The study revealed that while the Baptist and Methodist churches acknowledge the demeaning nature of DV/IPV as well as its prevalence and severity in Jamaica, with one in four women being affected, they also confess to not adequately fulfilling their ecclesiological role in providing care and support to victims. Through the voices of leaders of organisations and victims the research revealed that churches in Jamaica are not visible in the task of combatting DV/IPV. The participants highlighted several initiatives and programmes they believed could aid the church in their response. During the research it was revealed that the combat of DV might be best served if civil society and the church partner in combatting DV by stemming IPV.

Key words: domestic violence, intimate partner violence, church, gender, empowerment, Jamaica.

**Acknowledgements**

The successful completion of this two years master's programme, and particularly this master's thesis would not have been possible without the love, prayers and support of many who partnered with me. Firstly, I say thanks to Almighty God; the One who never leaves us nor forsakes us; the God of surprises.

Words are not enough to express my appreciation to my immediate and extended family for their continued encouragement, love and unwavering support. In particular my parents Viris and Leonard, my brother Maurice and my sister Beverly who were there for me every step of the way.

Thirdly, I am so blessed with wonderful friends who though millions of miles away never ceased to remind me that they were walking with me, especially when the journey felt so demanding and lonely.

I am so humbled by those who invested in me financially as they allowed God to use them to bless me. Thanks in particular; to my donor (who wishes not to be named), you opened the way for me to believe this journey was possible; the Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU); the Ocho Rios Baptist Church (my home church in Jamaica); Baptist Home Church in Oslo, Norway; several other individuals and organizations.

Fifthly, this journey would not have been the unforgettable experience it was without the VID team who provided the insight, knowledge, guidance, encouragement and support to make this study interesting and inspiring. Sincere gratitude especially to:

- Programme lecturers - Stephanie Dietrich, Kari Korslien, and Anne Austad; administrators - Kari Jordheim and Anne Dieseth; and student deacon and spiritual advisor - Elisabeth Nilsen Aas - as we say in Jamaica 'Nuff respect!'
- Thesis supervisor and lecturer - Hans Morten Haugen - you provided me with so much that I needed to complete this research, imparting pockets of your vast knowledge which at times overwhelmed yet stimulated and challenged me; Tusen takk.
- Those who critiqued my thesis, particularly professor Ignatius Swart who offered constructive criticisms in the early stages of my writing through the thesis writing seminar.

**Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to all women who have suffered, are suffering and may suffer as a result of intimate partner violence (IPV). My prayer is that this research will remind us, as Christians and fellow human beings, of our commission as we declare and affirm:

*…God's Spirit is on me;*
*he's chosen me to preach the Message of good news to the poor,*
*Sent me to announce pardon to prisoners and*
*recovery of sight to the blind,*
*To set the burdened and battered free,..* (Luke 4:18 MSG)

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| BWA | Baptist World Alliance |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women |
| DV | Domestic Violence |
| GBV | Gender-based Violence |
| GOJ | Government of Jamaica |
| IPV | Intimate Partner Violence |
| IPPV | Intimate Partner Physical Violence |
| JBU | Jamaica Baptist Union |
| JBUMA | Jamaica Baptist Union Mission Agency |
| JBWF | Jamaica Baptist Women's Federation |
| JCC | Jamaica Council of Churches |
| JCF | Jamaica Constabulary Force |
| JMD | Jamaica Methodist District |
| NSD | Norsk senter forskningsdata/Norwegian Center for Research Data |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goal |
| SDO | Social Dominance Orientation |
| SDT | Social Dominance Theory |
| STATIN | Statistical Institute of Jamaica |
| UN | United Nations |
| VAW | Violence against women |
| WCC | World Council of Churches |
| WHO | World Health Organisation |
| WHS | Women's Health Survey |
| Woman Inc. | Woman Incorporated Crisis Centre |

**List of Figures**

*"For just over three years, Donna lived with a man who would slap her if the dinner was late, kick and punch her if she spoke too quietly on the phone he had bought her, and beat her mercilessly if he assumed she was cheating. Then she fought back, hitting him with an unopened tin of milk before fleeing the Kingston 20 community with just the clothes she had on and what she could push into a small bag. Donna is among more than 71 per cent of the women who have experienced physical or partner violence and have retaliated. But for more than 20 per cent of these women, their efforts were futile, and Donna is among that group. In less than two weeks after she fled, the man convinced her that he had changed, and she returned home. One month later the beatings started again, and they would not stop until her father and brother arrived to forcefully take her away"* (Wilson-Harris, 2018).

**Chapter 1: Introduction**

**1.0 Introduction: An overview of the research**

"Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls," is goal number 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) of the United Nations (2015, p. 14). This goal stems from global estimates which show that 1 in 3 women worldwide experience physical and/or sexual violence at some point in their lives (UN Women: Americas, 2018). Gender-based violence (GBV) has been, and continues to stand, in opposition to this goal and needs to be addressed with a greater sense of urgency. Gender equality and empowerment of all is believed to be one of the key ways of developing a sustainable future for society and the economy (UN, 2016). GBV has been on the world agenda for decades but still it continues.

Statistics from a recent survey revealed that 27.8 percent of women in Jamaica are affected by gender-based violence with one in every four females subjected to intimate partner violence (IPV) (physical or sexual) in their lifetime (Williams, 2018). The church, as the called out people and representatives of God, has been given the mandate 'to set the oppressed free' and as such have a significant part to play in response to this crisis. It is with this in mind that this research seeks to gain a deeper understanding of how churches are working to combat domestic violence. The issue of domestic violence (DV), as one form of GBV, its attending impact and how the church community responds will be the focus of this master's thesis.

This research will analyze how Baptist and Methodist churches in Jamaica respond to DV through a direct focus on intimate partner violence (IPV). This master's thesis will also reflect on what civil society actors are doing in this area and their view of the role of the churches.

**1.1 Research question**

What are the (Baptist and Methodist) churches in Jamaica doing to help combat domestic violence and empower victims?

**1.2 Hypothesis**

  i.   The church (Baptist and Methodist) has primarily been working through existing traditional structures as a reaction to DV, e.g. counselling. No special systems and policies are in place and no new approaches have been sufficiently explored.

ii. The churches in Jamaica are open and generally receptive to programmes from the international church family in combatting DV (e.g. WCC Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women and WCC Decade to overcome Violence).

iii. Other actors working with and affected by DV view the church as falling short in its response to DV.

## 1.3 Inspiration

With 15 years of service in the head office of the Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU) I have learnt a great deal about church life from a broader level. Born and raised a Baptist all my life I did not know much outside the confines of my own denomination until I was called to pursue theological studies at an ecumenical institution in Jamaica, the United Theological College of the West Indies (UTCWI). During my four-year sojourn the makings and structures of other denominations (e.g. Methodist, Anglicans and Moravians) along with their doctrines and beliefs became part of the learning process. It was during that time that I developed a better appreciation for ecumenical work. Interactions with fellow students who became friends also opened up the way to understanding each denomination.

Subsequent to my studies at the UTCWI, I served my denomination in various capacities including direct responsibility for Youth, Christian Education, Media and Communications, among other areas. I also served as the JBU's chief event planner, coordinating and executing many events (local and international). Working closely with various church related bodies, as well as, civil society, I had the opportunity to represent and serve the wider church on government boards and the ecumenical church community. At the regional and international level I have served as Vice President of the Caribbean Baptist Youth Department, member of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) Youth Committee and as volunteer at the World Conference of Churches (WCC) International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (Jamaica, May 2011). All these afforded me the opportunity to become acquainted with several areas of church life inside and outside my own denomination and country.

My job also required me to interact with the Jamaica Baptist Women's Federation (JBWF) on initiatives such as a Leadership and Empowerment Conference for Women in 2017. During my years of service at the church head office I became knowledgeable with the workings of the women's groups and their related issues. Females make up approximately 75% percent of our

Baptist youth population and over 70% of our church population. My work with them over the years has given me much insight into the struggles of females navigating life in a man's world.

The Youth Department of the Union, for which I had direct oversight, consisted of several ministries that cater to the needs of young women, such as the ministry to (college and university) students, the Camps ministry (age 9-21 years) and the Young Adults ministry (age 25-40 years). My tasks included crafting, coordinating and supervising programmes and activities for these groups at local, regional and international levels, learning more about the many and varied challenges that our young women are facing.

The issue of inequality and gender-based violence is an ongoing challenge in my context and my particular interest in this as a research area was spurred following a discussion with a female Jamaican friend and pastor. During the discussion domestic violence was mentioned and immediately I felt as if a door had opened that I needed to step into and explore. At the end of our conversation I researched the topic and I was further drawn to it when I gleaned from the statistics the young age (15-44) of those, in Jamaica and worldwide, who were affected, and learnt that at least 38% of women murdered worldwide were killed by their intimate partners (WHO, 2017) while "37% of murders committed in Jamaica stem from domestic incidents" (Patterson, 2016).

The matter also touches me deeply on a personal level as a very close family member was victim to this trauma over 15 years ago. In retrospect I now recognize the impact it can have on the individual as well as the entire family, myself included. It wasn't until I started this project that it once again came to the fore of my thoughts and troubled me greatly because I believe there is more I could have done to help had there been more openness to the issue from many angles, including the church.

My research thus far has also revealed that there is very little evidence of much being explored or action being taken by the churches to address domestic violence (DV). I am therefore hoping that this body of research will direct us on empowering these women and enabling them to unleash their full potential as persons created in the image and likeness of God; to affirm their self-worth and dignity and to make them less dependent on those who take advantage of them. It is also my desire that this study will in some positive ways help to enhance the efforts of the churches to combat DV.

**1.4 Scope and limitation of research study**

Though domestic violence (DV) covers a range of categories and was initially the focus of the research, a shift has been made to concentrate primarily on intimate partner violence (IPV) from the point of view of the female. This is in keeping with the reality that IPV, also called spousal abuse, is considered to be the most prevalent form of DV in Jamaica affecting mostly women (Bureau of Gender Affairs, 2018). The experience of the male in IPV will not be addressed, neither will this research give in-depth insights into the experiences of abused children or other members of the household. No mention will be made about violence among same sex partners. Unlike other studies and literature that focuses on DV inside the church (Edwards & Edwards, 2017), this master's thesis is not concentrated on DV within the church setting but rather how the church is aiding victims in the church community and its environs.

As stated in the hypothesis (1.2) the traditional response of churches currently involves counselling and to some extent preaching. However it is not the intention of this study to map or assess the counselling or preaching aspect of the church's response to DV.

The use of the two traditional church denominations (Baptist/Methodist) is not meant to provide a comparison but merely to give the views of what is or is not being done. The responses of the representatives of the two churches named does not necessarily represent the views/voices of all churches within both denominations, or churches in general, in the Jamaican context. Additionally, the inclusion of one or two charismatic churches could have added another perspective to the study and given a wider view of the church community in the context.

**1.5 Review of existing literature**

There is a plethora of literature on the issue on GBV and DV since the matter is classified as a global issue affecting persons from all walks of life. Much of the literature on DV looks at the issue from a social standpoint while in more recent times some literature has been focusing on DV within the church. IPV is now receiving more attention since this has proven to be the most prevalent in the category of DV. A review of existing literature on the issue of religion and IPV as it relates to this research revealed a few relevant material.

In the book "Religion and Intimate Partner Violence", Nancy Nason-Clark, Barbara Fisher-Townsend, Catherine Holtmann and Stephen McMullin (2018) present results of a twenty-five-

year research on the impacts of religion and IPV. The research reveals an array of studies conducted with abusers, battered women, religious leaders, and other workers who assist families in crisis with data primarily from North America and to a lesser extent Jamaica, Croatia, Germany and India (p. 4). The book does a good job of highlighting both the negative and positive ways in which religion helps or hurts the battered woman and the abuser while offering solutions to avoid the possible pitfalls. Unlike other literature it balances the view of not just how women experience and respond to abuse but also how men can be helped. While the book is quite relevant and a very useful resource, it does not provide much insight into the church responding to persons outside the faith community but focuses on "families of deep faith" (Nason-Clark et al, 2018). I believe the authors are adequately responding to the cry from many quarters about the neglect of abuse within the church.

Another relevant book on the issue of DV from a religious standpoint is "Addressing Domestic Violence in the Church" (Edwards & Edwards, 2017). Though this book makes similar attempts as the previous one mentioned it is less detailed and focuses more on possible misinterpretations of the Bible as it relates to the use of troublesome terms such as submission and headship, as well as, the issue of divorce and how God views it. Similar to the first book, there is a caution to the church about its potential to enable abuse through misinformed responses or lack of responses. The book is short with a mere 82 pages but is a worthwhile contribution and offers some insights useful in this research, though limited to abuse within the church.

Both books highlight the seeming naivety of church leaders regarding the prevalence of abuse within the church and offers insights on the way forward. They also discuss the importance of the church community and faith in the experience of both victims and perpetrators, challenging the church to get more involved in combatting DV. The authors are influenced by and reflect much of the Canadian and U.S. contexts which to some extent mirrors the Caribbean or Jamaican reality.

## 1.6 Definition of terms and concepts

*Violence* is understood as the deliberate use of physical force or power which is self-inflicted or against another person or group which causes harm including death, injury and other psychological impairments (WHO, 2019). Within this general definition there are three

subtypes of violence namely; self-directed, interpersonal and collective. Self-directed refers to persons inflicting harm to themselves and collective is violence committed by a group. The third subtype, which is of interest in this research, is interpersonal violence which occurs between individuals in a domestic setting.

Walker (2017, pp. 94-98) goes further in the definition by proposing a Cycle Theory of Violence (see figure 1 below) which is directly related to interpersonal violence and more specifically intimate partner violence. She explains that there are three crucial stages of
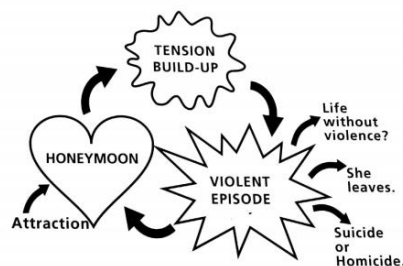


*Figure 1 - Cycle of violence*

violence including tension building, acute battering (violent episode) and the honeymoon (loving contrition). The cycle, she believes, starts after courting and signs of interest from the partner. Tension starts to build when the male begins to show signs of dissatisfaction and control in the relationship first in a verbal manner. This is usually after both have made a commitment to each other and so the woman may try to please him so as not to end the relationship prematurely. In this stage she often convinces herself that it will blow over soon. However, more often than not this behaviour then escalates to battering, phase two, after a build-up of emotions and tensions from stage one. During this phase the woman either succumbs to the abuse or retaliates which sometimes aggravates the situation further, resulting in the need for external help. During phase three reconciliation takes place and the batterer usually goes back to his loving self, apologising and promising he won't behave like that again. The woman believes and feels hopeful until the cycle starts all over again (Ibid).

*Gender-based violence* (GBV) is defined as harm or force (threats, violence, manipulation, deception, weapons, coercion or economic circumstances) that is meted out to a person against their will, and by virtue of his or her gender roles and expectations in a society or culture, and includes domestic violence, sexual abuse, discrimination and exploitation primarily committed against women and girls (UN Women Caribbean, n.d.). "The common forms of gender-based violence in Jamaica include, rape, sexual harassment, incest, and intimate partner violence (or

domestic violence)….primarily committed against women and girls…" (Bureau of Gender Affairs, 2017). The term GBV is sometimes used interchangeably with violence against women (VAW) because more often than not GBV affects women and girls. VAW is one of the most widespread human rights violations according to the UN (1993).

*Domestic violence* (DV) is an act that is directed at another individual in the confines of a home or among persons that have an intimate relationship. Such acts are inflicted on a person without their consent and affects their personhood resulting in them feeling demeaned, diminished or controlled (Ministry of Justice, 2019). It can take the form of physical, psychological, verbal, or economic abuse. Though DV affects both male and female partners, as well as siblings and parents, this research will focus primarily on intimate partner violence (IPV) among males and females with the female as the victim.

*Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)*, the most prevalent form of DV, happens between couples (male and female) currently or previously in an intimate relationship or who cohabit or are in a visiting relationship as outlined in the Domestic Violence Act (Ministry of Justice, 2019, pp. 4-5). This behaviour results in sexual, physical or psychological harm.

## 1.7 Thesis outline

**Chapter two** will provide background information on the Jamaican landscape/context relevant for the study, a general overview of churches in Jamaica and in particular the Baptist and Methodist churches in Jamaica. There will also be a brief look at the role of gender in Jamaica and the named churches.

**Chapter three** will give attention to the theoretical framework. There will be an exploration of the theories employed in the research which include: gender and ecclesiology, social dominance and power asymmetries, as well as empowerment (diakonia).

The thesis continues with a detailed discussion on methodology in **chapter four**. Research design, sampling of participants, data collection and analyses will be deliberated.

In **chapter five** the data collected will be presented with specific focus on responses from interviewees from churches (Baptist and Methodist), related organisations and victims of DV, as well as statistics from a related survey.

**Chapter six** will bring together aspects of chapters four and five by way of a discussion which seeks to interpret how they interrelate.

This master's thesis will conclude in **chapter seven** by lifting out major observations with possible recommendations as wells as suggestions for ongoing research.

## Chapter 2: Background and context

### 2.0 Chapter introduction

The aim of this chapter is to set the research in context with a brief introduction to the Jamaican landscape and history, an overview of the churches in Jamaica, and the Baptist and Methodist churches, in particular. The role of religion, as well as, how gender is viewed will also be discussed as a way of locating the importance they play in daily living.

### 2.1 Jamaica's background

With a population of approximately 2.8 million people, making it the third largest island in what is called the Greater Antilles and the fourth largest country in the Caribbean (figure 2), Jamaica spans a length of 146 miles (235 km) and an area of 4,411 square miles (11,244 km).



*Figure 2 – North America and The Caribbean*

Around 1492 and 1494 Christopher Columbus visited the Caribbean islands and the first European settlement developed resulting in exploitation of natural resources and native people. In 1655 the British captured the island from the Spaniards. The indigenous people of Jamaica, called Taino Indians, were harshly treated by their colonisers and died of overwork and diseases resulting in the importation of West African slaves to work the sugar plantations. August 1 is annually celebrated in Jamaica as Emancipation Day as on that day in 1838 all slaves were emancipated from their British colonisers. The current population exists of slave descendants and to this day the experience of enslavement continues to affect the people mentally, socially and psychologically. Verene Shepherd (2017) supports this view as she opined that GBV has

its "roots deeply embedded in colonialism" where (white) men were rulers and power holders who "exploited (coloured) women in gender specific ways, including trafficking and rape".

From 1655 to 1962 Jamaica remained under British rule. On August 6, 1962 Jamaica became the first Caribbean country to gain independence from the United Kingdom. Fifty-five years later the country still struggles to reach acceptable living standards for all with an unemployment rate currently at 8.7% (Trading Economics, 2019). For survival Jamaica's economy thrives on tourism, agriculture, manufacturing and bauxite mining, with tourism being its main income generator.



*Figure 3 - Jamaica*

Geographically, Jamaica is divided into 14 parishes (figure 3), with its capital city being Kingston. It is a parliamentary democracy governed by an elected prime minister who in turn appoints several other government ministers. A Governor General is also appointed as the representative of Queen Elizabeth who serves as the Jamaican monarch. Jamaica is a mixture of urban and rural centres, with much of the resources and business centres located in the urban areas such as Kingston, Montego Bay in St James and Ocho Rios in St Ann.

Although the official language of the people is English, many Jamaicans also boast of being bilingual with the primary spoken language being an English-based creole called Jamaican Patois (patwa); some of which was used by the interviewees.

With females being approximately 50.8% of the country's population (STATIN, 2017) Jamaica is one of those countries that can express pride in having women in significant leadership

positions such as the Attorney General, Director of Public Prosecutions and a former Prime Minister, to name a few. However, women in some spheres are still treated with scant regard and there remains a strong patriarchal socialisation in the country which has the tendency to lead to abuse, inequality and unfair treatment in the private and public spheres. There are still many stereotyped roles for males and females; with woman's role limited to household related tasks such as cooking, washing, cleaning, bearing and raising children.

Jamaica has a macho culture that permeates the people and as such efforts by some women to function outside those stereotypes are rebuffed and rejected through violent means. The United Nations Human Rights Council is quoted by Home Office (2017) in saying that one of the "major problems (in Jamaica) facing women is domestic violence…..due to the economic reliance on men and female poverty".

## 2.2 Jamaican laws/policies/initiatives

"Jamaica is party to seven of the nine core international human rights instruments, and has also passed local legislation to complement the rights and protections offered by these international conventions" (UN Women: Americas, 2018). The Domestic Violence Act (2009) seeks to protect women against acts of violence in a domestic setting (Ministry of Justice, 2019). Over time, several other laws, policies and initiatives have been introduced, including the Sexual Offences Act which provides some level of protection for women sexually abused by their partners; married or otherwise. The Victims Charter Act also has some important elements that protect the human rights of victims. Other mechanisms and legislative measures include: The Offences against the Person Act, The Child Care and Protection Act and the National Policy for Gender Equality, 2011. These are all aimed at gender equality and to protect the rights of women and children in keeping with SDG 5.

The initiation of training of police officers to respond and handle issues of domestic violence is also very integral to the process of elimination of violence. This forms part of an initiative sponsored by the British High Commission and United States Embassy in collaboration with the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF). The JCF operates a community Safety and Security Branch in each parish/district with a focus on community policing providing social services to the residents in an effort to engage and empower communities while responding to social ills. The Family Court also forms part of the justice system which seeks to protect the abused woman through protection and occupation orders. While the justice system exists to protect

victims it does not always work in their favour, sometimes due to tardiness and perceived corruption. Despite the fact that the country's corruption level has significantly decreased by 15 percentage points in recent years (Trading Economics, 2019) and despite the establishment of anti-corruption laws and committees, there is still much cause for concern as evidenced by the removal of a well-known minister of government following corruption allegations (The Gleaner, 2019).

Having ratified the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Jamaica is obliged to abolish any and all discriminatory laws against women and add the necessary provisions in their legal system to protect women from all forms of discrimination (CEDAW, 1979). The aim of CEDAW is to provide women with equal access and opportunities in all areas of life. This is also part of the mandate of the Bureau of Gender Affairs (2018) which, according to its vision statement, aims at "a society in which women and men have equal access to socially valued goods and are able to contribute to national development". The Bureau is a division of the Ministry of Culture, Gender and Entertainment.

One significant step by the government, is the 10 year Strategic Plan for the Elimination of Gender Based Violence which was introduced in 2017 and is being enacted through the Bureau of Gender Affairs. This 10-year plan focuses on five strategic priority areas – prevention, protection, intervention, legal procedures and protocols for data collection (Bureau of Gender Affairs, 2017) in keeping with requirements from international treaties and conventions as well as reports and critiques from international bodies such as United Nations. In fact the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) has questioned the lack of sufficient services for victims of DV and has cautioned that the country is still well below an acceptable level of gender equality with the movements being quite slow and marginal over the years (CEDAW Committee, 2012a, pp. 6, 12). In paragraph 22 of the 52nd report in its concluding observatons the UN urges the government to take steps to "ensure the strict enforcement of the domestic violence act …, institute a programme of public awareness to encourage the reporting of domestic and sexual violence … and strengthening victims' assistance and support programmes… " (CEDAW Committee, 2012b). Thankfully, some of these omissions identified by CEDAW are being acted on through the Bureau of Gender Affairs, but there is still a long way to go.

Moreover when Jamaica was up for Universal Periodic Review before the United Nations Human Rights Council (2015) more than 30 countries specified concerns, with GBV being the most common concern from states, and Jamaica accepted this critic. Other concerns that were not accepted by Jamaica included those that were related to the death penalty and LGBT related violence and rights (Ibid).

Jamaica is on board with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UN, 2016). For Jamaica this drive is being led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), who will in turn incorporate other Government bodies and private entities, nationally, regionally and globally for its successful implementation (STATIN, 2017).

The Woman Incorporated Crisis Center (Woman Inc., 1984), a voluntary, non-profit, non-governmental organisation which has been in existence for over 34 years operates the first and only crisis centre (shelter) and 24-hour hotline for victims of domestic violence (DV). Their primary aim is to promote the welfare of women through a crisis centre and temporary shelter for domestic violence situations, as well as to engage in prevention and sensitization programmes. The services are funded through donors along with a subvention from the government (NGO Caribbean Development Foundation, 2009).

One very important and relevant survey that was recently published and is a significant contribution to addressing the crisis of IPV in Jamaica is the Women's Health Survey 2016 (Williams, 2018), which was published and released in June 2018. The report confirms that IPV is currently the most prevalent form of domestic violence in Jamaica especially among adolescents 15-29 years who have the highest current (last 12 months) prevalence. The lifetime prevalence was most evident in those aged 25-29 (figure 4). The statistics also reveal that twenty eight percent (28%) of Jamaican women throughout their lifetime experience some form of physical and/or sexual violence by their male intimate partner (STATIN, 2018). Reference to lifetime intimate partner violence (IPV) includes women who report being hit, slapped, kicked, beaten, burnt, threatened or injured with a weapon, by a male partner at least once in their lifetime (UN Women: Americas, 2018).
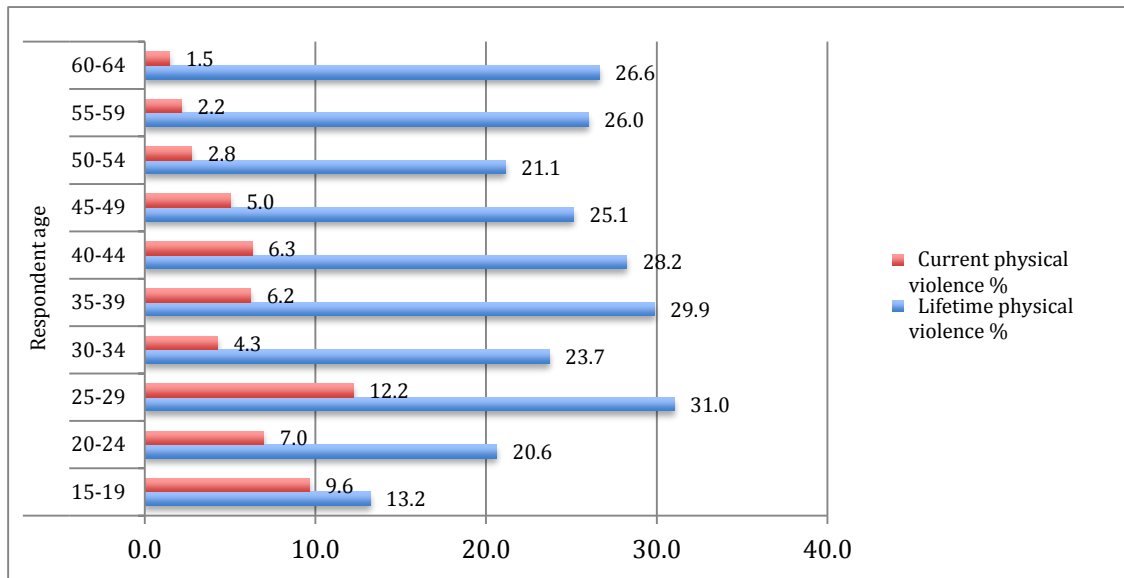
*Figure 4 - Lifetime and Current (last 12 months prior to the survey) Prevalence of IPV by age* (Williams, 2018, p. 45)

The survey, which provides substantial evidence for the need of additional intervention and prevention of IPV in Jamaica, was conducted with female residents aged 15-64 years from 2145 households across all 14 parishes over a period of fifteen weeks. A questionnaire was administered by field workers specifically trained for the survey and the results addresses several areas of interest related to this research which will be highlighted throughout this master's thesis including:

- Women's views on gender roles and justification for violence;
- The matter of violence being a private matter between a man and a woman;
- The lifetime and current prevalence of violence by male partners. "Lifetime prevalence refers to the percentage of women who have experienced IPV at any time. Current prevalence is a subset of lifetime prevalence; it refers to the percentage of women who have experienced IPV within the previous 12 months" (Williams, 2018, p. 16).;
- Rates of violence to pregnant women;
- Types of abuse meted out to victims of IPV;
- The effects of IPV on women and children; and
- The profile of abusers.

All these areas were influenced one way or another by age, education, economic status and location (rural or urban) (Ibid).

**2.3 Religion in Jamaica**

Christianity is the largest practised religion in Jamaica with smaller communities of Jews, Muslims, Hindus and Bahais. Christianity was actually introduced in the 16th century and further accepted in the 18th century when Baptist missionaries led the fight against slavery. Between 1871 and 1991 the population was predominantly Christian (Dick, 2000, p. 6), while the population census conducted in 2011 shows a steep decline to approximately 66% (STATIN, 2012). Boasting the most churches per square mile of any country in the world, Jamaica has over 1600 churches with Anglican (Episcopalian), Baptist, Methodist, Roman Catholic, Seventh Day Adventist (SDA), Moravian and United Church (Presbyterian and Congregational) among the established existing churches in the country (Jamaica Tourist Board, 2016). The 2011 population census (STATIN, 2012) revealed that Baptist was the only established church among the 5 top denominations of affiliation (figure 5), while Methodists were number 12 on a list of about 20.
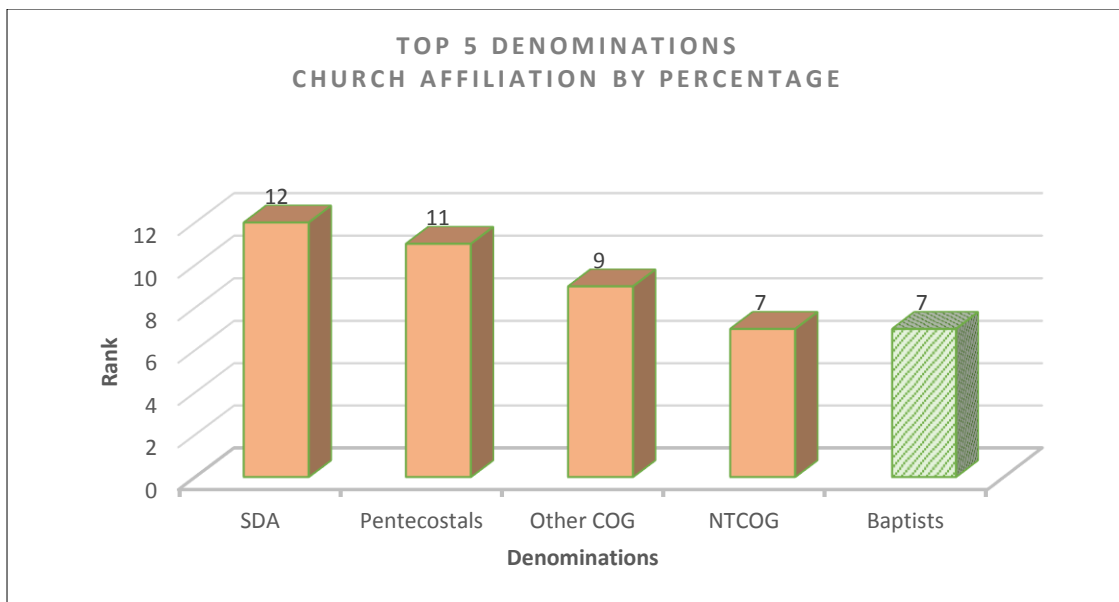


*Figure 5[1] (STATIN, 2012)*

Churches have played and continue to play a key part in matters of development in the country evidenced by their critical role in the education of slaves and consequently to the role of education in Jamaica. It was in fact the missionaries through the churches that started many schools for the slaves since their slave masters refused them the privilege. To date, although education is free from age 2 to 18, at least 1% have had little or no education and 30% only

---

[1] SDA – Seventh Day Adventist, COG – Church of God, NTCOG – new Testament Church of God

have basic primary education (STATIN, 2013) due to economic and other reasons. The privileged who are able to afford tertiary education are even fewer due to financial constraints and other factors. According to World Bank (2018) 82% are recorded as being enrolled in secondary education in 2017 compared to 94% in 2009 and only 27% enrolled in tertiary education in 2015. In this regard churches continue to place high premium on education of the masses.

With so many churches on the island one can well imagine that church life and faith plays a critical role in the life of the people. For many, milestones such as infant dedication, weddings and funerals are very significant. Church attendance is also viewed positively with many participating in and acknowledging Christmas and Easter celebrations.

Through its constitution Jamaicans have freedom of worship and all have the right to equal and fair treatment. However, patriarchal practices still dominate many families and organisations. Among the churches, Baptist and Methodists have been slowly moving away from the male dominance to the point that both currently have females serving as president – the highest positions in the denominations. Baptists and Methodists have a strong diaconal understanding with Baptists being among the first set of missionaries who fought against slavery and Methodists providing education of the slaves.

## 2.4 Baptists in Jamaica - Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU)
Baptists as a denomination, are said to have emerged during the sixteenth and seventeenth century as part of the Protestant Reformation (Study and Research Division BWA, 1999, p. 3), with a focus on the equal rights of every individual. With a current total of 338 churches and near 40,000 baptised members across the island, the Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU) traces its genesis to 1783 when George Liele, a formerly enslaved black Baptist minister of Georgia, USA, came to Jamaica and started preaching in Kingston. His preaching brought many converts, including slaves and freed persons from mixed races, and with the support of Baptist missionaries from England several congregations and schools were started.

With the Christian teachings and education that the enslaved received many of them became more and more aware of their rights and many anti-slavery movements emerged. This resistance eventually led to what is known as the Baptist war of 1831, led by national hero Sam Sharpe, whose initial intention was a sit down strike against the injustices of slavery. Needless

to say this initiative, though resulting in his, and the death of many others, was the start of a new day as it significantly boosted the abolition movement which saw the Act of Abolition of Slavery passed in 1834 in Britain, resulting in the total emancipation of slavery on August 1, 1838. As a result "Baptist work in Jamaica became an enduring symbol of the Church's opposition to slavery and all other forms of injustice" (Jamaica Baptist Union, 2019).

Emancipation brought not merely a change in legal status but an opportunity for formerly enslaved persons to grow into the image of God, achieving a new spiritual, human and political level. One could say that diaconal work started in the Baptist church during the times of slavery and took the form of the church being the voice of the people striving for justice and educating the people. The matter of protecting the human rights of all persons is a concern for all Baptists, including Jamaicans, as is evidenced by the Human Rights Commission of the BWA (BWA, 2019), through their work which continues to sharpen awareness that when one member suffers, all suffer (1 Cor. 12:26).

Today near 40,000 Baptists are part of what is known as the Jamaica Baptist Union (JBU), which was the coming together of several Jamaican Baptist churches in 1849 to form one organised group. Its members have been known to be agitators for justice in favour of the poor and marginalised in the country. In fact it is noteworthy that three of the seven national heroes of the country were Baptist leaders in their time who sacrificed their lives for better living conditions for the masses. Engagement in society was important in Baptist understanding of the Church. Baptists were concerned not just about souls but also about life (Lalor, 2013). In earlier years Baptists believed that Christians should be integrally involved in the life of the country. It is no different today as Baptists continue to be engaged in civil life and are representatives on many government bodies. The most recent example of this occurred earlier this year when the current Baptist (female) president preached at the country's National Prayer Breakfast, a well-recognised annual event that brings together stakeholders from all areas of society including business, government and religious spheres.

The JBU has a strong organisation (Jamaica Baptist Union, 2019). Women, men and youth are three main ministries of the church, in addition to Christian Education, and Mission. The JBU is organised into 12 parish associations with elected leaders who serve for two-year terms. While there is an organised union which governs the administration of the mission and ministries of the churches, congregations are autonomous and as such are free to make their

own decisions. Other committees and commissions also have responsibilities that cover life outside 'the walls' of the church. For instance the JBU Education Committee monitors over 80 early childhood institutions and close to 70 primary and high schools and represents the denomination "that has the most schools on record" (Gilchrist, 2017). The Social Issues Commission of the JBU seeks to identify issues affecting society, conduct research and develop policies accordingly. There is also the Mission Agency (JBUMA) which could be called the diaconal ministry of the church, through its mission to vulnerable persons, mission to alleviate poverty and improve education amongst others (JBU, 2018).

All mission endeavours include members of the entire congregation since the priesthood of all believers is a very important distinctive for Jamaican Baptists. As a fellowship of believers the church is engaged in the proclamation of the gospel as a necessary function of priesthood (1 Peter 2:9) and as such all believers are involved in the life of worship and witness in the church (Study and Research Division BWA, 1999).

Baptists at heart are known to be very ecumenical and involved at every level of religious life. The JBU is an active member of local, regional, international, ecumenical and denominational bodies such as the Jamaica Council of Churches (JCC) which is the local ecumenical gathering of 11 Christian denominations on the island, the Caribbean Baptist Fellowship (CBF), the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) and the World Council of Churches (WCC).

Females are a core part of the JBU especially as they outnumber male members 2 to 1. This is also evidenced by the organised group of women known as the Jamaica Baptist Womens Federation (JBWF), a movement initiated in 1922 and guided by their motto 'Seek Save Serve'. In the early days the motto was primarily geared at reaching out to orphaned children. Today the JBWF, is involved in several uplifting projects in their aim to *Seek* and engage, evangelise and *Save,* and *Serve* to enable women and girls, inside and outside the church. Through the various initiatives including a Children's' Home and an agricultural project, amongst others, they show their deep concern "about the welfare and wellbeing of adolescent girls and women of different ages and stages with different vulnerabilities as well as those affected by specific issues, (Christian and non-Christian)" (JBWF, 2017). The JBWF have some special projects underway involving a ministry to women who are victims of gender-based violence.

The presence of females can be felt within the denomination in many areas including pastors, deacons, and other leaders. Baptists, though practising the priesthood of all believers, place special emphasis on the ordination of pastors and deacons whom they believe are set apart for special tasks of the church. Previously these persons were largely males but a major shift took place when the path was cleared in 1989 for females to enter the pastoral ministry of the JBU. This event was recently commemorated with a seminar which reaffirmed the role of women and more so, female leaders in the Baptist churches while indicating "a need for a clear policy on women in pastoral ministry, as well as a gender policy, and a study guide on the relevant biblical and theological issues" (Johnson, 2019). Given the 2 to 1 ratio of females to males it is safe to conclude that a good portion of women occupy the role of deacon in Baptist churches with the task of the deacon being spiritual as well as attending to the material and social aspects of the church's life.

## 2.5 Methodists in Jamaica – The Jamaica Methodist District (JMD)

The Methodist movement is said to have started in the 18th century as the outworking of a great revival in the Church of England which rapidly spread in the British Empire, and many other places. The Wesley brothers have been named the founders of the movement and John Wesley was said to be the one who referred to 'the people as Methodists', a name that was subsequently used when the group became a denomination after his death (Jamaica Methodist, 2016). Methodism came to Jamaica in January 1789 through Thomas Coke who had met and was influenced by John Wesley some many years before (Jamaica Methodist, 2016). The subsequent arrival of missionaries saw to the continued growth of the church.

The Jamaica Methodist District (JMD) comprises 172 congregations, near 100 schools and several other institutions, including a home for girls and two children's homes that are owned and operated by the Methodist Church (Jamaica Methodist, 2016). As one of eight districts in the Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas, the Jamaican district operates under a larger grouping of Methodists known as the Connexion. Their structure includes the Connexional council, which is the governing body consisting of ministerial and lay representatives from all eight districts. Each district has its own council and committees fed from the various circuits and congregations (Ibid).

The Methodist church in Jamaica is affiliated to national, regional, international and ecumenical bodies. At the national level, the Methodists are members of the Jamaica Council

of Churches and internationally they are members of the World Methodist Council and the World Council of Churches. Since its inauguration in 1967 the regional body, Methodist Church in the Caribbean and the Americas, has been attempting to respond creatively to the missionary challenges of the region as it aimed to be "the church for and of the oppressed" (World Methodist Council, 2018). From as early as 1890, the vision for the deaconess ministry commenced as part of the Wesleyan church, with a focus on women serving in areas of education, orphan care, visiting the sick and caring for the poor. By 1986 the deaconess order evolved to men and women and was later named the Methodist Diaconal Order (Ibid).

Methodists believe the "mission of the Church is fulfilled as the church worships, witnesses, fellowships, cares and serves…through its membership and wider community…" (Jamaica Methodist, 2016). Members of the church are expected to join and participate in at least one "non-church" organization involved in alleviating need. This means that Christians are to be involved in the wider society and represent Christ in all spheres of life as they embrace being a church "not only to those who need you but to those who need you most" (Jamaica Methodist, 2016).

The women's group of the Methodist church is known as the Women's League. It is a fellowship of women whose primary objective is to equip themselves and others to face all the challenges of daily living as part of their service to God. With their motto 'Sincerity in Service' they are involved in many activities and outreach projects through visitations, workshops, seminars, prayer and study of the word (Jamaica Methodist, 2016).

As one measure to protect women's rights the Methodist church has developed a Safeguarding policy, a detailed document which seeks to provide guidelines, and policies on protecting children and vulnerable adults. Although this document speaks only to the "care and nurture of children and vulnerable adults within the Church and its Methodist institutions" (Jamaica Methodist Church, 2017, p. 3) it can also be instrumental in guiding the members to protect and care for those outside its remit. This demonstrates that the church is in fact seeking to meet the needs of those who are considered on the margin of society.

## 2.6 Gender in the Jamaican churches

There is no doubt that in many churches in Jamaica the gender roles are not on equal par. While there is a greater number of women in the pews, the leadership roles have been maintained

largely by men. However it is noteworthy that many churches have over the years made significant changes in how women are viewed regarding their roles in the church. This is evidenced by the growing number of female pastors in some of the traditional denominations. In past times there was a general unacceptance of women pastors influenced by the patriarchal society that was inherited from slave masters, but with increased exposure, understanding and reinterpretation of scriptures this perception has been changing (Gillpin, 2018).

On an international level Jamaican churches led by the local ecumenical group Jamaica Council of Churches (JCC) hosted the 20th Anniversary WCC Global Consultation on the Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women.  This speaks to the impact and recognition of the work in that region as well as the receptivity of Jamaican churches to international programmes. That session concluded with a commitment for action towards a just community at all levels (WCC, 2018). In 2011 churches also stood in support of the WCC consultation on the Decade to Overcome Violence through the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation held in Kingston, Jamaica May 17-25. These two events signal the reception and corporation of Jamaican churches in the fight against violence and gender inequalities.

Baptists and Methodists, members of the JCC, have since 2017 (The Gleaner, 2017) been part of the WCC Thursdays in Black campaign to end violence against women. In affirming the crucial role of the church on this issue Gary Harriott, General Secretary of the JCC is quoted as saying,

> In Jamaica, churches are still trusted and people look to them for leadership. Congregations are strategically placed in communities. We can meet with more adults and children each week than any other institution in society (…). We want society mobilized to end violence – in particular, violence against women and girls (WCC, 2018)

This statement emphasizes the commitment of the Jamaican churches to end gender-based violence while it also confirms that churches play a very important role in nation building in Jamaica.

**Chapter 3: Theories**

**3.1 Chapter introduction**

This chapter will provide a framework of the theories which will be employed in this master's thesis. Gender through the eyes of ecclesiology will be discussed in reflecting on how the church views its role and relationships. The theory of power asymmetries and how it is operationalized through social dominance will be presented. The chapter will also deliberate on the theory of empowerment as a function of diakonia. In many ways these theories overlap, are linked and inter-related, as will be seen in the discussions that follow.

**3.2 Gender and ecclesiology**

For decades there have been ongoing dialogues surrounding gender and the church and on a wider level the roles and norms associated with gender, which many may argue have been greatly influenced by church traditions and practices.

**3.2.1 Ecclesiology**

In the discussion of ecclesiology some questions for consideration are: What is church? What is the role of the church? According to the WCC (2005), the church is a gift of God, called into being by God the Father who sent the Holy Spirit to remind those who believed about all that Jesus taught while on earth. The WCC continues by pointing out that the Word of God (Bible) is the center and foundation of the church. In other words, for the church the Word of God which is presented in the Scriptures (Bible), is central and is the basis upon which it carries out its mandate. It is this Word that the church preaches, teaches and lives out through sacrament and service. This concept and understanding of the church is also affirmed by JBU (2019) in their statement, "The Bible (Old and New Testament) is the Word of God, and therefore authoritative, complete and sufficient for faith and practice". This suggests that the Bible underpins everything that the church is and does, an understanding that will be discussed in chapter 6.

Ecclesiology, derived from the Greek root word *ekklesia*, which is translated 'church', refers to the doctrine of the church. There have been several interpretations that are shared in different places including the varying faith traditions, as well as scholars, who have all put forward their own distinct definitions of what being church entails. Letty Russell (1993, p. 43) interpreted *ekklesia* as the sum total of Christians gathered in one common location, and the church

worldwide to which all believers share loyalty by virtue of the presence of Christ among them and their understanding of their role as proclaimers of the Gospel. Being church therefore means a coming together of followers who are on a similar path and who are committed to the One they follow. They are not only a church in one local place but all these churches together become one holy, catholic and apostolic church, globally. The church then, is understood to be the gathered community or the called out people of God regardless of time and space.

References to the church have also included the term *koinonia,* which is quite common in ecumenical settings. This Greek term, according to Fuchs (2008, p. 10), has a plethora of meanings including fellowship, mutuality, togetherness, solidarity or communion as used in the New Testament. This definition adds to what was said about the term *ekklesia* by highlighting the mutual sharing and participation of individuals who are different but have a common bond as members of the one body of Christ (Acts 24:14; 2:42).

According to the WCC (1982) one role of this called out community of believers is to proclaim and anticipate the Kingdom of God through announcing the good news of the gospel to all the world, as declared in the gospel of Luke (4:18), by setting the oppressed free, providing freedom to those held captive, recovery of sight to the blind and hope to the poor. The church is therefore a group of people who, in response to God's call on their lives, are committed to helping others experience a fulfilling and wholesome life. With this in mind this master's thesis seeks to understand how the churches in Jamaica have been carrying out their mission mandate to those suffering as a result of IPV.

Ecclesiology brings together the understanding of church with the Word of God as central, from which all receive their directives to carry out the mission by proclamation of the good news through word and actions. In the active role the gathered community ministers to the needs of the excluded, disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalized in society to enable them to experience life in all its fullness, with dignity and respect. As Methodists in Jamaica declare, the church "exists to fulfil the whole ministry of Christ" and the mission of the church is fulfilled as the church worships…fellowships, cares and serves. (Jamaica Methodist , 2016). It is this same mission which prompts Baptists to seek out and minister to the vulnerable as a key element of their mission initiative (JBU, 2018).

As an outworking of its task the church is faced with the challenge to interpret the inspired Word of God. However, history tells us that the writing and interpretation of the biblical texts have been led by males over the centuries. This has influenced how women are portrayed. One troubling result is that women are given very little significance in the Bible. Historically, the Christian tradition is rooted in the Hebrew and Greco-Roman worlds which promoted women's inferiority. Additionally, much of the language used for God is primarily masculine in nature – Father, Lord, King, depicting a male model of leadership. As each reads and interprets the Bible, it should therefore be done with the lenses of the particular context within which the text was written; the socio-cultural and political context.

As Deifelt (1997) suggests, the scriptures could benefit from a re-visioning, in the light of the questionable process of "patriarchal selection of texts" which could be intended to prevent women from participating in leadership. It is for this reason that feminists call for a God beyond gender. An understanding of the place and role of women in the Bible and by extension all of life, is important in how the church functions and responds to issues of daily living.

### 3.2.2 Gender

There is no doubt that gender and the roles associated with it are deeply entrenched in every culture. The World Bank (2011, p. 4) defines gender as the "social, behavioral, and cultural attributes, expectations, and norms associated with being a woman or a man distinguished by characteristics and behaviours that are determined by culture and is greatly influenced by how individuals are socialised (Mungure, 2016, p. 47). In my understanding there are certain expectations, roles and requirements that have become the norm in each society which are passed down from generation to generation resulting in the ongoing unequal treatment of one gender as opposed to the other leading to discrimination, abuse and marginalisation of women. Thus there is a constant challenge for re-socialisation of the gender roles and responsibilities.

Goal number 5 of the SDGs emphasises not only the empowerment of women and girls but gender equality. This goal, says WCC (2017), is really about gender justice with the targets, as outlined by UN (2016), to end all forms of discrimination and violence against women, to recognise the value of women, acknowledge the value of unpaid care and domestic work and to give women equal opportunities and participation in all areas of life. By this we see the church (WCC) as a wider body embracing and promoting the SDGs as part of their understanding of the role of the church. The SDGs have also been adopted by Jamaican society

in general and to some extent, the church, even though to date there is no explicit evidence of the acknowledgement of the SDGs by Jamaican churches.

Some feminist scholars, including Deifelt (1997), argue that the inequality between male and female is largely due to social and cultural constructs. These stereotypes and traditional roles are influenced and perpetuated by social structures as individuals seek to live according to how they are socialised over time. Often times any deviation from the norm results in alienation and rejection. Rasool (2017, p. 132) maintains that these traditional gender roles which see women as carers and men as breadwinners perpetuate violence against women as he cites Heise and Kotsadam (2015) who revealed that "a key driver of women's vulnerability to intimate partner violence (IPV)…. is gender inequality", according to a study of 44 countries. This becomes clear when the discussion about power is brought to the conversation, since inequality inevitably leads to an imbalance of power as one person wields power over another.

According to Nason-Clark et al (2018) patriarchal social structures make women vulnerable to their male partners, in that men who have been designated as the head of households interpret that as their right to control and rule their female partners. This gender inequality is not only evident in the home but also within other areas of society. This affects the overall development of the society as labour is unequally distributed and productivity is reduced. Even though women make up a large percentage of the labour market they are paid the least, while their work in the household is overlooked and undervalued (Friedmann, 1992).

"Gender equality is imperative for the overall development agenda in terms of economic growth; stability; enhanced productivity and its cumulative effects on other dimensions of welfare such as - education, health and family" (World Bank Group 2015, World Bank 2012, cited by Rasool, 2017, p. 119). Gender equality allows everyone the right to make their own choices and be able to access all basic human rights. Gender equality will also increase efficiency and take the economy a step further towards sustainable development.

This equality emphasises that both women and men ought to be allowed the same opportunities and their needs and priorities should be given equal consideration. In the long run when equal opportunities and rights are afforded both genders this will result in the overall improvement of life for all. Improvement of women's health and education is in turn better for children as is seen in the interdependency between women's development and the health and development

of children, particularly since women are the only ones capable of bearing children and for the most part are also the ones raising the children. Naturally, in the interest of overall development and if there is to be any success in achieving SDG number 5, the discussion and subsequent action on women's empowerment must consider not just the impact on women but on children, family, church and society.

### 3.2.3 Gender and/in the church

The WCC (2017, p. 64) acknowledges that "many religious traditions, including Christian, still express paternalistic and discriminatory practices as regard women's roles and rights". This is largely a result of the fact that the church exists in a community which is influenced by society and the cultural norms of the given country. The struggles which affect society at large are also evident in the church and so the issue of gender inequality also plagues the church. Patriarchal interpretation of scripture taught from pulpit can reinforce stereotyped images of women. Though religion (religious dialogue) is used by some cultural systems to substantiate, perpetuate and maintain unequal gender relations, it goes against the message of the gospel rooted in the creation story (LWF - Department for Mission and Development, 2009), where God created mankind in his own image and both were given authority to be stewards of the earth. Persons who suffer abuse at the hands of those they respect or see as father figures and protectors become confused about the male image of God when they find that the males they look up to, who should represent the male God, are exploiting and abusing others.

The church is charged to correct the misconceptions and misinterpretations of the Bible which support male domination. In the reinterpretation and proclamation of the Bible, emphasis must be placed on mutuality, equality and partnership as demonstrated by Jesus. Woman being created from the rib or side of the man should point to partnership and oneness (Genesis 2:24) and not to the notion of woman being a helpmate or subservient to the male. The WCC (2013, p. 5) points out that since man and woman were created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27) they have the natural gift to live in relationship with God and each other and each human being has been equally gifted and loved.

While there are scriptures which are used to continue patriarchy there are also many examples in the New Testament of how Jesus showed care and compassion for the marginalized, poor and vulnerable. In a male-dominated society Jesus declared that 'the first shall be last and last will be first', meaning that what previously existed in the culture of the day was being radically

challenged and turned upside down; including patriarchy. Of note was that Jesus had a distinct ministry with and among women, especially those in need. In Luke 8:40-48, we witness a rethinking of roles when Martha was challenged to come away from the expected roles of chores and to sit and learn.  Luke 10:38-42 also tells the story of Jesus in conversation with the Samaritan woman to whom He revealed Himself. The story in John 8:1-11 demonstrates a lesson on inclusion as the woman caught in adultery was shown compassion and justice as Jesus challenged the leaders (men) in their own sinfulness. These were all liberating and empowering moments for women. Is it not also noteworthy that after the resurrection Jesus first appeared to a woman, Mary Magdalene, who previously had been freed of seven demons? She, a woman, was given the greatest news to tell the disciples – men, that He was risen. These are the stories that disciples of the church ought to lift out as part of the good news as it seeks to continue the ministry started by Jesus. It is the task of the church to bear witness to the gospel and to serve others, in the search for peace and justice for all (Parmentier, 1997).

The initiative being undertaken by the WCC in their Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace raises gender justice as a key element of their objectives. The churches in Jamaica through the Jamaica Council of churches have signalled their support of this cause through their engagement of WCC initiatives and by virtue of their membership of the worldwide church body.

The theory of gender as espoused in and by the church will be further explored in the discussion chapter in terms of how the perception of gender roles affects and can influence the response of the church to the issue of IPV.

### 3.3 Power asymmetries and social dominance

The concept and understanding of power can be quite slippery and poses a challenge in attempts to assign any one definition. It becomes even more challenging depending on the context in which it is used. One effort to more accurately express its meaning is the use of prepositions to describe its possible variations. These include 'power over', 'power to', 'power from', 'power through' and 'power with' as used in many literatures today. Kearsley (2008) outlines the position of Michael Foucault, a well-known philosopher with his extensive work on the meaning of power, where he says and I agree, that "power is everywhere and in every relationship". For Foucault, power has the ability to bring about positive or negative changes (Ibid). Historically, the phrase 'power over' has been more frequently used and has often been

portrayed as negative because of the abuse and misuse attributed to it. In my understanding power is the ability to control people, actions and activities, whether by an individual or a system. It can be exercised mentally, physically and psychologically. However 'power over' can also be viewed positively such as in the teacher-student, parent-infant or doctor-patient relationship (Stortz, 1997, p. 74), where the latter acknowledges and needs the former to exercise control in the best interest of the other.

Stortz also applied the approach of power over, within and with, in the context of church. In this sense power over alluded to the God-believer relationship, with God being seen as master, judge or father. These portraits of God present challenges in our understanding of these words (master, judge etc.) in our context where all three roles give a sense of control and authority. However, it requires another understanding of the God who poured out His spirit on all and subjected himself to death as a servant leader. It is a God who through the Holy Spirit empowers his people, shares power with them and enables them to demonstrate that power from within. So we see in the example of Jesus (3.2) how power to, with and within are exemplified. It is this servant leadership approach that church leaders are called to emulate.

When one party exerts power over or has a power advantage the result is a power imbalance or what is also known as power asymmetry. This can be further expounded in the social dominance theory, which has been an area of research and debate for many scholars, in particular Sidanus and Pratto. The social dominance theory (SDT) posits human societies arranged as "systems of group-based social hierarchies" with one dominant group above and subordinate groups below (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999, p. 31). The dominant group owns all the positive social values including power, wealth and social status while the lower groups experience a much lower standard of living. To me it seems there is an unequal and deliberate distribution of social values. The theory seeks to point out the possible attitudinal and behavioural differences between the sexes. Using this theory in a patriarchal society and as posited by Sidanus and Pratto (1999, p. 33), men fall within one of the named systems as a dominant group in the gender category. As such males would benefit from the privilege and power by virtue of their automatic membership in this group which is socially constructed, and regardless of their individual capability.

SDT originates from the belief that regardless of culture or society, men are more inclined to be socially dominant than women and as such have higher levels of social dominance

orientation (SDO). Reasons given by Sidanus, Pratto and Bobo (1994) are that women are by nature more concerned about the welfare of others and tend to be more emotional, sentimental and submissive while men were described as dominant, forceful and rational, suggesting that men are predisposed to higher levels of SDO. This theory, says Haugen (2016), affirms that discrimination by individuals and institutions uphold and contribute to inequality with social groups that are dominant exerting power over non-dominant social groups. Scholars question the use of groupings as part of the research, on the basis that people respond according to the gender identification that they are assigned or associate themselves with (Wilson & Liu, 2003). I believe there is need to redefine these socially assigned roles and engage in social reform.

The power imbalance as depicted in the SDT can be considered when exploring the complicated issue of IPV. The male, by virtue of membership in the dominant group is given an unfair advantage over his partner which can eventually result in misuse and abuse of his power. Rowlands (2008) believes that people who are constantly denied power gradually internalise the negative messages and eventually come to believe the messages; also described as internalised oppression. For instance in an abusive relationship the abused partner will eventually stop sharing her opinions since she may be made to believe it is not her place to speak out. In such an instance the abuser holds all the power in the relationship and the abused is robbed of all power including freedom of expression. In this master's thesis men who are perpetrators and abusers in an intimate partner relationship could be considered to be part of a group-based social hierarchy according to the SDT. This could in part explain why men behave in such a controlling manner but does not excuse their use of violence, nor does it give them the right to misuse their power. This further emphasises the need for education, re-socialisation and redefinition of gender roles and its attending responsibilities.

Foucault, cited by Kearsley (2008, p. 98), states that the church should not underestimate the influence of society as it relates to status distinctions since the members of the church are also a part of the society. At the same time the church ought not to undervalue its role in influencing its community through its caring nature. Both the church and society have powerful influences in how individuals operate. Discussions about power in church circles are sometimes quite confusing as Christians grapple with the secular understanding of power alongside 'power from on high' (Luke 24:49). God uses power – 'you will receive power from on high', in reference to the Holy Spirit (power to/shared with). The scripture teaches that power ought to be shared

with the excluded and marginalized just as Jesus gave power to disciples to drive out demons and heal the sick, which did not result in Jesus having less power.

Stortz (1997) notes that the understanding of power becomes even more complicated for women as they grapple with their experiences of the absence and abuse of power. She further proposes that power can be defined under the headings of commodity, capacity and relationship, with commodity being external power accumulated for instance in the church where some pastors have more power than others due to their status. Individual ability (capacity) is also defined as power to dominate or educate, also evident in the church where the more educated are usually selected as leaders. As relationship, power is understood as how each relates to the other rather than focusing on what one has or is able to do (Ibid). This relational focus is perhaps the preferred way to define and see power at work as it highlights power as being in connection with others in community – shared power. Kearsley (2008, p. 160) implores the church to acknowledge its exercise of power 'over', and shift to power 'with' and 'to'; relational power in a community on its way to Jesus. In essence it means giving up the privilege of 'power over' (capacity and commodity) to enable another to benefit from 'power to'. This will see a demonstration of power to the vulnerable and outcast, as is needed for women in abusive relationships.

In the discussion chapter we will examine how the issue of power or lack thereof impacts the prevalence of IPV and how the church, in its response to DV, can help change the understanding of power.

**3.4 Empowerment and diakonia**
According to Rowlands (2008), the meaning of the term empowerment is not very clear and this can be attributed to the fact that its root word 'power' is also disputed. As discussed in 3.3 power is the control that one person exerts over another, sometimes forcefully and at other times subtly. In that sense then, empowerment can be seen as the ability to level the 'power' playing field by regaining control over one's life and actions. Empowerment, as a process, must lead people to feel that they are capable of making their own choices, and have the right to influence and make decisions. This understanding of empowerment will require changing negative social constructions, says Rowlands (2008).

The experience of empowerment is said to function within three dimensions as asserted by Rowlands (2008); on a personal level where each is rid of internal oppression and develops a sense of confidence and worth; on the relational level the individual is involved in contributing to the relationship on an equal level; and on the collective level people work alongside each other in the interest of the greater good. Naturally each of these dimensions are interrelated and one can lead to the other. I am inclined to endorse this model, which though not perfect, is one that is applicable and needed for victims of abuse who feel like they have lost all sense of dignity and feel dehumanised.

According to Nissen (2012, p. 27), empowerment points to the positive change that results from its actions and usually results in a change of life and situation. He goes on to say empowerment assumes at least two actors; one who has the resources or the capacity that the other doesn't have; one is perceived to have power over the other; thus the need to em-power - meaning a sharing of power. This understanding of empowerment points to the need for varying levels of education which can result in transformation and reconciliation as victims seek to experience wholeness and healing. This will be critical for those women who have been victimised by their partners and prevented from experiencing any social life through the domination and control that their partners exert over them; thus making them vulnerable (WCC, 2013, p. 44).

I concur with Mosedale (2003, p. 17) who narrowed down the empowerment definition to put the spotlight on women in saying that "women's empowerment is the process by which women redefine gender roles in ways which extend their possibilities for being and doing". This definition accords the control of change to women allowing them to define their path for the future and enhance their ability to serve different roles. Women's empowerment can also be found in the diaconal dialogue where the concept and definition of empowerment has shifted overtime from what has been the traditional view of charity and aid which involves a power imbalance (3.3), to a more wholesome model of transformation as outlined by Ham (2014). It also highlights the need to review gender roles bearing in mind that redefinition does not necessarily mean a complete change since there are some roles that are generally accepted and recognized as they currently exist in specific contexts.

In this research empowerment is then understood as the social process through which persons (women) reclaim control over their own lives as they are able to participate in community as persons of dignity and worth. In so doing they become autonomous beings fully capable of

making decisions about their lives and contributing to the community and by extension society (Dietrich, 2014). They are then able to reclaim and foster power as they embrace their self-confidence, worth and dignity. This understanding is in keeping with empowerment as a main theory of diakonia, understood as the caring ministry of the church, offering help in areas which others have neglected.

In the Baptist and Methodist contexts the view of the role of women is quite mixed with some who are open to women being involved at all levels while others believe that women should be limited to certain roles in the church. For instance there still are come congregations that will not support a female as their pastor especially since the autonomy of the local church, as indicated in 2.4, allows churches to make their own decisions in this regard. Conscious of this challenge Baptist leaders have been charged to sensitize their members about female ministers (Johnson, 2019).

The needs of those seeking empowerment or who are being empowered will vary from one individual/group to another and as such Rappaport (1987) indicates that empowerment will be different for each. Therefore there is no easy solution or template to be used, no one size fits all. In respecting their autonomy, each person will be involved in the process of their own empowerment and allowed to craft what fits them best. This is critical for those who have been victimised repeatedly for years by their partners and have lost all sense of worth and value. The manner in which they will require empowerment may be impacted by the ways in which abuse was meted out to them. In this regard diaconal actors must be sensitive and conscious of their needs, allowing them to determine their own path. This approach which emphasises shared power is supported by Nissen (2012) and Nordstokke (2013). Nordstokke believes the empowerment process emerges from below or within, which is a change in the way mission was conducted in the past, where the process was determined from the top or externally. For him empowerment has a God-given goal of energising people to participate in God's project, of promoting human dignity and justice (Ibid). Similarly, Haugen (2016) states that when individuals, families and communities are empowered it is a sign that there has been adequate acknowledgement of human rights principles in the decision-making process.

This is the process and approach to empowerment that this research recommends for churches as they respond to victims of domestic violence; empowerment from below establishing shared power. Methodists and Baptists share the common understanding based on the Bible that every

human is interdependent though unique, created in the image and likeness of God and is part of a community of human beings sharing with each other (2.4/2.5). The church as humble agents of change must embrace and demonstrate mutuality and equality listening to each victim's unique life story. This will not be achieved on a whim but will require hard and consistent work and regular monitoring; reflection and evaluation. The church plays a role of solidarity but more from a view of partnering with the other; the stranger in their midst.

Enabling the empowerment of those who have been victimised will require that the church be open to new ways of being, embark on new approaches and see with new eyes. In this process of empowerment women should be allowed to set their own agenda and move at their own pace. As was stated before (1.0) the empowerment of all is critical to the overall development of any society and in keeping with that the discussions on gender and development have been increasing with a focus on the empowerment of women. The word empowerment is frequently used in the gender conversations since for centuries women have been experiencing a sense of disempowerment. This has been the basis for the mandate of gender equality and empowerment of women that the SDGs are promoting.

A recurring question is whether or not the empowerment of women will result in a reversal of roles leading to men seeking empowerment. From the perspective of the church, the aim to empower ought not to lead women to exert power over men but rather to experience shared 'power with' all. Any other approach will be futile as men resist losing control. In helping women to be more empowered the process should also involve helping men to understand the need for power 'with' and not power 'over'. I believe involving men in the discussion on gender is important in moving forward.

How churches facilitate the empowerment of victims of IPV will be further reflected on in chapter six as it relates to empowerment as transformation and reconciliation.

**Chapter 4: Methodology**

**4.0 Chapter introduction**

This chapter will give an overview of the process undertaken in carrying out the study. Matters such as the design, sampling, data collection and analysis, as well as validity and reliability, ethical considerations and other limitations will be discussed to provide some insights into the process.

**4.1 Research design**

According to Creswell, qualitative research examines how groups and individuals understand a particular social or human problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 4). Therefore the qualitative approach is relevant for this research as we explore the social phenomena of domestic violence. This multi-case study was influenced by the transformative worldview with the aim to "examine an issue related to the oppression of individuals" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 17). This transformative approach aims at confronting oppressive structures with the intent to offer ways to change what currently exists in the interest of the victims. With this in mind open-ended interviews were conducted to garner information and experiences from the participants in a manner that did not further marginalize them but with the intent to understand the dynamics of what exists and what the two churches are doing in the fight against domestic violence.

**4.2 Sampling**

Upon reflection of the research question it was thought best to interview a cross section of individuals as a way to get a fair assessment of the situation. Interviews were conducted with 16 persons from different categories of society; church, private/public sector and victims. With the use of purposive sampling, persons interviewed were chosen on the basis of their positions within the organisation and institutions, and who possessed reliable information and experience relevant to the study (Bryman, 2012, p. 418).

Separate questions were prepared and administered for the three categories of interviewees. A recording instrument was used in collecting the responses for the interviews to ensure the use of accurate and reliable data. The questions were guided and focused on defining domestic violence, its various types and impact, and ascertaining the churches views on the matter and how churches are seen in their response to aid victims.

### 4.3 Recruitment of participants

All protocols were followed in the recruitment of the participants. A detailed consent form (see appendix ii) was provided to each person indicating what the research entailed and how their participation would be treated, as well as pointing out their freedom to withdraw from the process at any given time.

### 4.3.1 Table of participants

*Table 1*

|  | Pastor/Leader | Layperson | Male | Female | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Baptist | 4* | 1 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| Methodist | 2^ | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Organisations |  |  |  | 4 | 4 |
| Victims |  |  |  | 4 | 4 |
| **Total Participants** |  |  | **4** | **12** | **16** |

*2 pastors were denominational leaders and 1 was a retired pastor

^1 pastor was the denominational leader

### 4.3.2 Churches

Persons from each denomination were selected based on their positions and their knowledge. Being a Baptist, I was able to directly approach the leaders of the denomination, as well as leaders of congregations. A special effort was made to ensure there was a voice from both genders (table 1). The Methodist participants were approached in a different way. The denominational leader was first approached and then asked to make recommendations for other participants to be interviewed. Of the eight participants four were based in the capital city of Kingston & St. Andrew where both denominational head offices are located , while the other four were located in St. Ann, St. Catherine, Clarendon and Portland (see 2.1 figure 3).

### 4.3.3 Organisations

There are some organisations that are integrally involved in the fight against domestic violence and so it was thought fitting that they also be interviewed to share their experience and their thoughts on how the church has been supporting their endeavours. In dialogue with key stakeholders three organisations were approached, with a fourth being suggested along the way. The necessary enquiries were made to ascertain the ideal persons to be interviewed in each case. Of the four organisations interviewed (table 1), three were based in the capital city (Kingston – see 2.1) while the other was from another parish (St. Mary). This speaks to the fact that much of the activities and resources are somewhat limited to the urban centre (see 2.1).

Interviews were conducted with the Bureau of Gender Affairs, Woman Inc. and the Family Court, all urban based organisations. While the Family Court, which handles all legal matters pertaining to family and children, has a branch in at least 4 of the 14 parishes, the central offices of Woman Inc. and the Bureau of Gender Affairs are centred in Kingston. The fourth organisation, the Police Community Safety and Security Branch is located in each parish and has responsibility for community safety through its community-based policing which deals with domestic violence. The interview was conducted in St. Ann with an officer from the St. Mary branch (see 2.1 figure 3).

### 4.3.4 Victims

A sample of two victims was selected using sampling similar to the snowball effect as described by Bryman (2012), who states that the sample can be built through asking interviewees for suggestions about others who may have a perspective on the focus of inquiry. The Woman Inc., the organisation that has direct contact with victims, referred me to two key victims. One other victim volunteered to be a participant after learning about the research. Though she resided in Africa during the actual course of the abuse she currently lives and works in Jamaica. The fourth victim approached me following a shared conversation at a church event where I revealed the line of study being undertaken. Indicating that she too had experienced domestic violence she then expressed willingness to be interviewed. Unlike random sampling, I was purposeful and ensured that the units of analysis possessed the needed knowledge and experience in keeping with the research questions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

### 4.4 Data collection methods

While interviews was the primary method of data collection, document retrieval was also used. Visits were made to key organisations and research was conducted to gather and examine relevant documents and literature that would be useful to the research.

### 4.4.1 Interviews

An interview is a conversation between two or more persons with the intent to gather information or unearth data, and is believed to be one of the mostly widely used method in qualitative research (Bryman, 2012). During this study interviews were intended to identify views and opinions from participants through guided questions. The inquiries were carefully crafted to ensure that the research question would be fully explored. Informants were then chosen and introduced to the interview guide (see appendix i) prior to the actual interviews.

Attention was paid to ensure that the interviewees were properly briefed prior to the start of the process; telling them about the purpose of the interview, their role in the conversation, and the use of recording instrument (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 154). The length of the interviews ranged from 20 to 90 minutes and were conducted in Jamaica during July 2018.

While the ideal interview may be face-to-face there are other acceptable modes of conducting interviews such as via written form, by telephone or online (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 188). Two of the interviews were conducted in written form where the participants chose to write their responses to the interview questions. Another seven were conducted face-to-face and the remaining seven were done via telephone conversations. Live face-to-face interviews proved more interactive and come with certain advantages as the interviewer is able to identify facial expressions and body reactions.

The open-ended interviews allowed better interaction with the participants and better opportunities to present follow up questions as deemed necessary for clarification. At times follow up questions were necessary to further probe a particular answer that was provided. Due to the sensitive nature of the interviews with victims I often allowed them to share their experience without interruption as it was expressed that they do not get many opportunities to share their story. One commented that the interview was somewhat therapeutic and was curious about possible follow up actions. These interviews could be described as narrative interviews, telling their stories, as outlined by Brinkmann and Kvale (2015, p. 178). Conscious of the possible power asymmetries mentioned by Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), I made efforts not to dominate the conversation by any exercise of power but allowed participants the opportunity to express themselves freely.

### 4.4.2 Documents

As was indicated in 2.2, a detailed statistical IPV survey was conducted in Jamaica and the results were published in June 2018. This survey points to some relevant statistics that proves useful in this research, some of which will be referred to throughout this master's thesis; particularly in chapters 5 and 6.

### 4.5 Data analysis and interpretation

Mouton (2001, p. 108) posits that data analysis is the process of breaking down data collected into themes, patterns, and trends that are manageable and that will help to guide the researcher

to identify relationships between concepts or theories. Interpretation then seeks to find meaning that explains the observed patterns or themes, thus applying theories to the data to bring new insights.

During the interview and data collection process note was taken that IPV was the form of DV that had the most negative impact in Jamaica. As such though the interview questions specifically addressed questions related to DV in general, this master's thesis will reflect on IPV as was mentioned in 1.0, and 1.5.

### 4.5.1 Coding/thematic strategy

In attempting to interpret large chunks of data, coding is recommended as a starting point. Coding is the process of placing data into organized segments that seem related and assigning labels or themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 193). The process is gradually narrowed down and grouped into categories. This approach was adopted for the three sets of interviews and was done after interviews were carefully transcribed, read and reviewed. Keywords, phrases and comments were underlined, noted and then compiled into categories.

As part of the interpretation of the coded data the findings were summarized taking note of similarities, differences, trends, new and surprising discoveries which were then discussed in relation to the proposed theories in the study.

### 4.6 Validity and reliability

Whether a research is valid and reliable is very important in any study. Validity speaks to whether or not the research is credible and accurate, and reliability speaks to consistency of the data presented in keeping with other researches of similar nature. In my being completely transparent about the purpose of the research, participants in turn were quite open and honest in their responses. The consistency of the responses from the variety of informants revealed that the information garnered was valid and accurate. It was generally felt that the research questions were self-explanatory and that the participants understood them clearly.

The process of crosschecking and use of a recorder helps to ensure that the data collected is reliable (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 200). The transcribing of recorded data is thought to be one way to test reliability. These were utilised during and after data collection respectively.

As was mentioned in the introductory chapter, the direct knowledge of Baptist structures, policies and systems (see 1.4) helped the data collection process in that the individuals selected knew me fairly well and as such provided a level of confidence that the responses received were reliable. Being a previous employee did not seem to have affected the sincerity and accurateness of the respondents. The Methodist church respondents were receptive and facilitating, knowing that I was connected to the Baptist church and known by its leaders. My knowledge of the Methodist context in Jamaica was a positive element in conducting the interview. The atmosphere of the interview afforded open and honest conversations.

It was evident that the interviews allowed some of the participants to appreciate the need for the research and sometimes they remarked that the research had opened their eyes to certain realities they had not thought of or given attention to before. In some instances commitments were made to change approaches and work on weak areas.

## 4.7 Ethical considerations

The protection of the privacy of the participants was a key concern given the sensitive nature of the research subject. In order to achieve this several steps were taken before, during and after the study. Firstly, questions were carefully crafted so as not to collect or divulge unnecessary personal information. Secondly, approval was sought and received from Norwegian Centre for Research data (NSD) (see appendix iii) in keeping with the regulations of the university (VID). The required consent form was prepared and adjudicated to all participants indicating that the interview would be anonymised and that it was their choice to participate in the research. In some instances telephone interviews were conducted to protect the privacy of victims who shared their stories.

In keeping with Norwegian regulations and to protect the informants the interviewees were anonymised as follows: Church; DL – Denominational Leader, CP – Church Pastor, LL – Lay Leaders, organisation leaders are labelled Org1-4, and DV1-4 represents victims.

On the advice of Creswell (2018) additional care was taken during the analysis and presentation of the findings to avoid disclosing any data that would put the informants at risk. As required all stored data will be subsequently destroyed after the research is complete.

## 4.8 Challenges during data collection

Important to note in any research are the possible factors that may have impacted the process of conducting the study. As a previous employee with the Jamaica Baptist Union (1.4) I had certain biases and even though this was advantageous it was also a challenge of familiarity with some of the interviewees. It also meant that being conscious of certain preferences and prejudices I tried to remain objective. Additionally it may be possible that having known me and assuming my knowledge of the setting and internal workings of the denomination some participants may not have given full details as they might have to another researcher.

There were several delays in trying to initiate contact via telephone and settling dates and times for interviews. These could be termed as logistical challenges but they did not substantially affect the quality of the data.

There were times when the interviews were disturbed due to other interferences on the part of the participant who had to attend to other matters, resulting in a loss of momentum of the interview. In one instant the interview location had to be changed to avoid distractions and another instant the process was paused to allow the outside noises to fade. On one particular occasion the interview was delayed for a considerable time as both researcher and church interviewee intervened into what turned out to be an actual domestic dispute between a male and a female at a nearby location. This in some way reemphasised the importance for this research but neither of these interferences affected the quality of the data.

In the cases of the victims there was a challenge to get them to answer specific questions as they became quite wrapped up in telling their stories and on occasion somewhat emotional as they recounted incidents they had experienced. Some proceeded to tell their story even before the interview questions were presented and it was hard to bring them back to the actual questions subsequently due to a  flood of emotions. I found that some of the interviews were so vivid that it resulted in emotional responses from time to time. It was useful at the end of some interviews to pause and compose feelings in order to maintain the integrity of the interview process.

At different points the respondents, in particular the victims, switched to speaking the local dialect known as Jamaican Patois (patwa), as they became more passionate and involved in the interview. Interviews which were done in that language were translated for the purposes of the

interpretation of the data. As such some quotes provided in the findings may be rephrased for better understanding (Kvale, 2007, p. 132).

**Chapter 5: Presentation of informants' views illuminated by relevant statistics**

**5.0 Chapter introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to tell a story from the data collected. The story will be from the perspective of three categories of interviewees: organisations, churches and victims; in light of the Women's Health Survey (WHS) which presents some relevant statistics. In the early stages of the research questions were directed towards DV in general but as the research progressed IPV was lifted out as the main type of DV affecting Jamaica, as reflected in the interviews and the survey. References will be used to both DV and IPV, not to contradict but to complement.

The following codes were used to anonymise the interviewees: Churches: DL – Denominational Leader, CP – Church Pastor, and LL – Lay leaders, Organisations: Org. 1-4 – Organisation leaders, and DV1-4 – Victims. Quotes and excerpts from the participants' responses have been included to substantiate the analysis and to provide the reader with a better understand of the findings (Patton, 1987). In some instances more than one quote has been presented in response to a particular question, indicating a mix of viewpoints. These are interspersed with my comments and statistics from the WHS.

**5.1 Awareness of DV and its impact**

**5.1.1 An understanding of domestic violence**

The church leaders interviewed in the research who were asked 'what would you define as domestic violence' described DV in similar ways. One common element was that DV occurred in the confines of the home environment. Other definitions referred specifically to abuse between partners. The use of words such as physical, verbal, sexual and emotional abuse were recurring in their understanding of DV. Mention was also made of how the act diminishes, violates or demeans the other person. One interviewee captures these thoughts by saying,

> The person seems to have physical power or someone takes advantage whether psychological or physical strength against another that might seem to be weaker and vulnerable (DL3).

These characteristics capture the general essence of what domestic violence is, suggesting some sense of awareness of the issue on the part of the church leaders. It was noted that the responses

centered on violence between partners in an intimate relationship which can be a reflection of the fact that this is the kind that is most prevalent in the Jamaican context as discussed in 1.3.

A similar question was asked to the victims and their responses were understandably limited to their own personal experiences. For most of them their responses came from an emotional place and was most evident when one said "It is painful, heartrending. It's like you are here but you are not, like a ghost tormenting (DV1)". This reiterated that DV can have different definitions depending on who is speaking. It was clear that some victims were still experiencing it or the memory was so fresh in their minds that they became quite explicit. The magnitude of the experience of DV between intimate partners was very apparent.

### 5.1.2 Other elements that define DV

Leaders in the organisations were asked to give some details about what constitutes abuse, when is it classified as abuse and who are the typically victims of abuse. This was to further expand the definition of domestic abuse or violence. Three respondents indicated that abuse could be physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, and economical (figure 6). Among these, physical abuse was high on the list. According to one interviewee "most time it is physical abuse that we deal with; swelling, bruises, beat up, assault" (Org3). Economic abuse was mentioned by two respondents and was not considered as a major type, which confirms the view that economic abuse was the least experienced form of IPV with a mere 8.5% (figure 6) lifetime prevalence and no current (last 12 months) prevalence according to WHS (Williams, 2018).
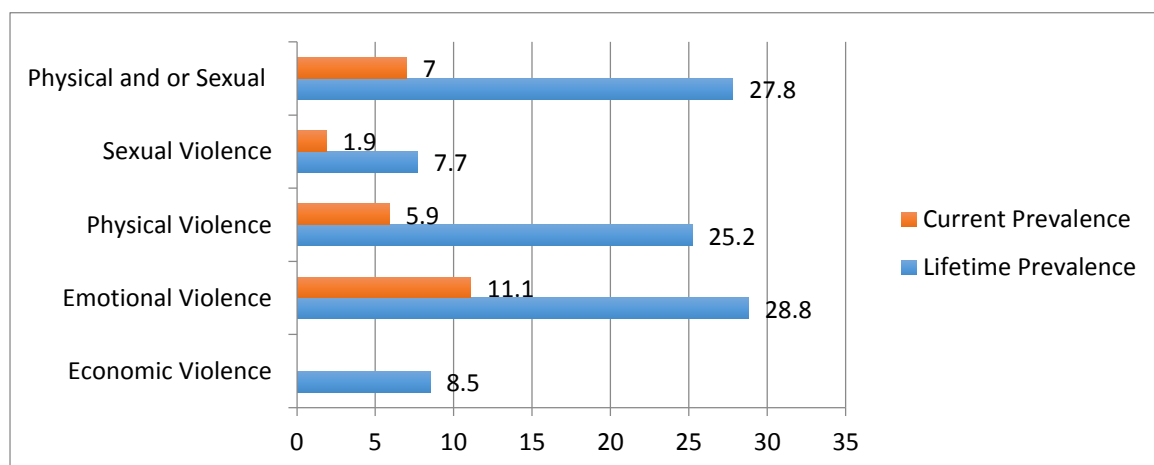


*Figure 6 : National Lifetime and Current Prevalence by type of Violence and Abuse (Williams, 2018)*

In answering, 'at which point the violation was classified as abuse' it was noted by one organisation that it was determined by the police with support from medical practitioners (Org1). On the other hand another participant indicated that "I let the client define it. I take a client direction approach; they define their pain. I can't feel their pain so I let them decide" (Org4). This response was unusual and surprising but welcomed as very often there is a debate on who decides that abuse has taken place resulting in women feeling offended and consequently shying away from making future reports. Additionally, in instances where there is no sign of physical harm many women are not taken seriously and are encouraged to return home thus emotional abuse, ranking number one (figure 6), is not given much attention. This is one reason often given why women do not report abuse as they fear they will not be believed.

Much of what has been referred to in this study gives attention to the female as the victim of DV in an intimate partner relationship. Leaders in the organisations that related directly to victims were also asked about the typical victims of DV from their experience. In one response reference was made to the published report, Women's Health Survey (WHS), (Williams, 2018) that provided some statistics revealing that 1 in every 4 women in Jamaica has experienced intimate partner violence in their lifetime. There was a prevalence of 27.8% of women who were affected and these were women mainly in urban areas. 1 out of 3 were between ages 25-29, while those 18 years and younger who entered their first union were twice as likely to experience violence as those who were older (Williams, 2018, pp. 43-51).

The survey also highlighted other important elements that make up the profile of a typical victim of IPV, including the level of education of the victims which revealed that over 20% of those who experienced severe abuse had little or no education (figure 7). At the same time those who had up to tertiary level education had the lowest prevalence of abuse. This supports the claim that the higher the level of education the less likely women were to experience moderate to severe abuse. As indicated in 2.3 at least 40% of the Jamaican population may not have attained education at the secondary level making them susceptible to IPV.
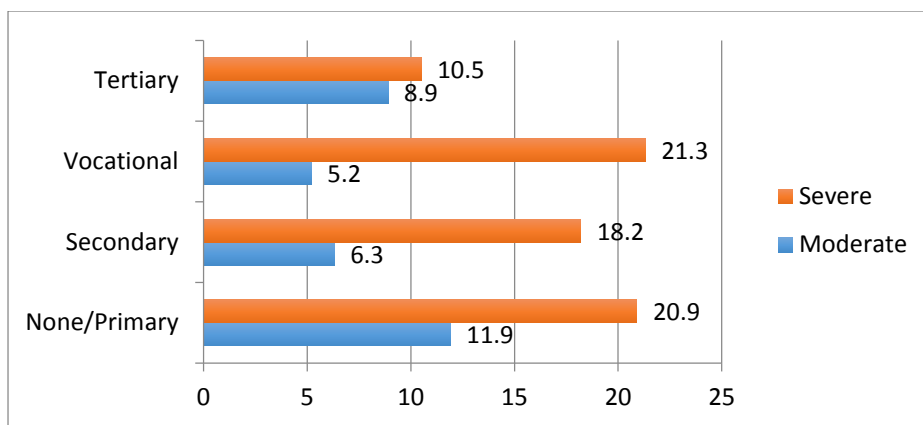
*Figure 7 - Prevalence of IPPV[2] by Severity and Education of Women, Jamaica, 2016* (Williams, 2018)

The report also establishes what this research has indicated, that DV is very often IPV in the Jamaican context. While aware of the other forms of DV, IPV takes center stage in terms of its frequency and impact. This was also supported by another respondent who stated that females were the typical victims with profiles of being "unemployed, unemployable, vulnerable women depending on men" (Org3). When a woman has little or no education it is equated to being unemployable and as a result dependent on her partner to provide for her, which makes her vulnerable to abuse.

In looking at the typical abusers or perpetrators the respondents all pointed to the males; some on account of their professions that make them exercise a certain level of power. Soldiers, police, doctors, pastors, deacons (Org 1) were among those named. One victim said "He is an ex-convict and an ex-police … like a mafia (gangster) in the police force" (DV1). Two organisation respondents indicated that males who witnessed violence at home as a child or who were raised with strong patriarchal values were among the typical abusers. This was also supported by the WHS which pointed to abusers being those who witnessed violence with parents, experienced abuse themselves, were raised with strong patriarchal values or were users of recreational drugs and alcohol (Williams, 2018, p. 51). Again this was corroborated by DV2 when she said, "he (my husband) saw his father treating his mother that way…he drinks a lot...always drinking (alcohol) and he smokes as well; ganja".

The responses of these informants attest to the profile of the abusers that are highlighted by the leaders of the organisations as well as the survey, except that no mention is made of certain

---

[2] IPPV – Intimate Partner Physical Violence

professions in the survey. In my estimation the word of the victims and the experience of the organisation leaders is sufficient to give us a picture of the realities that the survey may not have identified.

The understanding of domestic violence from the perspective of the respondents is comparative to the general understanding as outlined in other literature as well as recent surveys conducted. The conclusion can be drawn that the victims reflected the profiles that organisations and church leaders described, providing a general sketch of those who are more at risk for IPV by virtue of their level of education, the age at which they enter live in relationships, and the profile and practices of their partners.

### 5.1.3 The impact of DV on the person, the family and the society

Both victims and leaders of organisations received questions regarding the possible impact of DV. The impact ranged from personal to family and to society.

On a personal level, victims shared how the abuse affected them mentally, psychologically, physically, economically and emotionally. In addition, their immediate and extended families and friends were also impacted negatively from the years of abuse in some cases. One victims had this to say,

> I have been on medication for depression (…) and anxiety (…) been suffering with it over the years. My child is autistic because he raped me when I was on medication…he took the finances and tried to blackmail me to have sex with him to get money. My three children … don't talk to him; (they) call him sperm donor. I was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder …. I have suicidal thoughts. I attempted once by jumping off a gully (DV1).

Over time the effects of physical and emotional abuse can be severe as seen from the quote above. DV3 affirmed that the abuse can have a long lasting impact as in her case she has had to live with a nerve problem since the abuse. Williams (2018, p. 59) also researched the impact of violence on the health of women and children in Jamaica and discovered that women who had experienced physical and sexual violence had greater health issues with one third or 35% of the women confirming that they had long lasting health problems (figure 8). The psychological pain was also great with some suffering from depression to the point of suicide.
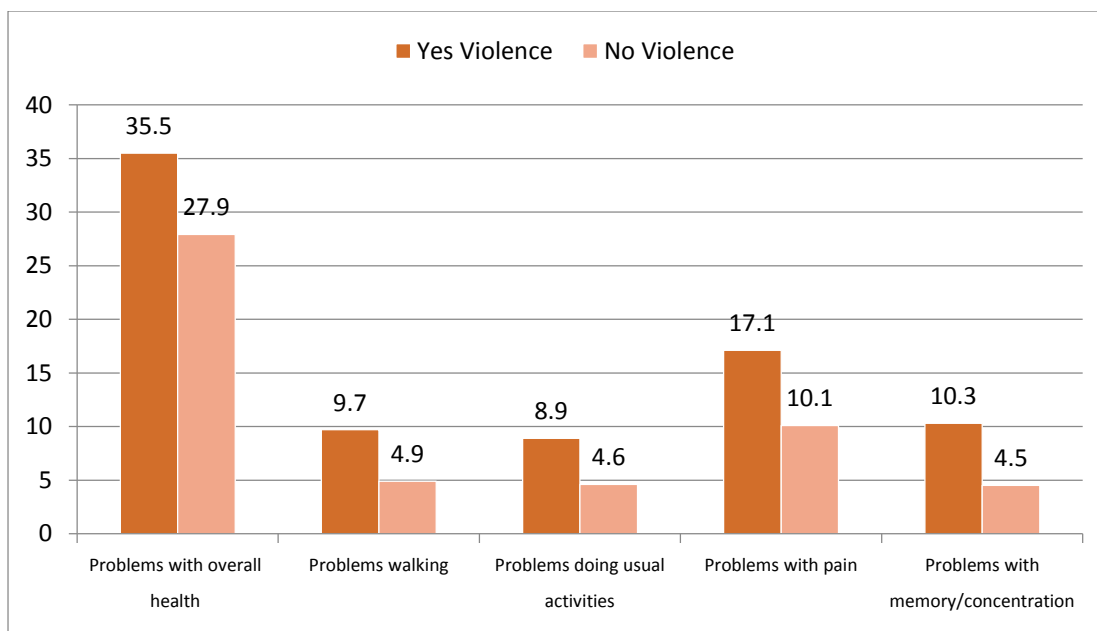
*Figure 8: Physical health problems reported among ever-partnered women by women's experience of physical and sexual violence (%), Jamaica 2016 (Williams, 2018)*

DV3 said the children became "fearful and avoided him". Another victim recounted the effects it has had on her daughter:

> She (my daughter) has a hole in her heart …. My daughter didn't want to go home because …her father … treats her bad as well. One day my daughter fought in class for the first time… I realized there was a link with him coming back into our lives. One time he abused the child…by kicking and pushing her. (DV2)

Victims (DV1-3) confessed to having lifetime health issues coming out of the experience of the abuse, while all victims noted the impact on their children. Children are affected mentally and psychologically from witnessing the encounters between the parents. At least 44% of children witness the act (Williams, 2018) while others are subjected to some form of abuse. According to Vargas et al (2005) and Hoff et al (2009) the response of children change over time and with age, in that some become withdrawn while others display signs of depression and become aggressive and violent towards their peers. This sometimes becomes evident in the school context where teachers and school counselors are encouraged to be aware of the signs as well as the steps to take in such cases or when they suspect or are informed of the existence of violence in the home (Org3).

One of the recurring concerns, noted in this research, as it relates to victims of DV is that they often times don't speak out about what is happening to them. This in many instances caused the abuse to continue for years. In fact the victims interviewed (DV1-4) stayed silent between 2 and 20 years before they sought help. Based on the responses from victims the reasons for their silence has concurred with the views of others as well as surveys conducted. Fear is one of the top reasons named for victims not speaking out. Informants recounted how their abuser threatened their lives if they told anyone. One victim (DV2) said that she was threatened by her partner with a knife and warned that if she told anyone he would kill her and then run away. DV1 also noted that her partner has a lot of influence and connections in the community, with police and others and that increased her fear and kept her silent for many years to protect her family. She also mentioned being stalked (trailed) for five months which restricted her movements. In both instances (DV1 & 2) it should be noted that both victims were either not working or working with a very limited income that could not cover day to day expenses. This left them both vulnerable and at the mercy of their abusers.

The informants from the organisations shared that many victims don't report abuse for fear of their lives; that their abusers may cause greater harm to them and their loved ones; especially children. Others are fearful to publicly testify in court due to corruption (see 2.2) and connections in the Jamaican justice system. "Abject fear is at work" (Org1) says one respondent. The victims are trapped by fear which leads to hopelessness. Unemployment or low income which leads to dependency is another factor that hinders victims from speaking. One victim tells that 'my salary was meagre, I couldn't pay rent on my own' (DV2). Some victims believe that they are at fault and deserve the abuse, while other victims believe it is a sign of love (Org3/4). Shame, lack of self-worth and stigma (Org4) are other factors that hindered disclosure of the abuse.

This research has highlighted that DV has a far reaching and negative impact on the person, the family and thereby the society. From the accounts of the informants their needs range from health to psychological to social, covering the entire life of the individual and affecting all their basic human rights.

### 5.1.4 The Bible and (domestic) violence

Since this master's thesis is seeking to identify what the church is doing to combat DV then it was pertinent to hear the views of church leaders on their interpretation of what the Bible says

about DV and if they believe the Bible supports abuse by assigning men as head of the households (Eph. 5: 21-24). In direct response CP3 referenced John 8:3-8 which speaks of the leaders proposing the stoning of the woman caught in adultery and Jesus opposing their actions. Luke 22: 49-51 was also mentioned when Jesus rejected the violent actions of his disciple when he was arrested. These two examples were used as biblical arguments against violence.

According to the responses of the church participants regarding the assignment of males as the head, the informants said "The Bible does not support domestic abuse based on statements or assumptions of male headship" (CP2) while another said their interpretation was that "the man is the spiritual head not in the physical sense" and Ephesians 5:6 meant that the man should "love his wife as Christ loves the church" (CP1). Another respondent was of the view that having headship of the house "doesn't give power to abuse; but leadership…in everything there is a leader to give guidance and direction. A head covers, shields, protects (CP3)". All three responses gives the sense that there is some agreement with the man taking the lead in the household but not for abusive and dominating purposes but from a place of love and honour as one participant repeated the command to "do unto others as we have them do unto us and to love one another" (DL3). As seen in figure 9 the survey revealed that women were largely in agreement that the leadership of the home was the role of the male and the woman's roles was to take care of the home (Williams, 2018, p. 38).
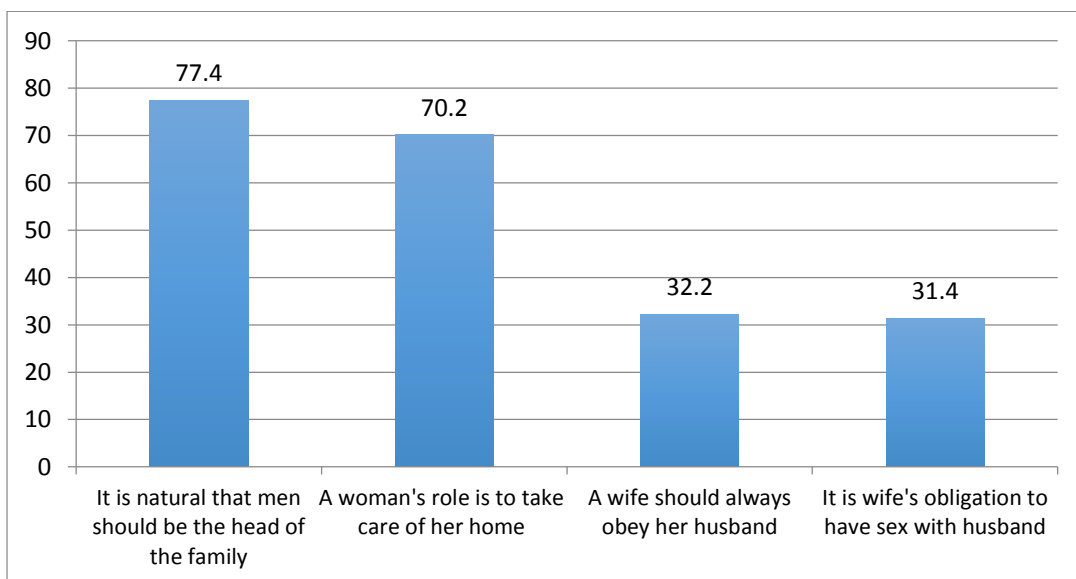


*Figure 9 - Women's attitude towards traditional gender roles, Jamaica, 2016 (Williams, 2018)*

In further highlighting what the Bible says about DV the church interviewees noted that the Bible does not speak to it directly but the respondents placed emphasis on all being created in the image of God and so each is endowed with human dignity and deserves respect. This should be interpreted that DV is an attack upon this God-given right.

.The research indicates that the church leaders' interpretation of the Bible points to a rejection of abuse and an embrace of love as the guide. There was no direct objection to men being the head of the household, in keeping with the WHS but more that this should not be used to justify or perpetuate the misuse of their power.

## 5.2 The current efforts and awareness of the (Baptist/Methodist) church

Having established a general understanding of DV and reflected on the church's view on the act of DV in light of scriptures we now turn attention to the church's current response to DV.

### 5.2.1 How does the church (Baptist/Methodist) respond to domestic violence?

This encapsulates the essence of the research question for this master's thesis. Questions were asked in an effort to capture what churches had done or were doing in their response to the crises of DV. This will be further explored as the master's thesis progresses.

With this in mind the research questions posed to church leaders asked whether or not DV was a subject that was addressed in the preaching and teaching ministry of the church. Five of the eight leaders acknowledged that DV was not a matter that was dealt with during sermons or Bible study and the other three mentioned the possibility of it being addressed on rare occasions. This observation was corroborated by Nason-Clark et al (2018) who noted that pastors confessed that they rarely raised the matter of abuse in premarital counselling.

In response to a question on the church's view of DV the respondents felt that the subject of DV was not taboo in the church but at the same time it was "ignored" (LL1), there was "reluctance in dealing with the issue" (CP2) and a "culture of silence (that) is pervasive and prominent" (DL1). On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being unacceptable and 5 being excellent, the church leaders gave an average score of 2.1 as their rating for their denominations response to DV (figure 10).
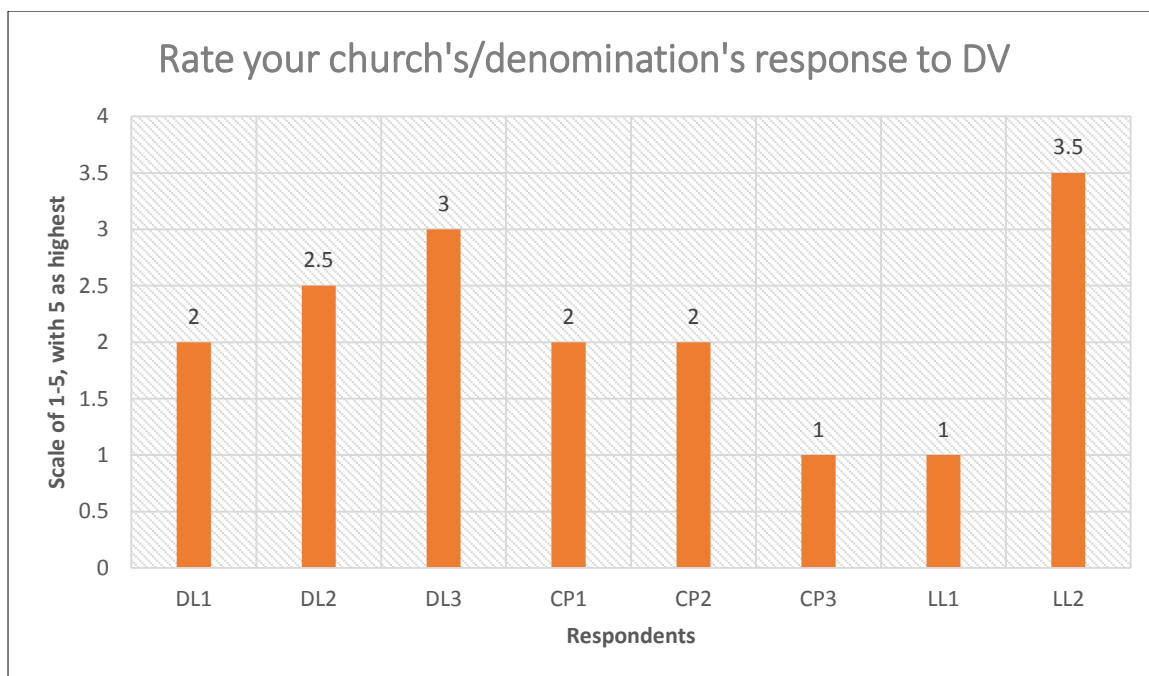
*Figure 10*

In keeping with the average score of 2.1 response, churches responded that there were no specific programs currently being offered to victims or their families. At present their primary response was occasional counselling as a reactive measure, when someone asks for help. For two church leaders there also existed a referral service in their specific local church but not from a denominational perspective. Referrals include pointing persons to relevant organisations or institutions that offer specific assistance to their situations. One women's group was also reaching out to abused women (LL1).

The victims felt that the church's response was not acceptable and seemed to be lacking. DV3 said she was "cold shouldered" by members as well as deacons of her church, while she had a positive response from her pastor once he became aware of the matter and she received help from select church sisters who offered "informal counselling". This church mentioned, is one of the churches in this study.

Another victim had a totally different experience and blames her church (leaders) for much of the violence she experienced. She recounts it by saying,

I said it (the violence) to church people and they call me, beg me not to press charges because he just came back from prison… so I stop go church completely. … I feel like they put me in the mess (DV1).

She further stated that while experiencing the violence she decided to find a way of relief by running away from her partner and going to church. She thought that when she gave her life to God it might have caused him to lose interest in her since she would change her mode of dressing to something more traditional and boring, as she saw some church persons dress (Knight, 2019). But then she says because the church she attended doesn't approve of living with a man outside marriage,

Him (her partner) and the pastor planned a wedding without me know (her knowing) and tell me mi (I) have to be married to live wid (with) him. (…) from the day I say I do to him all hell break loose (DV1).

According to her, ever since they got married the violence worsened and when she sought their (church) help they accused her of either being disobedient or provoking her husband or that she had a problem that she needed deliverance (freedom) from (DV1).

This highlighted that some religions, including Christians, are prone to believe that the abused person may be possessed by other external factors, such as evil spirits, that may influence their behaviour. As mentioned in theory chapter (3.2.1) religious beliefs vary and some religious practices do negatively influence the response that church leaders provide for those who seek their help. Victims are then misled to other sources and blame placed on them for what they are experiencing. Evident in this narration is the fact that the woman was not believed when she reported the abuse and if it did happen the blame was placed squarely at her feet. The victims also believed that the church is a boring and dull place and Christians are unattractive, and joining would possibly make her less attractive and as such her partner would lose interest in her.

DV2 shared that she sought solace in a church in the hopes that somehow she would change and maybe that change would influence her husband to change as well. Even though the step she made didn't change her husband she had a positive experience with the church who supported and encouraged her through her ordeal.

The findings revealed that all three sought help and solace in a church; whether through a listening ear or for some sort of change to take place in their lives and that of their spouse. In one instance the church seemed to make the situation worse by forcing marriage and casting blame on the victim while another rejected the victim who was already a leader and member of said church. The third victim received positive responses from the church which included not just counselling but also moral and physical support with legal matters.

The four organisation leaders that responded to the interviews gave a range of answers to the matter of specific programmes the churches provide as support. One noted that though there seems to be a willingness by the church it has not materialized to anything concrete (Org4). Another recurring response is that DV is considered and viewed as a private matter with only the pastor being made aware. In the survey 31% of women believed IPV was a private matter between the man and the woman (Williams, 2018).

One participant (Org1) gave credit to select denominations (7th Day Adventists, Baptist Women and one Baptist congregation) who were supportive as financial donors as well as responsive to initiatives by other organisations. This supports the response of interviewees that they are to some extent aware of and supportive of the cause of DV. According to Org3 it is not enough to only be reactive with counselling sessions, if and when someone voices their distress, and a once a year mention of the issue, there is a need to do much more and raise more awareness. This is understood to be what the typical church continues to practice as a normal response. There seems to be a lack of appropriate structure to ensure that referral systems are in place to aid the leaders in directing victims.

The respondents were generally of the impression that the church was not doing enough and that they were primed as influential in the communities to make a greater impact as institutions that promote value. One informant (Org2) felt that if more is said from the pulpit there may be a better response. Two participants (Org1&2) opined that the church's activities were inconsistent and limited to reactive counselling and once a year events during May or June which are considered family month(s) in the Jamaican context and more so in churches. All the organisations unanimously declared their dissatisfaction with the church's involvement in DV as per question 20 of the questionnaire.

In summary we garner from the interviews that the church is not seen as adequately addressing and creating awareness on the issues of DV and that when some victims turn to the church for help their experiences have not been very positive.

### 5.2.2 Acknowledgement of other institutions

The church leaders had a basic knowledge of the organisations but some were not very familiar with what the organisations do and how they functioned. CL3 admitted that no structured system existed that facilitated referrals outside of the counselling session. The research did not reveal any existing partnership or collaboration between the named churches and the organisations handling issues related to DV except the mention of one Baptist Women's group and one Baptist congregation. CL3 lamented that most of the organisations which provided help were centered in Kingston and as such there isn't much support for those in other parishes which points to the limitation of help available.

Church leaders generally agreed that the work of the organisations was relevant even though it was not sufficient to handle all the needs of the country. One leader commended organisations for the work they do by saying "they have taken time and heart to deal with this when others have not done so (DL1).

There was also an important point by CP3 who pointed out that,

> A lot of these are centered in Kingston and a lot of people who need help are on the outskirt (rural areas)….sometimes …just to find J$300 a life is lost…some would want to run to the centre (shelter) but they don't have the money…if we have other units it would help.

It may cost over 500 Jamaican dollars (US$30) or more for public transportation to the shelter. This highlights the challenge of having only one shelter for a country of over 2.8 million where one in four women are affected by DV.

All church leaders felt that the services offered by these organisations were relevant and more so in relation to the ministry and mission of the church. This question was asked to get a sense of how church leaders viewed their ministry in relation to how others are responding to DV. One leader was challenged "to do what we should and be proactive in doing based on our

understanding of humanity; all of us being equal in God's eyes" (CP2). Another reiterated and underlined the task of the church by stating that "the mission and ministry of the church is to reach/rescue those who have become vulnerable because of their circumstances. Any (organisation) that reaches to this group of persons is relevant" (LL1). This reiterated the mandate of the church (2.4).

Organisations also outlined (see 2.2) the support services that they offered to victims and families and indicated that more can and should be done but resources were limited. In that regard they called on the churches to join them in providing care and support. In support of this one church leader indicated that the church can help with resources such as buildings and volunteers (CP3). The research seems to point to a willingness that needs to be supported by dialogue and action.

Victims were also somewhat aware of institutions that offered direct support; for instance the Woman Inc. This could be because it was the same organisation that recommended two of them to be interviewed. It was evident from the interviews that two of the victims were also in dialogue with the justice system through the courts and had related to the police on several occasions. However they both expressed frustrations with the justice system in Jamaica. One victim had this to say,

> The justice system in Jamaica when it comes to DV, it is tardy. They (police) didn't take my report about how abusive he was… The judge ordered me to take out a protection order…he even threatened me in the family court and the judge only warned him. The lawyers are just in this…for money (DV2).

As was noted in 2.2 the justice system in Jamaica does not currently provide the kind of reliability and trust that encourages victims to seek their help. This challenge can be added to the list of reasons why victims remain silent and provides an added opportunity for the church's intervention.

## 5.3 What more can and should be done?

More than half of the respondents gave specific feedback and suggestions to the question of what (more) needs to be done to combat domestic violence. Some responses pointed to proactive measures to stem DV while others were reactive responses that should be effected.

### 5.3.1 The task of the church

The church respondents were all in agreement that the church should partner with the existing institutions in the initiatives to fight DV. A suggestion was also made for the church to lead initiatives where possible (CP1). However one leader cautioned that the church's financial resources are thin which may be a challenge (LL2). Other comments indicated possible challenges with certain requirements that these organisations sometimes have that are not in keeping with the practices of the church. One practical solution offered was "lending resources in terms of (church) buildings, personnel, pointing persons to their work" (DL2). Other suggestions included:

i. Acknowledging the 'beast' of DV (CP2).

ii. Engaging in collaborative efforts leading to prevention and restoration (CP2).

iii. Education and awareness; creating safe spaces and develop a positive view of the human being (DL2, CP3).

iv. Acknowledging the priestly and prophetic nature of the church by doing advocacy work (CP4).

As we see the church leaders identified some key areas that can aid the responsive process of combatting DV.

Organisations and one victim also made the following inputs regarding what they believe the church can do:

i. Churches need to educate themselves on the nuances that operate in the framework of DV. Be more open and approach the matter from a human rights perspective (Org2). Maximize the benefit of the church's reach in communities. Spread the word (Org1).

ii. Educate, starting with the young (Org3).

iii. Establish a shelter (Org3).

iv. Partner with Government to develop programmes (Org4).

v. Develop Bible study series on DV and implement a stronger crisis counselling programme or center in the church (DV3).

Also here it is revealed that there are some critical actions, education being top priority, that need attention from, not just church but also civil society as a multi-sectorial approach is taken to fight DV and its related issues.

In answer to how they believed victims can be empowered, church leaders said there was a need for ongoing dialogue where there was an atmosphere of trust and friendship as the church opens itself to the "wisdom of the spirit" as God's instruments in the world today (DL1). Empowerment involves education and sensitization, while also being open to more creative solutions, said DL2. Other suggestions from the church leaders included working with existing agencies to provide skills training, having regular conversations and discussions on the topic, finding ways to help build and restore self-confidence and using the Sunday School as a way to teach and reinforce positive values.

### 5.3.2.2 The task of society to combat DV

From a societal standpoint it was felt that enough was not being done by the government and its agencies to provide education and awareness on DV and to combat the crisis. As such, respondents offered some possible solutions. This was understood to be an important part of the process to ensure that the entire society was involved as much as possible.

Organisation leaders made reference to the various laws and policies in place which they felt were not being implemented and highlighted. Org2 noted the need to "lift the legislation off the pages" and make it come alive through testimonies from those who have been helped. The matter of empowering victims through skills training was also reiterated coupled with teaching children correct values and reaffirming them as one way to break the cycle. The research unearthed and highlighted the need for more shelters to cater to the increasing demands so that women felt they had somewhere to turn.

Other comments and inputs can be summed up as:

  i.    Improve the legislative and justice system (DV1).
  ii.   Overall education and sensitization – teach about DV and encourage loving relationships as well as how to handle conflicts; in schools and other places (CP1, DL2).
  iii.  Intervention and prevention programmes for victims and perpetrators (Org3, CP1).

iv.     Laws (e.g. special leave) in the workplace and school to facilitate the victim and children (Org3).

v.      Change how children are raised and trained so that gender roles become more balanced (DL1, CP3, DL3).

The church and societal actors have important roles to play if there is to be gender equality and empowerment of women and children in keeping with SDG number 5. It is evident that the church can influence communities and are more likely to influence the thought patterns of their members as well as those they interact with. The suggestions made by the three categories of interviewees reflected many similarities and highlighted an urgent need for intervention and prevention approaches as the church carries out its role as instruments of empowerment which can result in transformation and reconciliation.

**Chapter 6: Discussion**

**6.0 Chapter introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the data from interviews and other sources and analyse them in relation to the theories presented in chapter three: (i) the church and gender, (ii) power asymmetries in the male/female relationship through the social dominance theory, and (iii) the theory of empowerment and diakonia.

The discussion will reflect the responses of the informants as well as relevant results of the Women's Health Survey (WHS) recently published in Jamaica as was presented in chapter 5. While DV was used in many of the interviews as the primary concept, the research has been narrowed down to a focus on IPV, it being the most common type of DV in Jamaica (Bureau of Gender Affairs, 2018). With this in mind the terms DV and IPV may be used interchangeably in the discussion.

**6.1 Gender and ecclesiology**

The gospel and the church are meant for all categories of human beings, regardless of their race, gender or social status (McGrath A. E., 2008, p. 129). All are one in Christ Jesus, "neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female" says the apostle Paul (Gal 3:28). The church is therefore called upon to care for each other and to share with each other as members of a community. Dietrich states that "everybody's life is to some degree interwoven with other people's lives" (2014, p. 16) and the Ubuntu philosophy re-emphasizes that "a person is a person through other people". All people, females and males alike, should therefore care and love each other as equals; not competing with each other but complementing each other as part of a whole.

In chapter 3 I noted that the church is meant to be the called out people of God and the (one) body of Christ, not the men of God. Each person deserves to be treated with and plays a special part, just as each part of the body, though having different functions, works together as a whole. Ken-Phin (1997) notes that although each person, as part of the body, has unique gifts, talents and roles, the source is the same and the mission is the same. Women play an important role in the body, just as the men do. It is therefore incumbent on the church to ensure that parts of the body that are weak are helped by the strong so the entire body can function as it should. It requires first acknowledging that as a result of certain factors, such as violence, some members

of humanity are not experiencing the fullness of life that God intended and as such the body cannot function as it should.

In chapter 5 of this thesis it was evident that many members of the body are experiencing less than they deserve as human beings created in God's image as a result of IPV. The image of God is marred by violence and abuse that many women in intimate relationships are subjected to. From the research we see that the church, by its own admission has not been functioning as God commissioned them to. When representatives from the JBU and JMD rate themselves a mere 1 or 2 on a scale of 5 for their response to DV it suggests that something is amiss. Frochtling (2016, p. 150) opined that if the church refuses to listen and hear the cries and pleas of women then they are in fact not listening to those who God listens to most. As indicated in 2.5 the Methodists believe they should be Christ's representatives particularly to those who are most in need, demonstrating diakonia by offering care to the neglected and abandoned. In this case women who are IPV victims are most in need.

The research suggests that even when the church is listening they may sometimes be blinded by their own misconceptions and beliefs. In the case of one victim who sought help from her church and was rebuked for provoking her partner (thus deserving of the abuse), as well as possessing an evil spirit, the church is failing and perpetuating the crime. This case demonstrates the church's misuse of power, its misinterpretation of scripture, and its abuse and neglect of its distinct role as agents of care and love (3.2.1).

Nason-Clarke et al (2018) states that more often than not the church is the first place that victims turn to for help because there is a certain level of trust in keeping with the role that religion plays in the lives of individuals. If this level of trust is misused then the church loses out on a very fundamental distinctive that makes it different from the world and the reputation of the church is tarnished. This abuse of trust was evident from one interviewee where the church she shared her plight with used said information to their own advantage and indulged in what can be termed as corruption (2.2).

The church is also said to have the greatest reach in any society by virtue of their role and the fact that many turn to the church in their times of need and at significant points in their lives: weddings, funerals, graduations, and many other family and community related activities (2.3).

However it is evident that the church needs to educate itself and prepare its leaders to handle the issue of DV and more importantly to demonstrate the caring nature of the church.

### 6.1.1 Gender roles - male headship and female submission

Implicit in the issue of IPV is the matter of male headship. In the theories chapter (3.2.1) I discussed the influence of scriptures on understanding the gender roles that have become the norm in society. Important to the discussion is the debate regarding the arguments for and against men being assigned as head of the household from a biblical perspective. For many scholars there is concern about whether or not the church helps to perpetuate or prevent domestic violence through Bible teachings. Cunradi et al (2002) argue that because Christianity is imbedded in a patriarchal structure that seemingly promotes male dominance and female subservience, it has contributed to the aggression of males in intimate relationships. Another view is that misinterpretation was partly due to the influence of the writers, translators and commentators of the Bible who were men from patriarchal contexts and as such their biases were captured in their translations and commentaries (Edwards & Edwards, 2017, pp. 10-14).

I concur with two church interviewees (CP3, CP2) who believe it comes down to the reading of the Bible and applying it to the context while bearing in mind the historical context within which it was written. This will also require that those in leadership within all church groupings have a correct understanding and interpretation of what headship entails, since as we mentioned in 5.1.4 over 70% of women surveyed hold to the belief that men are designated by God to be head of the house.

This may not need to be argued if the general understanding of 'head' meant being a leader along the lines of guidance and direction (CP3) and not about misuse of power and control. This traditional view of men as the head of the home has resulted in abuse and violation of women. Church leaders (see 5.1.4) who were interviewed were quick to disassociate themselves from the argument that men being named the head was one way that the Bible may be supporting the abuse of women. One church leader made it very clear by saying "I reject that; in any interpretation even if you agree about the role and status of male versus to female, that does not translate to a right to abuse" (DL2). While none of the participants representing the church felt that headship meant abuse, there was no challenge to the argument that the Bible does provide a guide to family structure which suggests that the man should lead the home as

Christ leads the church. What was clear however, was that there needed to be proper interpretation and teaching of the scriptures to avoid misunderstandings.

Cunradi et al (2002) also point to another side of the role that religion plays in IPV, as researchers have indicated that couples who are consistently attending and active in a church are least at risk for IPV. It is believed that the support systems that are offered in a religious context provides couples with resources that can aid them in conflict resolution. Additionally the values and norms that are promoted in the church environment may make them less likely to resort to violence. This could perhaps explain why the victims in this research sought support in the confines of the church and why the church can play a critical role in combatting DV.

The CEDAW Committee's (2011, p. 2) list of issues to Jamaica sought to address and improve the measures being employed regarding the traditional stereotypes of the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society. In the government's response (CEDAW Committee, 2012a, p. 4) there is no mentioning of the church which is believed to engage families more than any other organisation and is a continued presence in almost every community, thus important to overall development (Marshall, 2010).

As part of its response to IPV I believe, as suggested by many of the informants, that the church through education and awareness programmes can help in redefining and reinterpreting gender roles so there is a clear understanding of what it means to be the leader of a family. The church will then communicate that it is a community that cares and facilitates healing and wholeness for the broken and the battered, while being a prophetic voice (CP2) that condemns the root causes of suffering and pain. Baptists and Methodist churches should continue to stand in opposition to anything that oppresses (Jamaica Baptist Union, 2019) the created order, for instance the atrocities of IPV, which in many ways enslave women. These are some ways the church can declare unequivocally "away with oppression, exclusion, exploitation and injustice" (Phiri & Kaunda, 2016).

### 6.1.2 The church embracing initiatives of international bodies

As the church grapples with finding its place in the combat against DV, it has been noted (2.6) to welcome the initiatives of international church organisations such as the WCC in their endeavours for gender equality and elimination of gender-based violence. However with the

exception of the WCC's Thursdays in Black campaign and hosting international programmes, there is not much evidence of actual work being done by the churches to eliminate gender-based violence; thus there seems to be a gap between words and deeds.

### 6.1.3 The church affirms dignity, equality and justice

As was pointed to in 2.4, the Baptist church holds to the belief that when one member (of creation) suffers then all suffer and as such when a woman experiences oppression through IPV, it affects everyone. This comes from an understanding that we are all interrelated as members of a community or family; a part of a greater whole (LWF, 2009). Fiorenza (1997, p. 57) reminds us that "as long as not every woman is free, no woman is free". When the victims define what DV means for them we hear how their sense of personhood and wellbeing has diminished and the humiliation and pain they experience. One victim described and defined DV as 'heart-rending and painful' with 'ghostlike' feelings. This captures the painful journey that women undergo as they struggle to identify and keep their sense of identity and dignity as human beings. The definitions of DV point to a clear break away from the inherent dignity of each person who experiences a lack of self-worth through the verbal and physical abuse they endure. It is therefore incumbent on the JBU and JMD to help women restore their dignity and self-worth through programmes and initiatives.

As part of their responses Baptist and Methodist church participants who were interviewed were sympathetic to the plight of the IPV victims and believed in general that the task of the church is to minister to the needs of the vulnerable including those the Bible refers to as widows, orphans and strangers. From the accounts of the victims interviewed it would not be unusual for a woman in an abusive relationship to become a stranger in her own community as a result of being restricted by her partner. DV1-3 shared how alienated they felt from family and friends and church community on account of their partners restricting them from communicating with others. DV1 also mentioned that community members turned against her and became informers for her husband, telling him if anyone visited her and all her movements.

The WCC (2019) through its pilgrimage of justice and peace points to the need of the Christian community to uphold the Christian value of dignity for all. This emphasises the church's task to meet the marginalised, rejected and outcasts of society and show them the love of God through acts of empowerment. I noted that in the questions about the church's view of what the

Bible says about violence many of the informants spoke of the human being made in the image and likeness of God and all being of equal worth and value and deserving to be treated with respect and love accordingly. I believe the church can do more in showing this care and concern for victims by sharing the good news of the gospel which is able to transform, reconcile and empower them. IPV victims need to experience this caring nature of the church which can affirm them as human beings who are loved regardless of their perceived status in life; educated or not educated, employed or not employable, young or old.

According to a WCC (2019) article gender justice has been under intense pressure globally with some influential nations trying to side step the international standards for human rights. As Olav Fykse Tveit (2018) affirmed in a recent WCC consultation in Jamaica "gender justice is a key focus and criterion of WCC's ongoing pilgrimage toward justice and peace for all". This consultation was hosted by the churches in Jamaica as they embraced the call for justice in the gender discussions. As the church exercises its role as persons who love justice there is an ongoing challenge to advocate for the fundamental human rights of each individual especially since IPV violates the human rights of its victim. As Haugen (2018) puts it, every human being, by virtue of their belonging to the human family ought to benefit from human rights. One important human right treaty, relevant to this discussion, is the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which has been ratified by the Government of Jamaica. In CEDAW's (2011) list of issues to Jamaica, gender discrimination and the rights of women as seen in bullets 2-8 of the document, address the issue of IPV and calls for more measures to be implemented to stem this atrocity. It seems then that when seeking to cater to the holistic needs of women, local churches will need to be attentive to the various policies and programmes that the government and international bodies are on board with and ensure they are adequately and justly enforced.

## 6.2 Power asymmetries and social dominance theory

In its document *Together Towards Life* the WCC (2013) affirms the search for authentic life and for justice that facilitates and enables those who are on the margins to experience life in its fullness; in other words, mission from the margins. The document reminds the reader that Jesus confronted the power dynamics of his time as he embraced and received those most marginalized (Ibid). Interestingly this was not mission to the marginalized which can easily be misinterpreted as charity or aid but mission from the margins suggesting a step into the life

world of those who are excluded from the center of community, church or society. The starting point of the mission is the margins not the center. At the same time the challenge is to confront those who remain overpowering as well as the power structures at the center which needs transformation and without which the mission may prove futile.

As the informants shared their responses on the types of men who abuse, the research showed that power was a key factor in the characteristics of the abusers. One informant (Org1) pointed to the fact that men who in certain types of professions are required to display dominant roles were some of the ones likely to be perpetrators of violence as they transferred job behaviours into their relationships at home. These included professions such as police, doctors, soldiers, pastors and deacons. Typically, these professions in Jamaica require either some amount of authority over subordinates or in some instances their training entails measures of aggression (e.g. police and soldiers).

The problem is then compounded by these men not only being assigned a dominant role by virtue of being male as the social dominance theory posits, but these men also engage in professions that require them to exercise and demonstrate strong authoritative roles. According to Freedman (2002, p. 297), studies have shown that violence is often enforced by those who believe they are entitled to social power; these professions (named above) reveal a similar kind of entitlement. The respondent who stated that her abuser was an ex-policeman and that was an important key to his behaviour and actions towards her (DV1) is an interesting example. Here again there is the challenge in re-socialising acceptable ways of functioning that are tied to certain professions. This teaching can be done through the church systems such as committees and programmes that both Methodist and Baptist churches engage their constituents through.

The power imbalance in an intimate relationship creates a sense in which the one with the power holds all the cards and feels the right to dictate to the one without the power. Consequently if there is even any slight resistance to the laid down rules then action is taken and this is where there is the possibility for abuse whether, verbally, physically, economically or emotionally. One interviewee stated that her partner wanted to have sex with her even after he left their relationship and was with another woman. When she refused, he withheld the finances, knowing full well that she was not able to adequately provide for her children without his support (DV1). The finances were then used as a means to blackmail her for sex. This kind

of power play oppresses the female who finds that she has to give in to the demands or she suffers; whether it be without money to provide food or she suffers by allowing him to abuse her sexually.

There is also the argument that religion gives power to the men by virtue of some of the expectations and principles that are entrenched in what some religions find acceptable. In one interview the victim (DV2) noted that she eventually married her partner because after trying to escape her plight and seeking out the church as a solution her partner threatened her attempts to leave and pressured her constantly for sex and the church leaders advised that she had to get married if she intended to remain in the church. In this instant it would appear that the church was playing a role of power over her vulnerable circumstances though not directly but by the very rules and requirements that the church dictates. Though I do not believe that the church should bend all its beliefs and rules to facilitate everyone in a difficult situation I do believe the church has a responsibility to dialogue and ascertain the best possible solution that respects the dignity of each person.

DV1 recalls that when her ex-partner learnt of her relationship or the possibility that she may be involved with another man, despite the fact they had been separated for some time, he was outraged and furious. This issue of social dominance also becomes evident when men in certain cultures are treated with disdain and teased if a woman leaves them. In the macho-influenced Jamaican culture a man is believed to have failed and is made to feel ashamed if a woman leaves him, especially for another man. This often causes jealousy leading to rage, anger and eventually violence. Stalking (spying) has also been reported as a controlling measure exercised by some men in their attempts to always be in the know on the whereabouts of the female. Statistics reveal that up to 32% of women reported stalking and jealousy as a controlling behaviour of their partner (Williams, 2018).

In some instances this jealousy, anger and rage towards their partner led to murder-suicides in Jamaica as the men decide that if they can't have the woman no one else will (Cross, 2018; Loop, 2019). Though reference is made to the increasing number of murder-suicides related to intimate partner violence the numbers are still unofficial due to the inability of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) to produce this information; reason being the data is 'not disaggregated accordingly' (CEDAW Committee, 2012a). Unfortunately 7 years later, given the magnitude of this dilemma, this data is still not available. The tendency to resort to violence

is perpetuated by the culture that continues to promote the gendered roles of males and females and the social norms that places men in controlling roles that make them feel like failures if their relationships come to an end. One University of the West Indies (Jamaica) scholar notes that,

> There were 16 perpetrators between 2003 and 2016 who committed 18 murder-suicide incidents, some 86.5 per cent of whom were men. …. 23 targets of which 73.91 per cent were female. ….. All of the triggers were domestic disputes that threatened the hegemonic masculine identity of the men who displayed their power over the women by killing them. The men then committed suicide thereby nullifying the power of the state to prosecute them for murder, which in itself is another display of power (Charles, 2019).

In this case power drives men to exercise their control over their partner through murder, and suicide is another means to exercise power, preventing any other structure or system from doing so. The profile of abusive men suggests that there is a need for them to control every action that they are faced with. In my experinec males are socialised and influenced towards violence through various avenues in society such as the media, sports, school, music and motion pictures which in different ways provide justification for their responses to situations. Here again we see an opportunity to initiate a change that will eventually result in men understanding that it is a woman's right to leave a relationship and they do not own the women. As has been said in this thesis before this will require education at all levels.

There is also a false sense of power in perpetrators who are users of drugs and alcohol. The WHS indicated that there were higher IPV rates for women whose partners were substance abusers, with an average of 40% (figure 11) of women attesting to their partners being users (Williams, 2018, p. 52). I noted that at least two of the victims in this research confirmed this when they indicated that their partners were drug and alcohol users (DV1 & DV2). Overuse of drugs and alcohol have the potential to interfere with one's logical way of thinking and acting and gives one a feeling of being on a high where they have power and control which can also be viewed as being out of control so much so that they impose any feelings of fear or insecurity upon their partner.
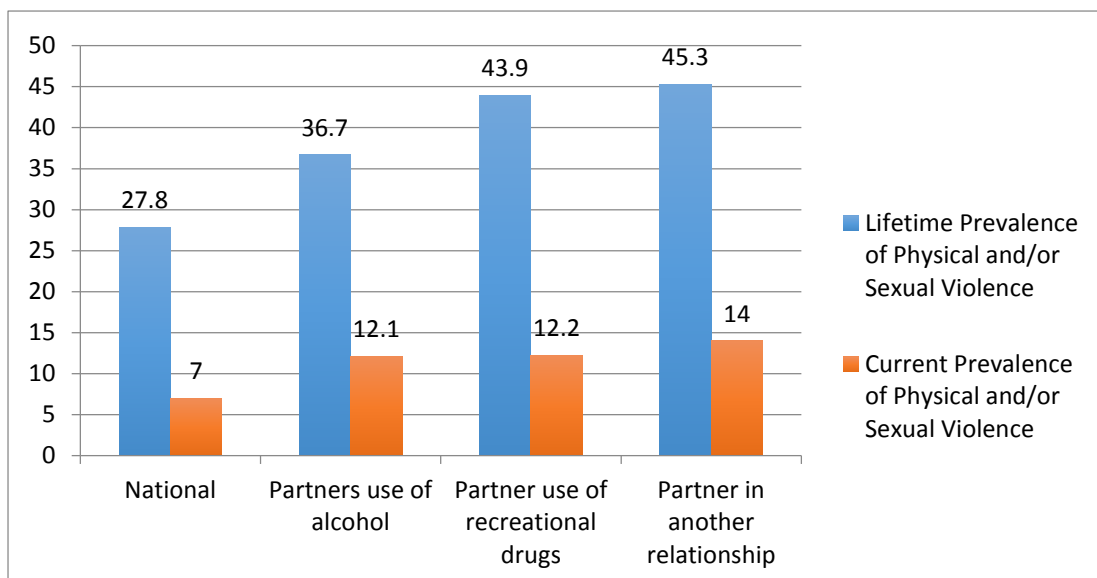
*Figure 11: Lifetime and Current Prevalence of Physical and/or Sexual Violence among Women by Selected Partner Behaviours (%), Jamaica, 2016 (Williams, 2018)*

In this master's thesis it was observed that there is typically one type of power demonstrated in intimate partner violence (IPV) relationships, and that is 'power over'. It was difficult to identify 'power with' or 'power to', nor are victims allowed to show their 'power within' as discussed in 5.1.3 and 3.3. In fact it appears that every effort is made to restrict any display of power within the female. This can account for why many abusers feel their power is threatened by a woman's relationship with friends and family as well as any attempt to be gainfully employed or to further educate or develop herself as was described by DV2 who sought to find solace in the church but her spouse reacted negatively and made every effort to stop her.

The learned behaviour of abusers is to always be in control and to have power over those in their charge. The social dominance theory places them in social groups with expectations that dictate how they should function. These assigned social groups are further promoted through societal norms and practices which become the given over time. However, any learned behaviour can be changed. Any successful elimination of exploitation of social groups requires that the whole society be structured in such a way that equality runs across the board and is applicable to all; everyone within the social groups and all social groups in the society. In doing so everyone, none barred, will have the same guaranteed access to all resources in the society. However, says Lorber (1994, p. 294), equality does not mean sameness or even similarity but it merely means that each individual talent and contribution is valued and rewarded on an equal scale. I believe if the perception of social groups are perpetuated as the norm it could be

challenging and as such everything should be done to reject and stem this orientation towards social dominance.

The church should not only minister to individual needs but also advocate for changes to the structures of power and the political stakeholders in order to create just legal systems and support people through the official societal structures (Dietrich, 2014). There is also support from Baptists in this regard as they are strong supporters of the church being involved with societal issues expressing concern about each person's life as stated in 2.4. The Social Issues Commission of the JBU seems to be one such way that Baptists seek to influence overall priorities and promote justice and through which they could initiate a change in some social norms.

My informants have convinced me of the truth in Focault's position, as quoted by Kearsley (2008), proposing that power is everywhere, not excluding the church. The church in its exercise of power should show justice, mercy and humility. As indicated in the previous chapter (5.2) sometimes the church's understanding and practice of power can be a harmful as when women are either being blamed for the abuse they receive or are directed to "go home, pray, work through their marriage, forgive and be submissive" (DV1). When the church unilaterally dictates that its church doctrine will not facilitate divorce then it leaves the woman with little or no choice but to allow the power control to continue and to bear the abuse. These acts of perpetuating the dehumanizing of God's creation is contrary to what the Bible teaches about love as noted in 3.2.3.

## 6.3 Empowerment and diakonia

The process of shifting power, as a result of power imbalances as seen in 6.2, is an aspect of empowerment and a task of diaconal agents. In the discussion on empowerment, diakonia is understood as the caring ministry of the church, looking out for and facilitating the needs of those left behind; the vulnerable and marginalised. In being diaconal agents the church meets the needs of those who are suffering in many and varied ways but more so the church must be concerned about ensuring that the needs of the whole person is fulfilled and persons are better able to manage on their own as a result. This need becomes apparent as one observes that the power asymmetries have given unequal privileges and rights to one gender over another. Since all are made in the image of God then it suggests that all have gifts, and abilities, irrespective

of their social situation and as such all should be enabled to live out their God-given capabilities (LWF, 2009). Empowerment is the process that facilitates this enabling; where persons are helped to become subjects of their own lives rather than being subjected to others who abuse and use them and treat them as objects. In response to IPV empowerment will "contribute to the process of transformation and reconciliation" (Nordstokke, 2013). As Nordstokke (2013) emphasises, people can only experience transformation if they feel empowered and are reconciled. I believe these connecting themes can be a starting point for the church in its response to IPV.

This research highlighted that the three categories of respondents viewed the church as integral to the task of combating DV as they viewed the church as different from other organisations. For one victim the church is described as her support through which she learnt to pray to the point that when she was hit in her eyes by her husband and couldn't see, she prayed "God I cannot die here…then my sight came back and I continued praying". This is affirmed by one African researcher who stated that "any meaningful effort to empower women … must pay more than a passing attention to the influences of religion" (Njoh & Akiwumi, 2012). This statement is embraced by many other scholars who have studied issues of gender-based violence and also by Jamaican leaders who have sought in recent times to involve faith-based organisations as part of the efforts in fighting gender-based violence in Jamaica (Jamaica Observer, 2019). It is my conviction that the issue of combatting DV requires the cooperation and involvement of faith-based organisations in facilitating empowerment of victims through transformation and reconciliation.

### 6.3.1 Empowerment through transformation – education and advocacy

In the preceding chapter I noted that this paper will view empowerment as an understanding which allows persons to reclaim power over their lives as they exercise their rights in community and society as persons of dignity and self-worth. This understanding is critical as victims of IPV are often times deemed powerless by virtue of their circumstances. In the interviews the victims mentioned either that they were unemployed (DV1) or their wages were so minimal (DV2) it was insufficient to cover the daily expenses of living. This in turn made them vulnerable and exposed them to violence and ill treatment from their partners. Similarly the informants from the organisations and churches pointed to what they perceived as many victims being unemployed, unemployable as well as not having a level of education that would

enable them to earn enough income to be independent. One local newspaper writer points out that in the Jamaican context, financial dependence is a challenge as the abuser covers the expenses of the home including rent and food while providing a sense of security (Robinson, 2018). Fear, shame and frustration are key emotions that prevent a break in the silence. Lack of education hinders many victims from taking charge of their lives and making their own choices.

The WHS conducted by Williams (2018) also referenced this challenge (5.1.2). This unfortunate lack of education, skills and financial independence makes women more at risk for IPV according to the report (Ibid). According to the published survey, for some victims violence becomes the norm and as such they see no reason for alarm. Another 10% believe he will change and then others are led to forgive their partner (figure 12) either because of the bond or because their partner convinces them the incident will not recur. As stated in 1.9 this then gives way for the cycle of violence to be repeated.
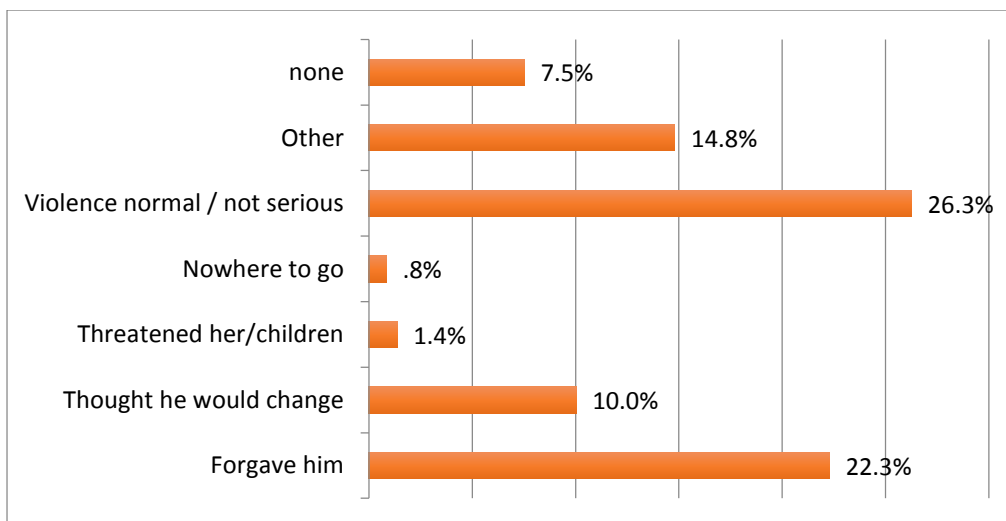


*Figure 12: Main reasons for not leaving home, by women who experienced physical or sexual partner violence and who never left home, Jamaica 2016 (Williams, 2018)*

In response to this, organisations and church leaders have proposed education and training as possible solutions that may help alleviate the situation of IPV victims and give them hope and relief from their abusive relationships. I concur with Haugen (2018) who states that education is key to improving one's abilities which also enables one to make sensible decisions about one's life and by extension, one's family which in turn benefits the wider society. This is also believed to have a positive impact on one's perception of self, thereby improving self-esteem

(Ibid) and being able to stand up against the injustices that may be meted out through abusive actions of one's partner. Education and awareness, as means of transformation, are integral to helping those already suffering, as well as those who may be potentially at risk, to know their rights and to be able to identify the signs of abuse. Chapter 2 (2.4/2.5) pointed to the important role that the JBU and JMD have been playing and continues to play in education in Jamaica. This mandate should not only be limited to the usual involvement in schools but education on a wider level in society, including first responders - police, health and social workers. February 2019 witnessed the Baptist Church beginning to take deliberate steps in educating and sensitising its members about gender-based violence (GBV). Three actions were taken at their annual General Assembly where they; 1) passed a resolution indicating a zero-tolerance stance to GBV, 2) engaged church representatives and the surrounding communities in a public forum on gender based violence (Krystal Clear, 2019), and 3) executed a 'Thursdays in Black' advocacy march in the second largest city, denouncing violence against women and girls (figure 13).
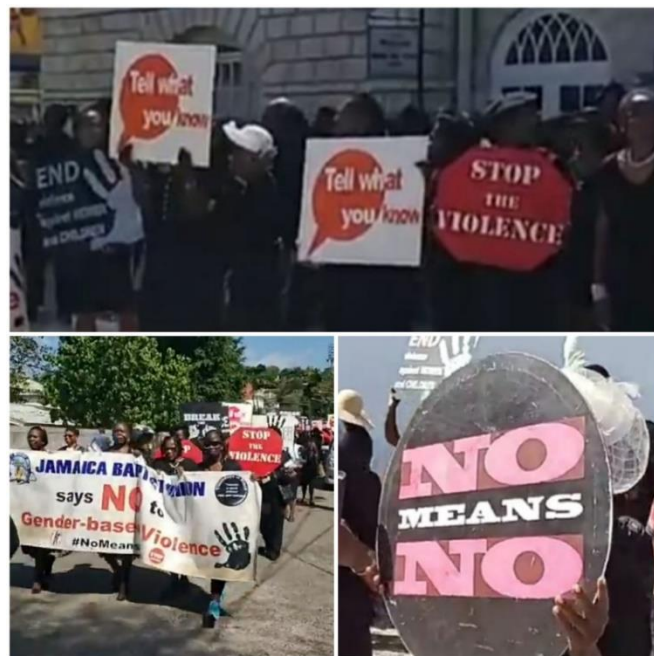


*Figure 13: JBU 'Thursdays in Black' road march, February 21, 2019, Montego Bay, Jamaica*

In addition to education as intervention, education as prevention entails a change in how children are socialised and trained, helping them to understand that DV is neither normal nor acceptable and that violence is not the route to resolving conflicts, while teaching values of love and respect. The education and training of children will help to stem the risk of adolescents

who become involved in potentially harmful relationships at an early (15-19) age (figure 14) (Williams, 2018). As the survey revealed they are the ones who often are not allowed or are unable to continue their (secondary/tertiary) education and subsequently become unemployable thus dependent on their partners. It was interesting to note from the research that near half of the women with only primary education believed it was the duty of the woman to take care of the house and it was the similar age range (15-29) who believed that violence between partners is a private matter. This age group also believed that under some conditions violence was justified (Ibid, 2018). Williams (2018) suggests that this can be explained by the inexperience and lack of exposure of this age group.
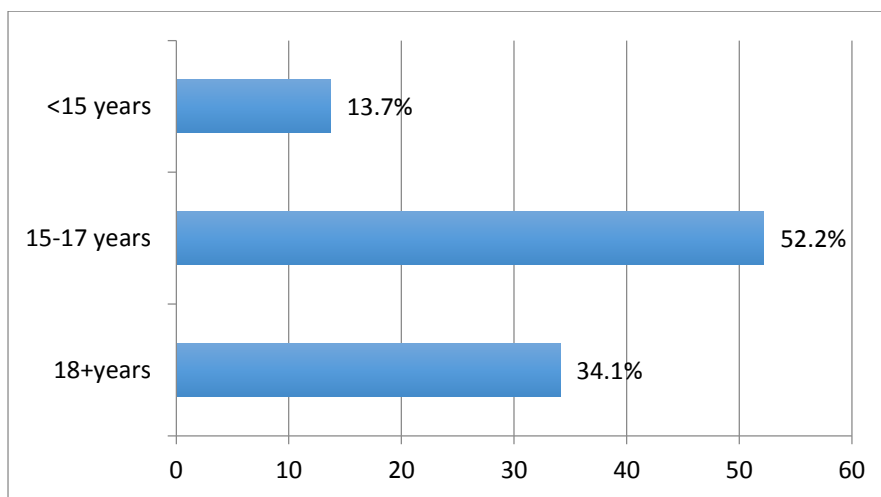


*Figure 14: Prevalence of age of first sexual intercourse, as reported by interviewed women who reported to ever had sex, Jamaica 2016 (Williams, 2018)*

I believe that this revelation reinforces the need to teach values, self-worth and gender roles to children and youth. These were areas which both church leaders and organisations emphasised would be key starting points in changing society. Boys were suggested as a specific target group as efforts are made to change mind-set and long embedded norms of what is expected of males; the attitude and thinking that boys must be aggressors and dominant. The research highlighted that boys sometimes grew up believing that what they saw at home is the acceptable norm. One respondent (Org3) noted with concern, her observation in schools, that boys were generally taught to be rough and tough; to be aggressive not emotional.

This master's thesis has shown that while education can empower and transform women, by itself it is not enough to change gender perceptions unless there is change in role perceptions and structures. So a woman may be educated but still under the control of the male because

society dictates and promotes it. Or she may never get a certain kind of job equal to her male counter-part because of the working place culture. If men are not on board and share control there isn't shared power. The reality is that the structures and systems that need changing are controlled by men, who as we mentioned in chapter 3 (3.4) may not be altogether willing to change due to the threat of loss of power that change implies. Therefore, in the process of change and empowerment both genders have to be given consideration and efforts made for mutual agreement. This will not happen overnight and will require persistence and determination as males are helped to understand the concept of 'power with' as against 'power over'. In this way they will understand that they are not being asked to give up their power but to share 'power with' equally.

This points to the need of advocacy as one means to highlighting the structural changes needed. If there is to be transformation it must not only be of the individuals who are victimised but also the abusers and the social structures must undergo evaluation and critique with possibilities for change. There must be a change in what is being taught formally, in schools and informally in society as these become the foundation of the society. There is also a need to advocate for change against systems and powers that perpetuate violence through their protection of perpetrators. This was evident in one victim's (DV1) account of the connections within the police force which resulted in her case not being treated with urgency and fairness. Other stakeholders criticize the length of time it takes to investigate and prosecute cases as it becomes a deterrent (2.3). One report critiquing the Jamaican system goes further to say,

> It is reported that the courts are overburdened and that the absence of adequate court infrastructure, human and financial resources seriously hamper the justice system. It has also been reported that amongst some police officers, domestic violence is frequently not viewed as a crime and that there is insufficient awareness and training among judges, prosecutors, police officers and health professionals about violence against women (Home Office, 2017).

The emphasises some gaps in the system that needs to be bridged and the matter of lack of education and awareness which has been highlighted in this research by the interviewees, and reinforces the need for some urgent steps in this regard. Without a just system victims will remain in silence as they question who they can trust or rely on and accordingly the crime will remain unchallenged. With this in mind I found it heartening to read a recent newspaper article

where the "State Minister for National Security, Pearnel Charles Jr., called on members of the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF) who have benefited from domestic violence training to become ambassadors in ending the scourge in the society" by going into churches, schools, community centres, and to educate other uniformed groups, on the premise that DV "is not a police issue; it is a Jamaica issue" (The Gleaner, 2018).

The church in their prophetic role ought to be advocates for women whose voices have been silenced by violence or who feel powerless to voice their concerns. In that sense the church can both speak out on their behalf as well as give them their voices as they are allowed to engage in meaningful roles in society. As one victim mentioned, she had to defend herself in court because of her inability to pay the fees for a lawyer. Again I believe churches can facilitate and suggest competent and legal advisors to help the victim. According to Nason-Clark et al (2018), the church can be the 'go between' for the victim with the justice system by helping the victim to know that it is safe to seek professional legal help.

Transformation does not only mean adjusting systems and structural policies that already exist but also introducing new measures, policies and programs that can contribute to the transformation process. The leaders of organisations as well as church leaders who were interviewed acknowledged and recognised the need for more resources, particularly shelters for the abused. One interviewee (CP3) lamented that for a country with one in every four women experiencing abuse one shelter is woefully inadequate. A recent news item gave some hope as it was reported that a budget of 86 million Jamaican dollars (700,000 US$) has been assigned for two new DV shelters (Jamaica Observer, 2019), with one slated "to be opened this year". There is a call for churches to cooperate and put pressure on the public sector to bridge this gap through use of its church spaces and properties. This in fact was in keeping with one solution provided by DL2 who believed the church could "lend their resources such as buildings and personnel" as one response to DV.

For me, one new revelation in this research was the need for laws that protect the jobs and livelihoods of women who have and are being abused as well as their families. Org3 commented that women who are victims of IPV are often unable to function optimally on the job, or lose their jobs due to the many effects of the abuse, whether it is due to health conditions or relocation. Similarly children are affected as they become traumatised by the violence or if they have to go in hiding with their mother as a means of protection and for safety, they miss

school time. The men were also included as it was noted that often times, if convicted they lose their jobs and income, as well as the stigmatisation of being imprisoned with no adequate reform system in place. These are some ways the church can advocate for new laws and policies to aid the victims of IPV. From the government's stance, The National Strategic Action Plan is expected to address issues that affect the entire family and especially children who are believed to be more prone to become abusers or the abused as a result of witnessing or living with acts of violence (Bureau of Gender Affairs, 2017).

### 6.3.2 Empowerment as reconciliation – health and wellness

There is no question that the help that is needed to combat the scourge of DV requires a multidisciplinary approach; involving all stakeholders. Many scholars and writers have repeatedly stated that DV is a major public health issue. According to WHO (2017), IPV is an enormous public health issue, not to mention what it costs the country on a day to day basis, with reduced labour force for employers, the impact on the already overcrowded justice and security systems, loss of income for women, among other woes. The reports and researches have made it clear that IPV has long lasting effects on victims, children, perpetrators, extended families and communities and the society at large. The effects have affected the development of countries, broken down family life, but more importantly and as was made clear in this research it has affected the abused women and children mentally, physically and psychologically. Women have attested to having mental breakdowns (DV3), permanent physical scars (DV2), psychological impacts of depression and anxiety, leading to attempts of suicide (DV1). One third of women surveyed in Jamaica confirmed that they had lifetime health issues and experienced psychological trauma from being violated (Williams, 2018).

Both the Methodist and the Baptist churches as part of their missionary endeavours, outlined in chapter 2, indicate their commitment to cater to the needs of the whole person (2.4/2.5). In the interviews, though reference was made generally to the caring nature of the church there was no specific mention of addressing the health aspect of the dilemma. However it could have been implied in the counselling role. Needless to say the church as a place that meets the need of the entire person, offering holistic ministry does have a part to play in helping persons who suffer from mental health issues as a result of IPV. Furness and Gilligan (2010) note that while some religious leaders do not believe they are sufficiently able to support certain mental health challenges, it is believed that affiliation with religious communities can help to improve one's

mental health through the coordinated support system that these communities offer. While some mental health issues will require the competence of health practitioners and professionals, other areas such as depression and anxiety can be helped through the services of the church. Thus one respondent (DV3) suggested a specialized counselling ministry for the purpose of being better equipped to assist victims and perpetrators of IPV (DV3).

It was noteworthy that the recently published extensive survey had no reference to women consulting or confiding in a faith-based body despite other literatures reporting that women are very likely to seek help through church resources because of the trust that churches represents (Nason-Clark et al, 2018). All four victims interviewed in this research shared that they all sought help within from the church community. However, an important point of note in the published survey was that 39% of the one third of women who sought help in other places admitted they were not helped (Williams, 2018, p. 62). "More than one-third of women confided in their mother (35.1 per cent), 27.8 per cent told siblings and 19.1 per cent confided in neighbours," said the study (Ibid, p.62). This also reveals that a large percent of women turned to their family for help when the violence was too much to bear alone and as such the church as a gathered community of families can influence the way family members respond to news of their loved ones being abused.

This master's thesis made it evident that feelings of guilt and shame can keep women in violent relationships. Through reconciliation efforts the church can aid all those affected by DV to be resilient. In this sense resiliency can be described as the effort of female victims of DV to work towards safety and healing (Nason-Clark et al, 2018). This provides hope for the victims which enables them to be more positive and provides them with protection against despair. For some women the hope is that the violence will end and they can experience a reuniting with friends and family while for others it is simply the ability to be restored physically, emotionally and spiritually. As they are renewed they come to realise that they are not responsible for the actions of their partners (Ibid). DV3 shared that after her separation from her husband and with support and help from church sisters she was once again reconnected with her family and church. This points to a strong resource that many churches have that must be utilised; such as women's groups. One church leader noted that the women's group that she was a part of was providing help to other women who were being abused. Both Methodists and Baptist are known to have Womens groups (2.4) that can be facilitators in supporting to victims of IPV.

**Chapter 7: Conclusion and recommendations**

**7.0 Chapter introduction**

This research sought to ascertain what churches in Jamaica were doing to combat DV and empower victims. The concluding remarks will summarise what this study has revealed and also put forward some possible recommendations in helping to combat DV.

**7.1 Summary of the study**

In conducting and executing this research one important conclusion was that IPV is the main subset of DV that is experienced in Jamaica. The interviews and WHS made it clear that IPV affects many women, both in rural and urban areas, starting from as early as 15 years old. The research has revealed that IPV is one expression that highlights how women are kept down all throughout their lives; from pregnancy to death. This master thesis, therefore maintains the premise that, overtime, DV can be combatted in Jamaica if IPV is stemmed.

The study has confirmed the hypothesis as stated in 1.2 that; (i) the churches (Baptist and Methodist) have primarily been working through traditional structures (e.g. counselling) as a reaction to DV and currently there are no systems and policies in place or being explored to guide church leaders on how to address DV and respond to victims, (ii) while churches in Jamaica, including Baptists and Methodists are generally receptive to the cause of eliminating gender-based violence and have been facilitating the efforts of bodies such as the WCC (2.6) this has not translated in their responses to DV. So while efforts have been made to adopt at least one of the programmes of the WCC, such as the 'Thursdays in Black' campaign in support of violence against women and children, not much else has yet been done, and (iii) the church is a key player in the intervention and prevention of DV but has seemingly failed to adequately fulfil their role as agents of empowerment in the crisis of DV.

It was also noted that the church by virtue of its potential influence in community can either help or hurt victims due to the long embedded patriarchal beliefs which are still practised in Jamaica. However what is clear is that even though some women still hold to the belief of specifically assigned gender roles there is a need to educate society as to what exactly the roles entail and mean in a more positive and fulfilling way that embraces the equality and dignity of each human being created in the image and likeness of God.

Additionally, the research found that there seems to be insufficient collaboration and dialogue between the faith-based organisations, primarily the church, and the public sector in working together to alleviate DV and more so IPV. In the reports to the UN there is no evidence that the government has included the faith-based organisations in their consultations in addressing the gender issues of the country. The church has also, by its own admission, not sufficiently engaged the organisations that are already established and working to fight DV. If Jamaica is to make any meaningful progress in achieving SDG 5, there will be a need for multifaceted, multidisciplinary and multi-sectorial approaches to fight this phenomenon of DV, which must include the church and other faith-based organisations.

## 7.2 Recommendations

The greatest need that was identified in the research was that of intervention and prevention initiatives, programmes and policies for both the church, public bodies and organisations. I will first present some suggestions for intervention in keeping with the urgency for the need to respond to DV/IPV, followed by a more long term view in the form of preventive measures.

### 7.2.1 Recommendations for intervention

|  | Recommendations |
|---|---|
| Church | o Break the silence surrounding gender-based violence and more specifically IPV; be more vocal and 'name the beast'; <br> o Clear misconceptions and dispel the myths regarding the interpretation of scriptures that seem to support women being treated unequally; <br> o Support and partner with institutions and organisations <br> o Educate and train lay members and leaders about the reality of DV and how to identify and respond to same, noting the various legislatures, facilities and programmes that exist; include education about DV in the programme for pastors and pastors in-training; <br> o Develop programmes to train and implement specialised counselling to support victims of DV; <br> o Develop church policies and procedures to guide the response to and identify victims or potential victims of DV; |

| | |
|---|---|
| | o Be a prophetic voice for those who are voiceless and suffering from IPV/DV; by advocating for changes in social norms, values and structures to promote equality and empowerment of women and providing opportunities for abused women to tell their stories; <br><br> o Advocate for new policies that protect victims of violence; such as work place laws, schools and prison reform laws; <br><br> o Provide safe spaces to facilitate dialogue and accommodation for victims; <br><br> o Facilitate additional skills training, educational and mentorship programmes for victims, for example through small groups e.g. church's women's groups; <br><br> o Target youth and young adults who are most at risk (WHS) and facilitate dialogue around the issue of relationships, dating, gender roles and abuse; <br><br> o Engage males in the discussion about DV. |
| Public Sector/ Government | o Partner with faith-based organisations to help eliminate gender-based violence, e.g. through resource sharing and ongoing dialogue; <br><br> o Provide additional facilities for safe spaces e.g. shelters and transitional homes; <br><br> o Engage and change social structures that promote gender inequality <br><br> o Include males in the discussion about DV; <br><br> o Train school counsellors and educators to identify and counsel children who may display signs of the effects of DV in the home. |

## 7.2.2 Recommendations for prevention

| | Recommendations |
|---|---|
| Church | o Train children (Sunday School etc.) how to love, respect and value each other with a special focus on boys; <br><br> o Teach children and adults how to resolve conflicts; <br><br> o Engage couples in discussions about conflict resolution strategies, gender roles and positive family values during pre and post marital counselling; |

| | |
|---|---|
| | o Invite church and community to regular conversations about gender-based violence; |
| | o Affirm the place of women in church, family and society; |
| | o Increase awareness of DV through teaching and preaching sessions; |
| | o Provide information in bulletins and inclusive liturgy. |
| Public Sector /Government | o Engage in a process of re-socialisation about gender roles to ensure there is equality in all spheres of society especially in the labour market; |
| | o Ongoing public campaign via all mediums to educate and sensitise all stakeholders and the population; distribute brochures and other relevant resources; |
| | o Implement measures to eliminate corruption; |
| | o Implement measures to ensure equal access to education and all resources at all levels; |
| | o Ensure policies and laws regarding DV are enacted to the full letter of the law; |
| | o Improve the amalgamating of data to include statistics on the number of murders and deaths that are as a result of IPV/DV; |
| | o Institute the observance of October as Domestic Violence Awareness month; |
| | o Implement recommendations from international bodies (e.g. CEDAW). |

These suggestions are by no means exhaustive but are some insights gleaned from this research.


**7.3 Suggestions for further research**

The effects and impact of IPV on children, DV and the elderly and same sex abuse are pertinent areas of study that could prove to be enlightening and further the cause of eliminating domestic violence. It would also prove useful to conduct more detailed research on how a wider variety of church communions see their role in addressing DV and to what extent members of the church may be suffering from DV. As the role of the church is assessed from different perspectives, more clarity will be evident in terms of what additional measures need to be in place to stem DV.

**Bibliography**

Brinkmann, S., & Kvale, S. (2015). *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles: Sage Publications.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods* (Fourth ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.

Bureau of Gender Affairs. (2017). National Strategic Action Plan to Eliminate Gender-based Violence in Jamaica (2017-2027). Kingston, Jamaica.

Bureau of Gender Affairs. (2018). *Domestic Violence: Breaking the Silence (Brochure)*. Kingston, Jamaica: Xpress Litho Ltd.

BWA. (2019). *Human Rights Day*. Retrieved from Baptist World Alliance: https://www.bwanet.org/programs/mej/human-rights-day2

CEDAW. (1979). *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*. Retrieved from UN Women: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm

CEDAW Committee. (2011). *List of issues and questions with regard to the consideration of periodic reports: Jamaica*. doi:CEDAW/C/JAM/Q/6-7

CEDAW Committee. (2012a). *Responses to the list of issues and questions with regard to the consideration of the combined sixth and seventh periodic report: Jamaica*. doi: CEDAW/C/JAM/Q/6-7/Add.1

CEDAW Committee. (2012b). *Concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women: Jamaica*. doi:CEDAW/C/JAM/CO/6-7

Charles, C. A. (2019). *Masculinity and Civilian Murder-Suicides in Newspaper Reports*. Retrieved from Academia: https://www.academia.edu/28892745/Masculinity_and_Civilian_Murder-Suicides_in_Newspaper_Reports

Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (5th ed.). London: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Cross, J. (2018, December 28). *Jealousy Blamed for Murder-Suicide in Rollington Town*. Retrieved from The Gleaner: http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20181228/jealousy-blamed-murder-suicide-rollington-town

Cunradi, C. B., Caetano, R., & Schafer, J. (2002). Religious Affiliation, Denominational Homogamy, and Intimate Partner Violence in US Couples. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 41*(1), 139-151.

Deifelt, W. (1997). Power, Authority and the Bible. In M. R. Kanyoro (Ed.), *In Search of a Round Table: Gender, Theology & Church Leadership* (pp. 48-56). Geneva: WCC Publications.

Dick, D. (2000). *Rebellion To Riot: The Jamaican Church in Nation Building* (2nd ed.). Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers.

Dietrich, S. (2014). Mercy and Truth Are Met Together; Righteousness and Peace Kissed Each Other: Biblical and Systematic Theological Perspectives on Diakonia as Advocacy and Fight for Justice. In S. Dietrich, K. Jorgensen, K. K. Korslien, & K. Nordstokke, *Diakonia As Christian Social Practice* (pp. 28-45). Oxford: Regnum Books International.

Dietrich, S. (2014). Reflections on Core Aspects of Diaconal Theory. In S. Dietrich, K. Jorgensen, K. K. Korslien, & K. Nordstokke (Eds.), *Diakonia as Christian Social Practice: An Introduction* (pp. 13-27). Oxford: Regnum Books International.

Edwards, H., & Edwards, B. (2017). *Addressing Domestic Violence in the Church.* Canada.

Fiorenza, E. S. (1997). Reading the Bible as Equals. In M. R. Kanyoro (Ed.), *In Search of a Round Table: Gender, Theology & Church Leadership* (pp. 57-70). Geneva: WCC Publications.

Freedman, E. B. (2002). *No Turning Back: The History of Feminism and the Future of Women.* London: Profile Books.

Friedmann, J. (1992). *Empowerment: The Politics of Alternative Development.* Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishers.

Frochtling, D. (2016). Women En Route to Justice: Migration, Gender and Gender-specific Human Rights. In S. Dietrich, K. Jorgensen, K. K. Korslien, & K. Nordstokke (Eds.), *Diakonia in a Gender Perspective* (pp. 141-151). Oxford: Regnum Books International.

Fuchs, L. F. (2008). *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology.* Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Furness, S., & Gillgan, P. (2010). *Religion, Belief and Social Work: Making a difference.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Gilchrist, C. (2017, January 6). *The Church Laid The Foundation For Education In Jamaica.* Retrieved January 28, 2019, from The Gleaner: http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/news/20170106/church-laid-foundation-education-jamaica

Gillpin, J.-A. (2018, February 25). *Women Take Lead - Females To Head Three Of Jamaica's Larger Christian Denominations.* Retrieved from The Gleaner:

http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20180225/women-take-lead-females-head-three-jamaicas-larger-christian

Ham, C. E. (2014). Empowering Diakonia: A Perspective from the World Council of Churches. In S. Dietrich, K. Jorgensen, K. K. Korslien, & K. Nordstokke (Eds.), *Diakonia as Christian Social Practice* (pp. 107-120). Oxford: Regnum Books International.

Haugen, H. M. (2016). Human Rights and Diakonia in a Gender Perspective. In S. Dietrich, K. Jorgensen, K. K. Korslien, & K. Nordstokke (Eds.), *Diakonia in a Gender Perspective* (pp. 227-240). Oxford: Regnum Books International.

Haugen, H. M. (2018). Social Struggle - For Inclusive Development and Avoiding Violent Conflict? *Forum for Development Studies, 45*(1), 143-165. doi:10.1080/08039410.2018.1432166

Hoff, L. A., Hallisey, B. J., & Hoff, M. (2009). *People in Crisis: Clinical and Diversity Perspectives* (6th ed.). New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group.

Home Office. (2017, January). *Country Policy and Information Notes. Jamaica: Women fearing Domestic Violence.* Retrieved from Gov.UK: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/587350/Jamaica_-_Women_fearing_DV.pdf

Jamaica Baptist Union. (2019). *About Us: Our Constitution*. Retrieved from Jamaica Baptist Union: http://www.jbu.org.jm/about-us/our-constitution

Jamaica Baptist Union. (2019). *About Us: Our Origin*. Retrieved January 8, 2019, from Jamaica Baptist Union: http://www.jbu.org.jm/about-us/our-origin

Jamaica Baptist Union. (2019). *Our Beliefs*. Retrieved from Jamaica Baptist Union: http://www.jbu.org.jm/about-us/our-beliefs

Jamaica Methodist . (2016). *The Church*. Retrieved from Jamaica Methodist : http://www.jamaicamethodist.org/thechurch

Jamaica Methodist. (2016). *About our Church: History of our Church*. Retrieved from Jamaica Methodist: http://www.jamaicamethodist.org/about

Jamaica Methodist. (2016). *What we believe*. Retrieved from Jamaica Methodist: http://www.jamaicamethodist.org/about

Jamaica Methodist. (2016). *Women's League*. Retrieved from Jamaica Methodist: http://www.jamaicamethodist.org/about

Jamaica Methodist Church. (2017). *Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Guidance for Jamaica Methodist Church (Booklet).* Kingston: Jamaica Methodist Church.

Jamaica Observer. (2019, March 4). *$86 Million Allocated for New Domestic Violence Shelters*. Retrieved from Jamaica Observer: http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/all-woman/-86-million-allocated-for-new-domestic-violence-shelters_158468?profile=1003

Jamaica Observer. (2019, March 6). *Eliminating Gender-based Violence*. Retrieved from Jamaica Observer: http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/editorial/eliminating-gender-based-violence_158818?profile=1015

Jamaica Tourist Board. (2016). *Quick Facts about Jamaica*. Retrieved from Jamaica Tourist Board: http://www.jtbonline.org/tourism-in-jamaica/quick-facts-about-jamaica/

JBU. (2018). *Mission Agency Report to Annual General Assembly 2018.* Kingston: Jamaica Baptist Union.

JBWF. (2017). *News*. Retrieved January 24, 2019, from Jamaica Baptist Women's Federation: http://www.jbwf.org.jm/jbuwf-news/

Johnson, K. B. (2019). *Report of the General Secretary.* Kingston: JBU.

Kearsley, R. (2008). *Church, Community and Power.* England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Ken-Phin, P. (1997). The Decade as the Great Commission. In M. R. Kanyoro (Ed.), *In Search of a Round Table: Gender, Theology and Church Leadership* (pp. 183-185). Geneva: WCC Publications.

Knight, C. (2019, March 4). *Shamed into Conforming*. Retrieved from Jamaica Observer: http://www.jamaicaobserver.com/all-woman/shamed-into-conforming_158382?profile=1003

Krystal Clear. (2019, February). *Jamaica Baptist Union 6th Believers Convention and 169th General Assembly*. (P. Smith, Producer, & Krystal Clear Production) Retrieved from Krystal Clear Productions: https://livestream.com/Krystalclearproductions/jbu2019/videos/187754043

Kvale, S. (2007). *Doing Interviews.* London: Sage Publications.

Lalor, G. (2013, July). Baptists of Jamaica. *Baptist World Alliance Gathering.* Ocho Rios.

Loop. (2019, March 3). *Break-up reportedly behind murder/suicide in St Andrew on Friday*. Retrieved from Loop: http://www.loopjamaica.com/content/break-reportedly-behind-murdersuicide-st-andrew-friday

Lorber, J. (1994). *Paradoxes of Gender.* New Haven: Yale University Press.

LWF - Department for Mission and Development. (2009). *A Faith Reflection on Gender and Power.* Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation.

LWF. (2009). *Diakonia in Context: Transformation, Reconciliation, Empowerment.* (K. Nordstokke, Ed.) Geneva: The Lutheran World Federation.

Marshall, K. (2010). Development, Religion, and Women's Roles in Contemporary Societies. *The Review of Faith & International Affairs, 8*(4), 35-42. doi:10.1080/15570274.2010.528970

Ministry of Justice. (2019). *Domestic Violence Act*. Retrieved from Ministry of Justice: http://moj.gov.jm/sites/default/files/laws/The%20Domestic%20Violence%20Act_0.pdf

Mosedale, S. (2003). Towards A Framework For Assessing Empowerment. *New Directions in Impact Assessment for Development: Methods and Practice* (pp. 1-23). Manchester: University of Manchester.

Mouton, J. (2001). *How to Succeed in your Master's and Doctoral Studies.* Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Mungure, E. (2016). Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality: Pastoral-Theological Reflections from Africa. In S. Dietrich, K. Jorgensen, K. K. Korslein, & K. Nordstokke (Eds.), *Diakonia in a Gender Perspective* (pp. 46-57). Oxford: Regnum Books International.

Nason-Clark, N., Fisher-Townsend, B., Holtmann, C., & McMullin, S. (2018). *Religion and Intimate Partner Violence.* New York: Oxford University Press.

NGO Caribbean Development Foundation. (2009). *NGO Caribbean Development Foundation*. Retrieved from Woman's Inc. Kingston: http://www.ngocaribbean.org/womans-inc-kingston/

Nissen, J. (2012). Towards a transformation of power: New Testament perspectives on diaconia and empowerment. *Diaconia. Journal for the Study of Christian Social Practice, 3*, 26-43.

Njoh, A. J., & Akiwumi, F. A. (2012). The Impact of Religion on Women Empowerment as a Millennium Development Goal in Africa. *Social Indicates Research, 107*, 1-18. doi:10.1007/s11205-011-9827-4

Nordstokke, K. (2013). Empowerment in the perspective of ecumenical diakonia. *Diakonia. Journal for the study of Christian Social Practise, 3*, 185-195.

Parmentier, E. (1997). Theology in the Communion of the Churches. In M. R. Kanyoro (Ed.), *In Search of a Round Table: Gender, Theology & Church Leadership* (pp. 114-119). Geneva: WCC Publications.

Patterson, C. (2016, December 2). *Domestic Violence Training for Police Personnel.* Retrieved from Jamaica Information Service: https://jis.gov.jm/domestic-violence-training-police-personnel/

Patton, M. Q. (1987). *How to Use Qualitative Methods in Evaluation.* Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Phiri, I. A., & Kaunda, C. J. (2016). Gender Perspectives on Power. In S. Dietrich, K. Jorgensen, K. K. Korslien, & K. Nordstokke (Eds.), *Diakonia in a Gender Perspective* (pp. 189-200). Oxford: Regnum Books International.

Rappaport, J. (1987). Terms of empowerment/exemplars of prevention: Toward a theory for community psychology. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 15*(2), 121-148.

Rasool, S. (2017). Gender Equality and Social Development. In J. Midgley, & M. Pawar (Eds.), *Future Directions in Social Development* (pp. 119-139). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Robinson, C. (2018, July 1). *Still Suffering In Silence - Women Refusing To Report Incidents Of Domestic Violence Despite Calls To Speak Up.* Retrieved from The Gleaner: http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20180701/still-suffering-silence-women-refusing-report-incidents-domestic#.W1n1ktg6Z08.email

Rowlands, J. (2008). *Questioning Empowerment.* Oxford: Oxfam.

Russell, L. M. (1993). *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church.* Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press.

Shepherd, V. (2017, February 18). *Gender-Based Violence in the Caribbean: Historical Roots (Lecture).* Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies.

Sidanius, J., & Pratto, F. (1999). *Social Dominance.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

Sidanius, J., Pratto, F., & Bobo, L. (1994). Social Dominance Orientation and the Political Psychology of Gender: A Case of Invariance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 67*(6), 998-1011.

STATIN. (2012). *Population and Housing Census 2011 Jamaica Volume 1.* Kingston: The Statistical Institute of Jamaica.

STATIN. (2013, May). *Population Census 2011.* Retrieved from Statistical Institute of Jamaica: http://statinja.gov.jm/Census/PopCensus/completed/FemalePopulationbyHighestLevelofEducationalAttainment.aspx

STATIN. (2017). *Overview of 2030 Agenda*. Retrieved January 24, 2019, from Statistical

Institute of Jamaica: http://statinja.gov.jm/demo_socialstats/newpopulation.aspx

STATIN. (2018). *Jamaica-Voluntary National Review Report on the Implementation of the

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Statistical Annex*. (A. Lee, & L. Delatie-

Budair, Editors) Retrieved from Statistical Institute of Jamaica:

http://statinja.gov.jm/pdf/Jamaica%20VNR%20Statistical%20Annex%202018.pdf

Stortz, M. E. (1997). Naming and Reclaiming Power. In M. R. Kanyoro (Ed.), *In Search of a

Round Table: Gender, Theology & Church Leadership* (pp. 71-81). Geneva: WCC

Publications.

Study and Research Division BWA. (1999). *We Baptists.* Virginia, USA: Study and Research

Division, Baptist World Alliance.

The Gleaner. (2017, February). *Church Launches Thursdays-In-Black To Support Women,

Girls*. Retrieved from The Gleaner: http://jamaica-

gleaner.com/article/news/20170212/church-launches-thursdays-black-support-

women-girls

The Gleaner. (2018, March 13). *Cops Charged To Become Ambassadors Against Domestic

Violence.* Retrieved from The Gleaner: http://jamaica-

gleaner.com/article/news/20180313/cops-charged-become-ambassadors-against-

domestic-violence#.W1n2WJzxBLw.email

The Gleaner. (2019, March 21). *Editorial: Reset Anti-Corruption Agenda*. Retrieved from

The Gleaner: http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/commentary/20190321/editorial-

reset-anti-corruption-agenda

The World Bank. (2011). *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and

Development.* Washington DC: The World Bank.

The World Bank. (2018). *School Enrollment*. Retrieved from The World Bank:

https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.SEC.ENRR?locations=JM

Trading Economics. (2019). *Jamaica Corruption Rank*. Retrieved from Trading Economics:

https://tradingeconomics.com/jamaica/corruption-rank?poll=2018-12-31

Tveit, O. F. (2018, October). *Address to the Global Consultation on the Decade of the

Churches in Solidarity with Women by the WCC general secretary*. Retrieved from

World Council of Churches:

https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/address-to-the-global-

consultation-on-the-decade-of-the-churches-in-solidarity-with-women-rev-dr-olav-

fykse-tveit-wcc-general-secretary

UN. (1993). *Declaration on the elimination of violence against women.* New York: United
    Nations.

UN. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.
    doi:A/RES/70/1

UN. (2016). *The Sustainable Development Agenda*. Retrieved from United Nations:
    https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/

UN Human Rights Council. (2015, July). *Report of the Working Group on the Universal
    Periodic Review: Jamaica*. doi:A/HRC/30/15

UN Women Caribbean. (n.d.). *Ending Violence against Women*. Retrieved January 16, 2019,
    from UN Women Caribbean: http://caribbean.unwomen.org/en/our-work/ending-
    violence-against-women#_ftn1

UN Women: Americas. (2018, June 21). *Jamaica First National Survey on Gender-Based
    Violence Launched*. Retrieved from UN Women: http://lac.unwomen.org/en/noticias-
    y-eventos/articulos/2018/6/presentan-primera-encuesta-nacional-de-jamaica-sobre-
    violencia-de-genero

Vargas, L., Cataldo, J., & Dickson, S. (2005). Domestic violence and children. In G. R. Walz,
    & R. K. Yep (Eds.), *Compelling perspectives on counseliing* (pp. 67-69). Alexandrai,
    VA: American Counselling Association.

Walker, L. E. (2017). *The Battered Woman Syndrome.* New York: Springer Publishing
    Company.

WCC. (1982). *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry.* Geneva: World Council of Churches.

WCC. (2005). *The Nature and Mission of the Church.* Geneva: World Council of Churches.

WCC. (2013). *Together towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes.* (J.
    Keum, Ed.) Retrieved from World Council of Churches:
    https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/publications/TogethertowardsLife_Missiona
    ndEvangelism.pdf

WCC. (2013). *When Pastors Prey.* Geneva: WCC.

WCC. (2017). *Ecumenical Diakonia.* Bossey, Switzerland: Unpublished.

WCC. (2018, July 4). *Jamaican churches campaign to end violence against women and girls*.
    Retrieved from World Council of Churches: https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-
    centre/news/jamaican-churches-campaign-to-end-violence-against-women-and-girls

WCC. (2018, October 2). *WCC Deputy General Secretary reflects on Decade of the
    Churches in Solidarity with Women*. Retrieved from World Council of Churches

(WCC): https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/wcc-deputy-general-secretary-reflects-on-decade-of-the-churches-in-solidarity-with-women

WCC. (2019, March 28). *Churches called to "break new ground" in gender justice*. Retrieved from Wolrd Council of Churches: https://www.oikoumene.org/en/press-centre/news/churches-called-to-break-new-ground-in-gender-justice

WCC Faith and Order Commission. (2013, March 6). *The Church: Towards a Common Vision.* Retrieved from World Council of Churches: https://www.oikoumene.org/en/resources/documents/commissions/faith-and-order/i-unity-the-church-and-its-mission/the-church-towards-a-common-vision

WHO. (2017, November 29). *Violence against women*. Retrieved from World Health Organisation: https://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/violence-against-women

WHO. (2019). *Definition and Typology of Violence*. Retrieved from Violence Prevention Alliance: https://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/definition/en/

Williams, C. W. (2018, June). *Women's Health Survey 2016 Jamaica.* Retrieved from UN Women: http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/-/media/files/un%20women/vaw/vaw%20survey/jamaica%20womens%20health%20survey%20report%202016.pdf?vs=5406

Wilson, M. S., & Liu, J. H. (2003). Social dominance orientation and gender: The moderating role of gender indentity. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 42*, 187-198.

Wilson-Harris, N. (2018, July 1). *Battered & Bruised But Women Hit Back - 71% Of Abused Females Lash Out At Their Intimate Partners.* Retrieved from The Gleaner: http://jamaica-gleaner.com/article/lead-stories/20180701/battered-bruised-women-hit-back-71-abused-females-lash-out-their#.W1n23oPsUv0.email

World Methodist Council. (2018). *Member Churches*. Retrieved from World Methodist Council: http://worldmethodistcouncil.org/about/member-churches/name/caribbean-and-americas-methodist-church/

**Appendix i: Interview guide**

    **i.    Questions to church leaders & laity (Baptist/Methodists)**

1. What would you define as domestic abuse/violence?
2. In your interpretation what does the bible say about this matter?
3. Does the bible support abuse in assigning men as the head of the households (submit to your husbands)?
4. Have you ever heard a sermon or bible study that directly addressed domestic violence/abuse?
5. Do you think abuse is a taboo subject in your church (Baptist/Anglican/Methodist) and why?
6. On a scale of 1-5 (1 unacceptable, 2 not much, 3 average, 4 good, 5 exceptional) how would you rate your church's response to this matter?
7. Do you believe domestic violence is present in the church; among its leaders and members etc.? Do you think your church is (too) silent on issues of domestic abuse or try to cover it up?
8. Should your church get involved or has your church been involved in dealing with DV? In what ways?
9. Does your church currently offer specific programs for victims and families of victims? What are they?
10. Are you aware of institutions and organizations that offer support and care to victims of DV?
11. Can you name any such and indicate what knowledge you have of their work?
12. How effective/relevant/necessary do you think their work is?
13. How relevant is their work in relation to the mission/ministry of your church?
14. Does or should your church relate/partner with such institutions? How?
15. What (more) do you think can be done (as a church in general and your church in particular) to address this issue? How can the church be more proactive?
16. How can the church help to empower victims etc.?
17. How do you think we can stem domestic violence? Where should we start as a church?

### ii. Questions to related organizations

1. What is the aim and objective of your organization?
2. Who is involved?
3. How is your organization financed?
4. Do you know of other organizations that offer a similar service to yours? Which?
5. In your experience what constitutes abuse?
6. At what point is the violation classified as an act of abuse? What is normal/abnormal?
7. What are the types of domestic violence/abuse?
8. Who are the (typical) victims of domestic abuse? (age, class, gender, status; education etc.)
9. Who are the typical abusers?
10. How does it affect the whole person; physical/mental/psychological/health
11. How is the family affected; especially children?
12. Why does abuse prevail?
13. What kind of help does your organisation offer to victims?
14. About how many access your services monthly?
15. From your experience why do you think victims won't speak out?
16. Are Christians less likely to report abuse?
17. Is there enough being done to provide protection and care for victims?
18. How has the church in Jamaica provided support/help for victims?
19. Do you know of specific programmes offered by specific churches to provide support?
20. Are you satisfied with the church's involvement in this area?
21. What more needs to/can be done by churches?
22. Do you believe there is enough education and awareness on this subject?
23. In your opinion what can be done to help to curb this violent act?

### iii. Questions to (select) victims

1. What is domestic abuse in your understanding?
2. When was the first time you were abused?
3. What happened in these instances?
4. How has this affected your life and that of your family?
5. Have you been able to forgive?

6. Have you sought any form of counselling or help?

7. If yes, from where? If no, why not?

8. Are you aware of organisations that provide support to victims?

9. What kind of help do you think should be offered to victims of DV?

10. What kind of support have you received and from where?

11. Is this a matter that you think the church should be concerned about and involved in? Why? Why not?

12. Do you think the church can help you in anyway?

13. Have you ever received/sought help through a church or church related body?

14. If yes, how was the response? Was it helpful?

15. Have you or anyone you know been assisted through the church regarding this issue.

16. Do you think the church is doing enough to help victims in this situation?

17. Are you satisfied with the way in which the church has spoken up/about these matters or do you believe they are too silent?

18. What (more) would you like to see the churches do in response to this dilemma?

**Appendix ii: Research consent form**

Dear Participant,

I am Arlene A. Henry, a Masters Student in Diakonia and Christian Social Practice at VID Specialized University in Oslo, Norway. In partial fulfilment of my studies I am required to write a thesis paper on a specific subject; which in this case is 'Domestic Violence: A look at the church's role as instruments of transformation, reconciliation, and empowerment in the Jamaican context'. To accomplish this task I am required to carry out research through the form of interviews with key persons. It is with this in mind that you are being invited to agree to participate by answering some questions. The estimated completion of the project is May 15 2019, by which time the collected data will be anonymised.

If you agree, please be advised that the information you provide will be held in the strictest of confidence and will not be shared in any other forums. Additionally I will also, with your permission, record the interviews to ensure the most accurate representation of our conversation. Please note that you can opt not to take part or to withdraw at any point during the process.

For any further questions/clarification about the research please contact me on my mobile number +4748289010/18768777556 or via email: arleneahenry@gmail.com, or contact Mr. Hans Morten Haugen, my temporary supervisor (until assignment of my permanent supervisor) at +4722451797 and email: hans.morten.haugen@vid.no.

Kindly indicate your consent by signing below.

I have read and agree to the above request.
Name:

_____

_____            _____

Signature                                                                            Date

Thank you.

# Appendix iii: NSD recommendations and guidelines

**NSD**

Hans Morten Haugen
PB 184 Vinderen
0319 OSLO

Vår dato: 20.06.2018          Vår ref: 60635 / 3 / HJT          Deres dato:          Deres ref:

## Tilrådning fra NSD Personvernombudet for forskning § 7-27

Personvernombudet for forskning viser til meldeskjema mottatt 04.05.2018 for prosjektet:

| | |
|---|---|
| 60635 | *Domestic Violence: A look at the church´s role as instruments of transformation, reconciliation and empowerment in the Jamaican context.* |
| *Behandlingsansvarlig* | VID vitenskapelig høgskole, ved institusjonens øverste leder |
| *Daglig ansvarlig* | Hans Morten Haugen |
| *Student* | Arlene Henry |

### Vurdering

Etter gjennomgang av opplysningene i meldeskjemaet og øvrig dokumentasjon finner vi at prosjektet er unntatt konsesjonsplikt og at personopplysningene som blir samlet inn i dette prosjektet er regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. På den neste siden er vår vurdering av prosjektopplegget slik det er meldt til oss. Du kan nå gå i gang med å behandle personopplysninger.

### Vilkår for vår anbefaling

Vår anbefaling forutsetter at du gjennomfører prosjektet i tråd med:
- opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet og øvrig dokumentasjon
- vår prosjektvurdering, se side 2
- eventuell korrespondanse med oss

### Meld fra hvis du gjør vesentlige endringer i prosjektet

Dersom prosjektet endrer seg, kan det være nødvendig å sende inn endringsmelding. På våre nettsider finner du svar på hvilke endringer du må melde, samt endringsskjema.

### Opplysninger om prosjektet blir lagt ut på våre nettsider og i Meldingsarkivet

Vi har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet på nettsidene våre. Alle våre institusjoner har også tilgang til egne prosjekter i Meldingsarkivet.

### Vi tar kontakt om status for behandling av personopplysninger ved prosjektslutt

Ved prosjektslutt 15.05.2019 vil vi ta kontakt for å avklare status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS    Harald Hårfagres gate 29    Tel. +47-55 58 21 17    nsd@nsd.no      Org.nr. 985 321 884
NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data    NO-5007 Bergen, NORWAY    Faks. +47-55 58 96 50    www.nsd.no

Se våre nettsider eller ta kontakt dersom du har spørsmål. Vi ønsker lykke til med prosjektet!


Vennlig hilsen


 Dag Kiberg

Håkon Jørgen Tranvåg

Kontaktperson: Håkon Jørgen Tranvåg tlf: 55 58 20 43 / Hakon.Tranvag@nsd.no
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering
Kopi: Arlene Henry, arleneahenry@gmail.com

**Personvernombudet for forskning**

Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is to find out how the churches in Jemaica can more effectively provide care and counselling to victims of domestic violence in Jamaica and provide empowerment from as a diaconal task for victims.

SAMPLE

The sample consists of approximately 12 adults, all church leaders or members with formal positions in churches. They are recruited by the student, who will initiate contact with church leaders.

METHOD

Methods used are personal and group interviews.

INFORMATION

According to your notification form the sample will receive written information and will give their consent to participate. The information letter we have received is well formulated, but we ask that you include the estimated end date of the project and when the personal data will be anonymised.

SENSITIVE PERSONAL DATA

It is indicated that you intend to process sensitive personal data about ethnic origin or political/philosophical/religious beliefs, and health.

INFORMATION SECURITY

The Data Protection Official presupposes that you will process all data according to the VID vitenskapelig høgskole internal guidelines/routines for information security. We presuppose that the use of a personal computer/mobile storage device is in accordance with these guidelines.

END DATE AND ANONYMISATION

The estimated end date of the project is 15.05.2019. According to your notification form you intend to anonymise the collected data by this date.

Making the data anonymous entails processing it in such a way that no individuals can be identified. This is done by:

- deleting all direct personal data (such as names/lists of reference numbers)
- deleting/rewriting indirectly identifiable personal data (i.e. an identifying combination of background variables, such as residence/work place, age and gender)
- deleting digital audio