

**CHILD, YOUTH & FAMILY  
DEVELOPMENT  
HUMAN SCIENCES RESEARCH  
COUNCIL**



**Partner Violence, Attitudes to Child  
Discipline & Use of Corporal  
Punishment: A South African  
National Survey**

**REPORT FOR SAVE THE  
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## ACRONYMS

CTS	Conflict Tactics Scales
CTS2	Conflict Tactics Scales 2.
CTSPC	Parent-Child Conflict Tactics Scale
CYFD	Child Youth and Family Development (Research Programme of the HSRC)
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
EA	Enumerator Area
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
SALC	South African Law Commission
SASAS	South African Social Attitude Survey
SES	Socio-economic Status

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

### INTRODUCTION

The present study is the first South African national survey of partner violence, attitudes to child rearing and the use of corporal punishment by caregivers. It was conducted towards the end of 2003.

There is a dearth of information available on the prevalence of corporal punishment and partner violence in the South African context. There is also little information on the extent of the disciplinary attitudes used by parents and caregivers to warrant their use of corporal punishment.

Current gaps in our knowledge compromise our ability to understand violence against women and children, and weaken efforts to create viable intervention strategies in order to address both problems. It is to be hoped that evidence produced by this study can be used to inform intervention.

The study establishes the prevalence of partner violence and corporal punishment in the SASAS sample, and explores attitudinal and demographic predictors of these phenomena.

Finally, the study provides baseline data that can be used to track change over time, as various initiatives are undertaken to deepen a culture of democracy, and women and children's rights.

### METHODOLOGY

The South African Social Attitude Survey (SASAS) is a nationally representative household survey. It was conducted late in 2003. Modules were constructed for the investigation of

parental attitudes to child discipline, the use of corporal punishment and intimate partner violence. Participants were interviewed at home by field staff.

### Summary of sample characteristics:

#### *SASAS Total Household Sample:*

- A representative sample of **2497** men and women over 16 years of age drawn from all provinces, population groups and economic backgrounds were interviewed for the survey.

#### *Sample extracted for the investigation of partner violence:*

- A total of **1198** *participants with partners* completed the measure of partner violence; **83%** were married and the rest were unmarried and cohabiting.
- The refusal rate was **4%**.

#### *Sample extracted for the investigation of corporal punishment:*

- A total of **952** *parents with children* were surveyed for the study of corporal punishment; **31%** were men, and **69%** were women; **61%** were Black African, **19%** were Coloured, **8%** were White and **12%** were Indian or Asian.

### Measures

The SASAS interview schedule contains 324 items. A sub set of questions tapped the following:

- Parental attitudes to discipline,
- The use of corporal punishment and
- Lifetime and past year prevalence of partner violence.

Questions to ascertain the participants' demographic characteristics were also included in the SASAS (marital status, language group, population group, class, income etc).

## MAIN FINDINGS

### Partner violence

- Overall prevalence in relationship lifetime: Nearly 20% of the sample who had partners, have experienced violent physical assault, either as perpetrators, victims or both in the lifetime of their relationships with that partner.
- Overall prevalence in the past year: 12.5% reported such assaults in the past year.
- Perpetration and victimhood in relationship lifetime: More than 16% of the sample report having assaulted their partners, and 15% report being assaulted during the lifetime of their relationship.

- Gender differences: Regardless of the period, women are twice as likely to be assault victims as their male partners.
- Income level and men: regardless of the period measured, more men in the lowest income bracket (< R1000.00 per month) assault their partners than any other income group.
- Income level and women: More women in the lowest income group are likely to assault their partners and be assaulted. Double the number of low income women in relation to men are assaulted.
- Race: Regardless of the period, proportionally higher numbers of African/Black and Coloured women report assaults by partners, and more men in the same communities assault their partners than in others. African/Black and Coloured people in South Africa are far more likely than others to be in the lower income groups. Therefore what we are seeing in these figures is as likely to be a consequence of poverty as it is a function of ethnic grouping.

#### *Predictors of partner violence*

- Couples: Poorly educated men and women and those who are cohabiting are most at risk of being involved in a relationship characterized by partner violence.
- Women victims: Younger, poorly educated women are most at risk of being involved in a relationship where they would be victims of partner violence.
- Male Perpetrators: Cohabiting men are most likely to be perpetrators of partner violence.

### **Attitudes to child rearing and use of corporal punishment**

#### *Patterns of Corporal punishment*

- 57% of all the parents with children under 18 reported using corporal punishment, with 33% using severe corporal punishment (beating with a belt or stick).
- The most common age of children who are smacked is 3 years of age and the most common age of children who are beaten with a belt or other object is 4 years old

#### *Gender differences:*

- Of those parents who reported that they smacked their children in the past year, 30% were men and 70% were women.

#### *Age differences:*

- Fewer younger parents use corporal punishment than those who are older.

#### *Population group differences:*

- Indian and Asian parents are least likely to use both forms of corporal punishment; greater proportions of Africans and whites beat their children with a belt than other groups.



*Married and cohabiting parents:*

- Cohabiting parents are most likely to smack their children and similar proportions of single to married parents use corporal punishment. A greater proportion of previously married single parents beat their children with belts and other objects.

*Predictors of corporal punishment*

- Attitudes supportive of the use of physical punishment and non-empathic parenting attitudes are the most significant predictors of the severity of corporal punishment, and of these two factors, the first is the strongest predictor of severe corporal punishment.

*Links between Corporal punishment and partner violence*

- Participants who experience high levels of partner violence are also more likely to agree with physical discipline of children.

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study confirms shockingly high rates of partner violence, particularly in poor communities. Women are twice as likely as men to be victims, although both men and women do assault each other. Given the sensitivity of questions about partner violence, the rates of assault reported in this study are very likely to be underestimates.

Reported rates of corporal punishment obtained in this study are lower than those obtained in surveys conducted elsewhere. It is possible though unlikely that this is due to the sensitivity of the issue. Rather, as is clear in the survey results, if this survey reflects the beliefs of South African parents, most do not support the practice and most do not use it. While this is so, the practice is most common among Black Africans and Whites.

Of most concern, in those who do use corporal punishment, little children aged around 4 years are being beaten with belts and other objects.

The study showed that of all other variables considered, including social class and population group, it is an attitude of support for corporal punishment that is the crucial predictor of its use. It is women who most frequently administer the punishment.

What does the evidence suggest for intervention?

- In the case of partner violence, it is clear from the results that interventions aimed at changing the collective norms, attitudes and behaviour of *men* are essential. They are the main perpetrators, and women are the victims. Where women participate in violence, they are likely to be respondents rather than initiators. At the same time, evidence from other studies suggests that many women may be complicit in their own violence, believing that men have the right to assault them under certain circumstances.

- Initiatives to support for single parents and particularly for couples who are living in poverty is essential to reduce the risk of partner violence and corporal punishment.
- Both corporal punishment and partner violence can be addressed in the life orientation sections of the National Curriculum. Education interventions focusing on parent-child and gender relations starting in school and which include positive non-violent male role models and alternatives to corporal punishment constitute possible important universal intervention strategies. The focus should be on men as much as women. However, education at school will not be enough. It is through assisting communities to change their ordinary everyday behaviour toward their children and partners that is most likely to make a difference over time.

# **PARTNER VIOLENCE, ATTITUDES TO CHILD DISCIPLINE & USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT: A SOUTH AFRICAN NATIONAL SURVEY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The study to be reported here is the first South African national survey of partner violence, attitudes to child rearing and the use of corporal punishment by caregivers.

In addition to reporting on the extent and severity of partner violence and corporal punishment the study permits explorations of some of the predictors of both forms of intimate violence. Finally, the study provides baseline data that can be used to track change over time, as various initiatives are undertaken to deepen a culture of democracy, and women and children's rights.

Partner violence and the use of corporal punishment to discipline children may be studied from the perspective of the law and rights. They are also matters for scientific enquiry. Notwithstanding our concern as authors to advance the protection and enforcement of women and children's rights, the current research does not investigate these issues.

The appallingly high level of reported criminal violence against women (including rape) in the public sphere suggests that there are high levels of partner violence in the private sphere. However, while some regional prevalence studies have been conducted (e.g. Jewkes, 1999), there are no comprehensive South African statistics that enable us to assess the scale of the problem nationally.

From April 2002 to March 2003, there were 52, 425 reported rapes in South Africa, a significant proportion were under 18 years of age. Crime figures also show that during the same period 4, 798 cases of child abuse and neglect were reported (SAPS Crime Statistics, 2003). While crime statistics are not reliable indicators of the true situation they point to very high levels of violence against women and children

There is a dearth of information available on the incidence and prevalence of corporal (physical) punishment in the South African context. There is also little information on the extent of the disciplinary attitudes used by parents and caregivers to warrant their use of corporal punishment.

There is also little data from other African countries. However, the occurrence of corporal punishment of children is likely to be high on the continent. For example, in a recent paper, Nilsson (2002) reported on some findings of a cross-national study conducted by Save the Children over 90% of Cameroon children surveyed (in four provinces) experienced corporal punishment in the home.

Ten years into democracy, and following a broad range of constitutional and other legislative moves to protect women and children from violence in the home and the community, through the current study, we have an opportunity to begin to investigate the extent of intimate physical violence to women and children – committed in the confines of the domestic sphere.

Current gaps in our knowledge compromise our ability to understand violence against women and children, and weaken efforts to create viable intervention strategies in order to address both problems. It is to be hoped that evidence produced by this study can be used to inform intervention.

### **Scope of the report**

The report commences with definitions, followed by a review of recent research literature in the fields of partner violence and corporal punishment. The South African Social Attitude Study (SASAS) methodology is then presented together with information pertaining to the study sample, procedure and research instruments. In the results section, we commence by reporting the prevalence of adult partner violence and then proceed to examine caregiver attitudes to child discipline, and the prevalence of corporal punishment. The final section of the results closes with a consideration of the links between partner violence and corporal punishment. The report concludes with an overview of the findings, limitations of the study, and recommendations.

### **Matters of Definition**

In this study, *violence* is defined as:

- *an act carried out with the intention or perceived intention of causing physical pain or injury to another person (Hotelling et al, 1990).*

*Intimate violence* refers to violence that

- *is intimate in the sense that the perpetrator of violence has a personal relationship with his/her victim.*

In the current study, intimate violence is of two types:

- *Partner violence, which is defined as the use of violence between two persons who are either married (in terms of law or custom), unmarried and cohabiting, or who are not cohabiting but consider themselves to be a couple.*

- *Corporal punishment* (following Straus, 1994), which refers to “the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain but not injury for the purposes of correction or control of the child’s behavior” (p. 4) (italics ours).

The Center for Effective Discipline in Ohio State USA, includes the following as acts of corporal punishment: *slapping or smacking with the hand; hitting with objects (e.g. sticks or belts); pinching, shaking, and forcing a child to stand for extended periods of time* (Bower, 2002).

As will be seen below when we turn to the method and results of the study, a distinction is made between the use of the hand to *smack* or *spank* or *slap* the child, and the *use of a belt or some other object* to administer punishment. The intention here is to provide an index or risk of injury to the child, as well as the risk of physical abuse. Arguably the latter acts are severe forms of physical punishment that may border on abuse. The lines between physical punishment of children and physical abuse are not clear. Most accept that these events must be situated along a continuum, rather than as discrete categories. In other words, physical abuse is a potential outcome of corporal punishment, particularly where the child is beaten frequently with some or other object such as a stick or a belt.

In the United States of America, there is no consensus as to where “to draw the line between acceptable corporal punishment and dangerous physical abuse.....(and where) “State laws defining what constitutes physical punishment often specifically include corporal punishment” (Gershoff, 2003, p. 540), and it is not unusual for physical abuse to include the *excessive* use of corporal punishment as part of its definition. But what is excessive – essentially this is both a normative moral matter, and a matter for medical judgement.

The lack of clarity in the field has impacted on the operational definitions that are used to measure the incidence and prevalence of this form of intimate violence (Hotaling et al, 1990). Physical punishment and domestic violence between adult partners tend to co-occur, as has been shown in the United States (see below). There is no national level data on this matter in South Africa.

## INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE AND CORPORAL PUNISHMENT: A RESEARCH REVIEW

### METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The literature review that follows is not intended to be an exhaustive account of at least two complex fields. The objective is to outline the main findings, and proceed to highlight overlaps between the two phenomena. Material for the review was gathered from the following main sources:

International peer reviewed literature:

- Recent reviews of theoretical contributions and empirical findings in the fields of partner violence and corporal punishment that were published between 1993 and 2003.
- Seminal studies in the above fields published in the past 30 years.

South African literature since 1994:

- Peer reviewed papers and empirical studies where these exist;
- Relevant 'grey literature' including unpublished reports.

Journal articles and other literature were sourced using key-word searches of electronic data bases such as PsychInfo, Ebscohost and others. South African grey literature was obtained from a range of sources including the collections of research institutes (e.g. the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cape Town) and relevant Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

This review discusses the findings of South African studies, where they exist, in light of international literature which is far more extensive than that produced locally.

First, incidence rates and risk factors associated with the incidence of *intimate partner violence* will be presented. Secondly, the risk factors associated with the incidence of parental *corporal punishment* will be identified. Thirdly, common risk factors and causal factors associated with the *co-incidence of intimate partner violence and corporal punishment* will be highlighted. Fourthly, methodological inconsistencies and challenges will be discussed as they pertain to the measurement of the prevalence and incidence of intimate partner violence and parental corporal punishment.

In the conclusion various challenges will be posed for future researchers. There is an obvious need for quantitative information regarding the incidence and prevalence of both intimate partner violence and corporal punishment in the South African context. Future studies need to include variables that address individual proclivities and environmental factors associated with the specific South African context. Furthermore, such studies need to establish uniform definitions and measurement techniques in order to allow for comparisons between studies. In general, a model of family violence needs to be developed which integrates the separate traditions that have evolved around issues relating to the use of physical violence against children and partners within the family. It is only by identifying common causal pathways and risk factors that one will be able to understand the nature, causes and consequences of multi-violent families that have come to dominate South African society. In other words, a general study of interpersonal violence in the family is required in order to frame more appropriate interventions in the South African context.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to understand the causes of intimate partner violence and corporal punishment, two key issues need to be addressed:

*First*, it must be recognized that the perpetrators of such acts do not fit into a homogenous category. They are a heterogeneous set of individuals whose actions are determined by multiple factors that operate at individual, inter-personal and socio-cultural levels.

*Second*, the causes of these phenomena cannot be explained by a single theory. Rather it needs to be recognized that there are multiple pathways leading to intimate violence, which involve a complex array of risk factors.

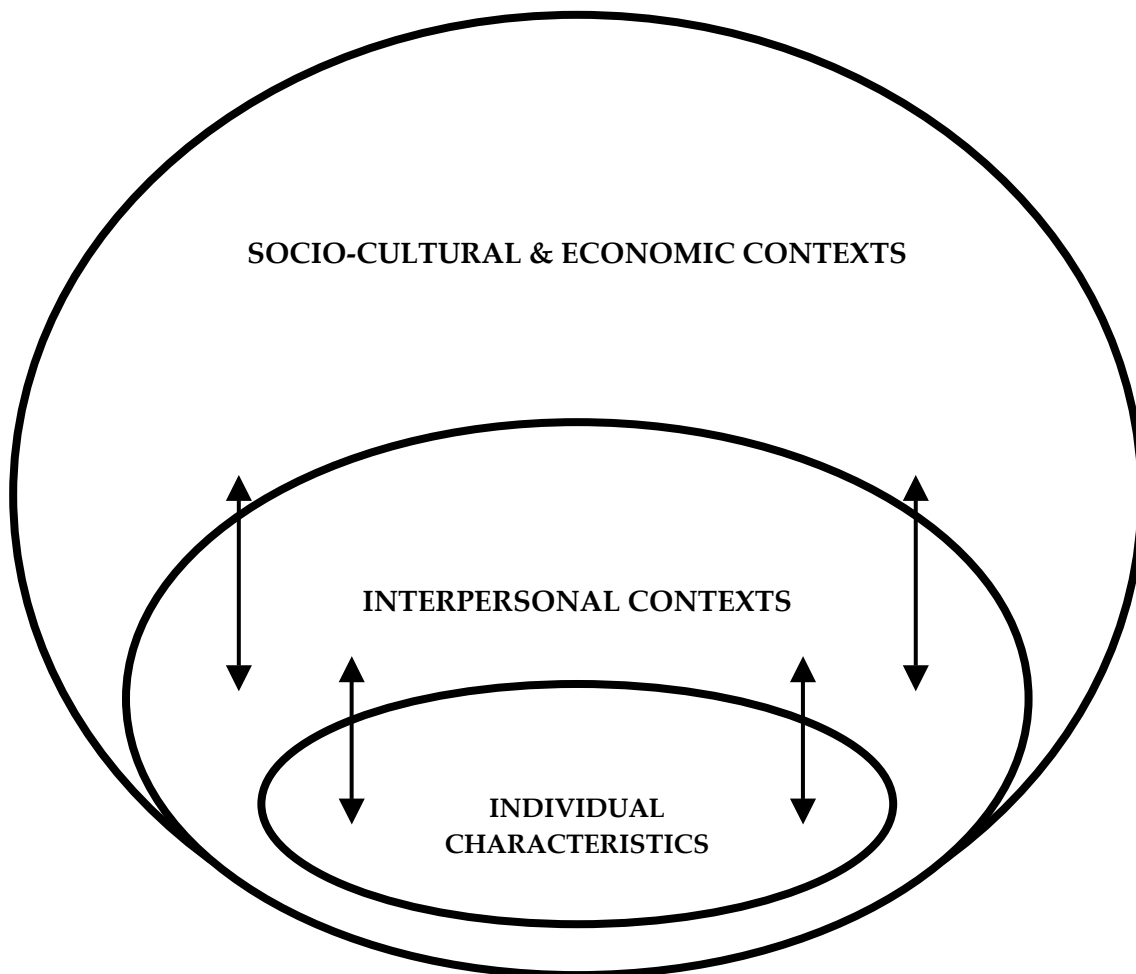
The central approach that will be pursued to explore these pathways will be based on a synthesis of Tolan and Guerra's (1998) biopsychosocial approach and that of Becker and Kaplan (in Becker, 1994). A synthesis of elements from these two models can be found in Figure 1.

According to this model, the multiple influences on intimate partner abuse and parental corporal punishment can be best understood as levels of influence, each nested within the less proximal influence. The concentric circles suggest that individual characteristics are nested within contexts of interpersonal relationships, which in turn are nested within socio-cultural and economic systems.

Examples of adult individual characteristics include poor impulse control, low self-esteem, (maternal) depression and/or lack of empathy for victims. Adult interpersonal relationship factors may include households with authoritarian approaches to child rearing and high levels of marital conflict. Factors at the highest and most distal level would include socio-cultural and economic influences.

It is important to recognize that individuals and their relationships have to be understood in the context of more insidious, yet less empirically demonstrable societal or cultural influences.

Figure 1: A multilevel model of risk factors



While ecological perspectives such as this have been critiqued on several grounds including the difficulty of defining the levels with precision (e.g. Jewkes et al, 2002), they remain useful for heuristic purposes.

A number of factors, including intra- and inter-personal as well as cultural, social and economic have been explored in order to account for the multiple factors that influence, or create predispositions towards, aggression against intimate partners and children. The review begins with an examination of the literature that addresses risks for intimate partner violence and parental corporal punishment at the wider cultural / socio-economic level, and then proceeds downward to the individual level.

## PARTNER VIOLENCE: INCIDENCE FIGURES AND RISK FACTORS

### The incidence of partner violence in the South African context:

Although the incidence of domestic violence in South Africa is very high, there are no official figures that testify to the prevalence of such abuse in South Africa. Prior to the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act of 1998 in 1999, police or justice records did



not keep a separate category of criminal behaviour for domestic violence, instead wives who were maltreated by their husbands had to lay criminal charges of assault or other categories of crime against the perpetrator (Van der Hoven, 2001; Bollen et al, 1999). Domestic violence is often not a single event but a continuous series of events. However this is not recognised by South African criminal law, which focuses on isolated individual events (Dissel & Ngubeni, 2003). Domestic violence is not only physical but also sexual with increased numbers of women reporting marital rape (Vetten & Bhana, 2001). Furthermore, domestic violence is underreported because of fears of intimidation, shame, self-blame and fear of retaliation (Vetten & Bhana, 2001).

A few studies have attempted to assess the incidence of intimate partner violence in South Africa. Most have been conducted in the major cities, and most are not representative of the general population.

In one urban study, Bollen et al (1999) found that 90% of the 269 women interviewed had experienced some form of physical abuse. In 59% of these cases the perpetrators were partners, lovers or spouses. In another urban study of 269 women who had contacted counseling agencies, found that 90% had experienced emotional or physical abuse (Mbokota and Moodley, 2003). These authors also found that 38% of a random sample of 604 attending King Edward VIII hospital in Durban had experienced domestic violence at some point in their lives.

Research undertaken by Technikon Southern Africa (2001) of the attitudes and responses to domestic abuse among its employees found that out of 230 responses, 70-75% of the female participants stated they had never been victims of domestic abuse. However, eighty percent (80-85%) of the male participants indicated that they had *never* physically abused their partner (Singh, 2003, p. 34). In contrast, 44% of a sample of 1 394 men working for three Cape Town municipalities, admitted to physically abusing their female partners (Abrahams et al, 1999).

There are few studies of rural women. Artz (1999) found that on average 80% of the 168 rural women interviewed in her research were victims of domestic abuse.

Community prevalence studies of abuse are unusual in South Africa. In part this may be because they present considerable methodological and ethical challenges (Jewkes, Watts, Abrahams, Penn-Kekana & Garcia Moreno 2000). Some indication of lifetime prevalence is reported in a representative study of women aged 18-48 in Mpumalanga, Eastern Cape and Limpopo Provinces (N= 1306). Lifetime partner physical abuse prevalence was found to be 26.8% in the Eastern Cape, 28.4% in Mpumalanga and 19.1% in Limpopo. Ninety percent of the women who had been abused in the past year believed they should obey their husbands, and more than 50% of all women surveyed (including those not beaten), believed that their partners had the right to punish them if they did something wrong. Forty percent or more felt that men who beat their partners love them. Clearly in these women, cultural values ensured their vulnerability to violence through their (no doubt reluctant) acceptance of its place in the relationship.

Perhaps for such reasons, and due to economic imperatives, battered South African women remain in abusive relationships for approximately ten years and are battered an average of 39 times before seeking assistance (Padayachee, 2003).

Clearly different results on the prevalence or incidence of partner violence are derived from the community prevalence studies of Jewkes and her colleagues, and those of the smaller scale investigations conducted in the other studies referred to above. In part this is due to methodological differences, and differences in the questions asked. Apart from the community prevalence studies that survey the general population, several of the other South African studies cannot provide us with an indication of domestic violence prevalence in the general population. The most fundamental problem is many of the participants are self-identified or identified by others, as experiencing domestic violence, thereby hindering any comparison with non-violent couples. In effect they are a particular population.

Other relevant South African studies will be noted in the sections which follow below.

### **Socio-cultural & Economic Context Risk factors for Partner Violence**

#### *1: Violence, poverty, culture and patriarchy:*

Families are embedded in socio-cultural and economic contexts. This influences the way that individuals interact within the family, the norms and values transmitted to children through socialization, and also individual temperament and behaviour. Hence, in many ways individual behaviour is structured by the socio-cultural contexts and economic contexts in which individuals are situated, influencing their proclivities towards the use of violence in intimate relationships.

Ideologies related to the normative value of violence have been identified as significant risk factors in the South African case (Jewkes et al, 2002). Jewkes and her colleagues stress that any model that attempts to understand intimate partner violence: “needs to present it as a web of associated and mediating factors and processes which are centrally influenced by ideas about masculinity and the position of women in a society and ideas about the use of violence” (p. 1615). We concur with their view, and there is growing support for their position.

For example, Peacock argues that intimate domestic violence, levels of violence in the wider society and tolerance for violence are inter-related (Peacock, 2002). Violence in the societal sphere contributes to violence in the family and the problem is exacerbated when levels of economic inequality and the stresses associated with deprivation and poverty are high. Intimate violence among adults in the family also impacts on the values that parents impart to their children and the relationship behaviour they model for them (Bandura, 1971; Patterson, 1982; Patterson, et al, 1989), including approval for intimate partner violence. (Straus, 1977, 1994; 1990).

Jewkes and her colleagues (2002) stress the importance of ideologies of male superiority, supporting violence to women, particularly in economically stressed communities.

Campbell's South African research (1995) shows that regarding women as subordinate chattels invites their abuse, particularly under conditions of severe poverty.

The power of norms may be evident in data collected in the United States. Studies indicate that rates of assault on marital partners *decreased* from 1975 to 1985 and again from 1985 to 1992 (Straus et al, 1997). They also note that surveys show that approval of slapping of wives by husbands decreased from 20% in 1968 to 13% in 1985, 12% in 1992 and 10% in 1994. Straus and his colleagues argue that the changes reflect changes in cultural norms that place a high value on violence and aggression as the way to deal with interpersonal problems. Of course one would have to examine this data against economic trends as well in order to rule out changes in social structure as a contributory factors, which Straus et al (1996) fails to do.

No such change in social norms has been witnessed in South Africa, and our heightened incidence of violence is often described and explained by means of the term 'culture of violence'. Violence has been used to resolve conflict and problems throughout South African history. It was pervasive in African tribal society, white colonial settlements, Apartheid's system of oppression, in the liberation struggles and today in social, economic and political spheres. Violence has thus come to be regarded as normative and often desirable in the South African context. Indeed, Jewkes and colleagues (2002) report that 75% of the women in their three province community prevalence study believed that it was "sometimes or always acceptable for an adult to hit another adult" (p. 1609). With such a prevalent attitude among women, let alone men, it is small wonder that South Africa is so violent.

The transition to a majority government has done little to resolve high levels of endemic violence. As the political process appeared beyond the reach of the average person, there were no accessible targets for aggression and frustration, and little way in which rising insecurity and uncertainty could be averted (Simpson, 1992; Maitse, 1998). Afrikaner men experienced a pervasive sense of loss of control, which was reinforced by high levels of joblessness and insolvency. According to Marchetti-Mercer (2003) this has been a factor behind rising levels of intimate femicide among the Afrikaner community. The failure of the majority government to resolve extreme levels of socio-economic inequalities structured under apartheid has become manifest in high levels of stress and frustration among working class black men. This stress, frustration, anger and insecurity was and is still, diverted to women and children in the private sphere of the home as a means by which men try to regain some form of control and power in a society characterized by rapid change, uncertainty and extreme economic stress.

Studies in South Africa have identified a correlation between violence and financial stress. In Singh's study (2003), 35% of women and 24% of men recognized the link between these factors. Research on intimate partner violence in South Africa suggests that unemployed men are more likely to abuse their wives. Given the social expectation of men as principal breadwinners, unemployment is experienced as a failure at a personal level, thereby leading to the 'emasculatation' of men; this constitutes a loss of the power and control that is socially used to define masculinity (Vogelman & Eagle, 1991; Kister, 2003). As a result, many men attempt to assert their power in relation to women, in the form of intimate partner violence.

However, Bollen et al (1999) found that violence against women does cut across the division of the employed and the unemployed: 67.5% of the abusers in her study were employed on a consistent basis, 10% worked most of the time and 22.5% were unemployed. There are no doubt several reasons for the differences in these findings. Employment is but one factor in this complex puzzle.

In general, low SES and intimate partner violence have been found to be strongly correlated in many countries. Olivier (2000) argues that frustration (that may lead to aggression) arises in lower-income families due to an unequal distribution of opportunities and due to the presence of stressors associated with poverty (Cano et al, 2001). Olivier notes that the tensions that arise in a family under poverty conditions may be displaced from their root structural causes onto innocent others such as women and children (Olivier, 2000). However, the extent to which the displacement takes a violent form depends on the presence of other factors, particularly the acceptance of violence to women and children and a history of violence in the perpetrator's family of origin (Patterson, et al, 1989). In addition, the way individuals react to stressors depends on the nature of the stressor, their individual personality characteristics, and the availability of social support.

In the United States, various studies have shown that minority group status is a predictor for spousal violence. African American and Hispanic men are disproportionately represented in violence perpetration and victim data. Sociological studies point to cultural clashes, adaptation stresses, racial oppression and a repressive heritage in order to explain this phenomenon. In addition of course, in the US (and South Africa), minority group status co-occurs with poverty. So it is not at all clear whether the main driver for violence is 'ethnicity' or class related. Indeed, in his research on Hispanic men, Straus (1990) warns of the dangers of conflating ethnicity with social class as this leads one to confuse cultural with socio-economic factors. For example, within a Hispanic sample, Straus found that in families where the husband faced unemployment or low-income and low status occupations, child physical abuse and spouse abuse rates were much higher than in the case of better-off Hispanic families. As a group, Hispanic families have substantially lower income levels than non-Hispanic white families and have less access to external social supports. Straus notes that while one in four US Hispanic households was the scene of assault (during a year of study), this is not necessarily a reflection of cultural influence on it own, but rather the result of the harmful effects of socio-economic deprivation.

Apart from cultural proclivities to machismo, threats to male identity associated with poor earning power may become manifest in domestic violence and child abuse. (Townsend & Dawes, 2004; Comas-Díaz, 1995). Research among South African men tends to support this contention as we have seen.

Patriarchal beliefs become manifest in marked social inequalities, which in turn become reflected in the household structure where it is implicitly assumed that men can use violence and aggression to maintain control. Due to their economic dependency, a lack of alternatives and the stigma attached to such abuse, women are often prevented from leaving abusive partners (Cano and Vivian, 2001).

In South African literature, patriarchy has been identified as a significant risk factor behind intimate partner violence. It is argued that women in South Africa exist in a situation of powerlessness or subservience given patriarchal beliefs and their precarious position in the labour force. Kister (2003) argues that with the onset of the new South Africa, women possess legal citizenship, yet they lack the rights associated with this status given ideological and structural constraints.

In many communities, particularly in the countryside, Black African women are regarded as a form of property. Customs such as *lobola*, signal that women are seen as assets in the marriage contract, the value of which is to be determined by the men in their families of origin and by their future husbands (Van der Hoven, 2001; Vogelmann & Eagle, 2001). As property they are highly dependent on the men who thus have the social and economic power needed to use and abuse them at will.

Studies of intimate violence in South African farm worker communities confirm that violence is often justified by men as they are heads of households (Paranee & Smythe, 2003). Community norms dictate that domestic violence under certain circumstances is justified (e.g. Jewkes et al 2002). South African men are excused for resorting to violence as this is seen as a masculine way of dealing with extreme situations, whereas women are held responsible for some provocation or failure (Vogelmann & Eagle, 1991). In conservative Christian and Afrikaans communities wives also tend to agree that women should be submissive and assume traditional, passive sex roles (Van der Hoven, 2001).

Artz (2001) argues that violence assumes a gendered form, as it entrenches the notion that gendered power relations are natural and non-negotiable; it is thus a form of social control. These beliefs in favour of male dominance over women are manifested in marked social and economic inequalities. In the rural areas of South Africa in particular, women's position remains tightly circumscribed (Teboho, 1998), and according to Kister (2003), HIV/AIDS status has compounded the insecurity of women because they are denied educational and occupational opportunities by communities that rely increasingly on their care-giving roles (Kister, 2003). This entrenches the gendered power imbalances that make them vulnerable to intimate partner violence.

The problem is perpetuated by the fact that many married women in South Africa continue to fear reporting their abuse to the police whose negative attitudes towards them indicate their ignorance and gendered-bias in favour of the male perpetrator (Mafokane & du Preez, 2000; Van der Hoven, 2001; Artz, 2001).

In summary, socio-cultural predictors of spouse abuse include the co-occurrence of low male socio-economic status (SES), male approval of violence as a mode of conflict resolution, and support for male power over women.

## Interpersonal Context Risks for Partner Violence

### *1: Interpersonal relationships:*

Family members have similar interests, engage in common activities, and are likely to spend large amounts of time with each other. All things being equal, this leads to greater opportunities to engage in violence with each other.

Furthermore, intense familial relationships are likely to increase the degree of injury incurred in family violence. The extent to which neighbours and kin can assist family members in coping with disputes is limited because of the private nature of the family. In addition, the relatively small size of the family unit may prevent families from adequately coping with stress and thereby increase the likelihood that violence will be used as a coping mechanism. Gender and age gaps within the family as well as the failure to achieve societal expectations and norms may contribute to stress (Straus, 1977).

Most models of family violence do not include marital satisfaction or other relationship-oriented perceptions. Nonetheless, Dixon and Browne (2003) argue that the factors behind intimate partner violence differ according to interactions between the individuals in the dyadic context of a marital or cohabiting partnership. Individual attachment styles influence the way that individuals interact, which in turn determines the extent to which violence features in this context.

In US surveys, highly stressed men with low marital satisfaction endorsed higher rates of violence towards their wives (Straus, 1990). Severe or distressing stressors may lead to perceptions of lack of support. Interaction within the family is based on the reciprocal exchange of rewards and the avoidance of costs and punishments. If the costs outweigh the benefits, the interaction may break down. Social Exchange Theory holds that those who use violence toward family members do so when the cost of being violent does not outweigh the rewards. Costs are increased by formal and informal social controls; however, in the case of intimate partner violence, few formal and informal social controls exist given attitudes in favour of violence at the socio-cultural level (Peacock, 2002; Brownridge & Halli, 2000).

According to Singh (2003) marital satisfaction is a risk factor behind intimate partner violence in South Africa. Out of 230 completed interview schedules, 39% of the female participants and 32% of the male participants in her study stated that men resort to domestic violence because they are unhappy in the family or marriage relationship. Reasons behind this unhappiness include partner unfaithfulness and an unexpected pregnancy in the family.

Unhappiness in a relationship may lead to frequent and multiple partnerships. In their study of men in three municipalities in Cape Town, Abrahams et al (1999) found that men who only had one partner in ten years and who were still in that relationship were significantly less likely to report abuse. Men who reported having more partners, were more likely to report being abusive.

## 2: *Cohabitation versus marriage:*

In the 1970s, Straus and his colleagues coined the phrase: “the marriage license is the hitting license” (Straus, 1977). More recent studies in the US have however shown that the rate of violence for cohabiters significantly exceeds that of married couples (Brownbridge et al, 2000; Hines & Morrison, 2001).

Various explanations have been proposed. Cohabiting men who have fewer resources than their partners, in the form of education, employment and income, may resort to violence to restore what they perceive to be the correct balance of power within the home. Additionally, it is argued that cohabiting men are more likely to be involved in patriarchal subcultures that encourage gender domination and sanction violence (Bowker, 1983).

Stets and Straus (1989) argue on the basis of Social Exchange Theory that cohabiters invest less in their relationships and thus the cost of utilizing violence decreases. Furthermore, cohabiters face greater isolation from kin networks, either as a consequence of social stigma or by choice, thus decreasing the chance that kin will intervene in disputes.

However, as Brownbridge and Halli (2000) argue, such evidence is inconclusive. It is difficult to compare rates of assaults because studies utilize different measurement techniques, the violent partner is rarely identified and the severity of assault is not ascertained.

Furthermore it is unclear whether rates of assault in cohabiting relationships are higher than those in married relationships because less people are choosing to get married or whether there is something inherent in the structure of cohabiting relationships that places individuals at increased risk of intimate partner violence.

## 3: *Child Maltreatment:*

Child maltreatment is not in itself a risk factor for partner violence. However, the literature shows that child maltreatment co-occurs with intimate partner violence (Hester et al, 2000; Bowker et al, 1988; O’Keefe, 1995; Giles-Sims, 1985; Guille, 2003; Tajima, 2000). Browne and Hamilton (1999) estimated that between 46% and 53% of spouse abuse cases also involve physical and/or sexual abuse of children in the family. McCloskey (1997) found that compared to non-violent couples, the probability of child abuse by fathers is escalated (.42) in homes where mothers are also abused.

A recent review reports forty-two studies that found a co-occurrence of spousal and physical child abuse (Appel & Holden, 1998). In representative community samples the base rate of co-occurrence was approximately 6%, but in clinical studies of either battered women or physically abused children the rate of co-occurrence was much higher, ranging from 20% to 100%. The different rates were attributed to methodological inconsistencies across studies in terms of sample characteristics, the criteria used to determine physical abuse, the source of the report, the reporting period and the target group.

According to Browne and Hamilton (1999), in cases where there is an overlap of child and spouse abuse, domestic violence increases in severity. The relationship is however highly

complex and not well understood. It is related to various family risk factors including spousal violence, low marital satisfaction, greater alcohol/drug abuse, poor parent-child relationships, combined with family stress variables such as low socio-economic status, unemployment, large family size, and few family social supports. The child's temperament and aggressive tendencies also play a role (O'Keefe, 1995).

In general however, the link between intimate partner abuse and child maltreatment is related to power inequalities between male and female partners, and between parents and their children (Bowker et al, 1988). These inequalities tend to reflect the inequalities that exist at the socio-cultural level.

### **Individual Characteristics and Partner Violence**

#### *1: Psychological Functioning and Temperament of the abuser:*

On the basis of reports from battered women, early research explored the personality characteristics of abusive men. In the 1980's and 1990's research aimed to synthesize these findings in personality profiles or typologies of male perpetrators (Guille, 2003). Biological risk factors for intimate partner abuse included neuropsychological, psychophysiological and physical health problems. The perpetrator was generally characterized by low assertiveness, low self-esteem, poor impulse control, cognitive distortions and poor social skills. Antisocial, narcissistic, dependent personality disorders and mood disturbances such as depression and anxiety were also common (Dixon & Browne, 2003). Unlike studies of criminals who were portrayed as rational, instrumental and goal seeking, perpetrators of domestic violence were perceived to be psychologically distressed, irrational and utilizing violence in an expressive rather than instrumental manner (Hotaling et al, 1990).

In the South African literature, psychological functioning and temperament have also been highlighted as risk factors in intimate partner violence. In the Victim Offender Conference project, 116 conferences were held between intimate partners. When asked how the women understood the violence that they experienced, many said that their men were violent people or short tempered, indicating a behavioural problem. Partner's tended to exhibit controlling behaviour and high levels of jealousy. Hence most regarded the violence as a result of the actions, behaviour and temperament of their male partners (Dissel and Ngubeni, 2003) In Singh's study, 52% of the female participants believed that men who resorted to violence lacked confidence and were insecure about their competencies and abilities (Singh, 2003) Kistner (2003) highlighted emotional factors such as low self-esteem, emotional dependence, insecurity, depression and personality disorders

However, such studies faced a number of problems. The samples were most commonly derived from clinical populations limiting the generalizability of the findings. In addition, control groups were commonly not included in the research designs

Finally, feminist researchers objected to the focus on abuser psychopathology which ignored the need for an understanding of the contextual and individual risk factors that mediate or moderate abuser behaviour (Hotaling et al, 1990; Dixon & Browne, 2003; Guille, 2003).



These early studies have contributed to an understanding of domestic violence perpetrated by men who have psychological disorders, but they are very limited in explaining wider patterns of partner violence in the general population.

## *2: The role of Gender: Do both men and women perpetrate intimate violence?*

Studies have tended to focus on unidirectional forms of violence in which the male partner is always posited as the perpetrator and the female partner is always portrayed as the victim (Dixon & Browne, 2003). However, recent studies have shown that in the United States both men and women are involved in partner violence, with Hines and Morrison (2001) reporting approximately equal rates of partner assaults by men and women partners.

These are controversial findings. Critics have countered that the scales used to measure partner violence, Straus' CTS2 in particular, does not allow for an assessment of the context of the violence, and who initiated the conflict. Critics argue that it is likely that women are much more likely to *respond* to male violence than to instigate aggression. Their behaviour is a form of self-defense. Also, women consistently face greater physical and psychological injuries from partner violence, and any arguments to the contrary simply ignore the patriarchal structure of society that sanctions violence against women (Dobash et al, 1992). Nonetheless, and whether their behaviour is responsive or not, many women in conflictual relationships do act with violence (Straus, 1997).

Research on domestic violence in South Africa suggests that the perpetrators are overwhelmingly male; however, as Bollen et al (1999) reveals, perpetrators may also be female. Fourteen of the perpetrators in their study were females under the age of seventeen. 35% of female and 40% of male participants in Singh's study abused their intimate partners when provoked by the female partner. However, Singh does not clarify whether this provocation took the form of violence (Singh, 2003).

## *3: Educational level and age:*

The evidence suggests that more educated couples engage in less conflictual and negative interactions than do less educated couples (Hines and Morrison, 2001; Guille, 2003; Tajima, 2000; Browridge & Halli, 2000). This is largely because less educated spouses with low status jobs may face greater levels of stress or frustration, which may spill over into the marital relationship. Furthermore, education is seen as a coping resource, which reduces the risk of depression and provides individuals with the skills needed for effective problem solving. Such individuals are less likely to resort to violence to resolve differences than uneducated individuals. Clearly, low education is likely to co-occur with the stresses of poverty and like all other individual factors cannot be seen out of context. Abrahams et al (1999) identified low educational level as a risk factor in South Africa.

In Bollen et al (1999), age was identified as a risk factor in the South African context. 69% of their 269 female participants were between the ages of 20 and 29 years at the time of the most serious incident which tended to be emotional/physical (80%) and physical (76%). Thirty two percent reported sexual violence as the most serious type of abuse experienced when they were under 20 years of age.

Age disparities are a further risk factor in intimate partner violence. Kistner (2003) identified an age gap between men and women partners of 6 or more years (men being older) as an indicator for predicting violent outcomes within heterosexual relationships.

#### *4: Alcohol and Drug Dependency:*

Several studies have identified alcohol and drug misuse as a factor in intimate partner violence (Dixon & Browne, 2003; Kaufman Kantor & Straus, 1987). Essentially, it is argued that excessive alcohol intake lowers inhibitions, alters judgment and reduces moral restraints on violent behaviour. In addition, alcohol may act directly to stimulate aggression in some people.

South African studies support this contention – more than 60% of abused women report that their partners were drunk when they were assaulted (Abrahams et al, 1999; Singh, 2003).

Taken alone however, a narrow focus on intoxication ignores other contextual factors such as the symbolic meaning attached to alcohol use and the contexts within which it is imbibed (Kaufman, Kantor & Straus, 1987; Guille, 2003). According to Paranzee and Smythe (2003), alcohol abuse is deeply embedded in farming areas in South Africa. White farmers paid their black labourers with alcohol in order to exercise social control under the Apartheid regime. Although this practice is illegal at present, the accessibility of shebeens ensures that alcohol is used as a means of coping with various economic and social stressors in poverty-stricken areas.

At a cultural level for example, excess drinking may be regarded as acceptable and indeed appropriate masculine behaviour, and as a means of asserting men's power and control in a relationship. As we noted above, alcohol and substance abuse is normally not a direct cause of violence but an amplifier of already conflictual situations (Padayachee, 2003; Hotelling et al, 1990).

#### *5: Violence in the family of origin:*

Male perpetrators of domestic violence are likely to have experienced violence in their families of origin, including witnessing violence between their parents or experiencing regular harsh punishment or abuse as children (Dixon & Browne, 2003; Guille, 2003; Olivier, 2000; Osofsky, 1995; Hester et al, 2000; Straus, 1990; Patterson, 1982; Patterson, et al, 1989).

In part, this pattern of generational repetition, or cycle of violence, which is particular to males, is informed by Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1971) and subsequent research. In essence, children who grow up in violent homes model their behaviour on significant others such as caregivers and older siblings. In addition, children who observe intimate partner violence in their families or are subject to violence in the form of corporal punishment or physical abuse, tend to be desensitized to the consequences of aggression and are likely to regard violence as legitimate, as a means of achieving one's goals or resolving disputes. The legitimacy of violent behaviour is further reinforced when children see a parent's violent action going unpunished.

There is a further explanation. Male children who grow up under circumstances of chronic violence at home are at risk for what Terr has called *Type 11 trauma* (Terr, 1990 cited in Osofsky, 1995). Youngsters who show Type 11 trauma display a range of psychological outcomes that are associated with proclivities to violence and reduced empathy for victims of violence. They include: emotional numbing, constricted emotions, impulsivity and impaired concentration, and most important, *hypervigilance* to the potential threat of violence. Hypervigilance is associated with a tendency to misread benign social cues as threatening. They carry these outcomes forward into adult life and are poorly equipped to manage conflict effectively.

In these ways violence may be transmitted from one generation to the next within a family subsystem. In other words, the approach to conflict shaped in violent childhoods leads to the risk that the future adult male will become engaged in intimate partner violence to achieve certain outcomes or as a means of resolving conflict. And for girls, who are reared under such conditions, the expectation is that her partner will be abusive.

These developmental antecedents or proclivities to violent behaviour may be released by life stresses, and the everyday conflicts that attend an adult relationship. Thus men experiencing high levels of stress are more likely to engage in violence to their partners when they have been brought up in violent families (Cano & Vivian, 2001).

Witnessing or experiencing violence as a child is also regarded as a risk factor in South African studies. Abrahams et al (1999) found that on average there was a 50% greater risk for reporting abuse among participants who had witnessed the abuse of their mothers or sisters during their childhood. Experiencing corporal punishment as a child was also identified in 88.5% of the 608 men who reported having abused their partners. 82% of the women in Singh's study (2003) believed that their abusive partners had either seen abuse and violence happening or had experienced violence and abuse in their homes whilst growing up. This supports the conclusion by international studies that intimate violence is a 'learned' form of behaviour.

### **Summary of Risk Factors for Partner Violence**

In summary, the incidence of intimate partner violence is associated with a complex interplay of risk factors at macro-, micro- and individual levels. Cultural / socio-economic level predictors include the co-occurrence of low male socio-economic status, male approval of violence as a form of conflict resolution and support for male power over women. Although some studies indicate that ethnicity may be a risk factor, this is more likely to be a reflection of the harmful effects of socio-economic deprivation. These socio-cultural factors constitute the context in which interpersonal relationships are embedded.

Relationships characterized by low levels of marital satisfaction become manifest in intimate partner violence in the presence of severe or distressing stressors and the absence of formal and informal social controls. Evidence as to whether cohabitation is a risk factor is inconclusive; however, low male-economic status, patriarchal beliefs and the social isolation,

which often accompanies cohabiting relationships may constitute risk factors behind intimate partner violence.

Individual proclivities include psychopathology and mood disturbances, alcohol and drug dependency, low levels of educational attainment, low socio-economic status and experiencing violence in the family of origin. The findings regarding gender are both inconclusive and controversial; although women may use violence against their partners this is often a response to male violence. Individual proclivities to violent behaviour are often released by life stressors. Hence, risk factors at various levels interact in a complex manner to increase or decrease the likelihood of partner violence in relationships.

There is a dearth of information on these risk factors in the South African context. However, where they exist, the findings highlighted above, tend to be supported by international literature.

### **Challenges in measuring partner violence**

Partner violence is not easy to assess. Apart from ethical difficulties (Jewkes et al, 2000), the use of different definitions and measures leads to different results.

The Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS) developed by Straus (1979) (and modified as the CTS2 in Straus et al, 1996), have been widely used in studies of partner violence and child punishment. The scales were designed as a simple behavioural self-report instrument in order to ascertain prevalence and incidence data regarding partner violence in marriage, cohabiting or dating relationships. Straus used the CTS to measure violence in four national surveys conducted in the US (1975, 1985, 1992 and 1995). It has since been used in 100 other studies in more than ten countries (Giles-Sims et al, 1995). It is also the instrument used in the current study.

Notwithstanding its wide use, the instrument is not without its critics. Firstly, the CTS2 relies on recollections to gather data. For example, estimates of chronicity (how often abuse occurs in a particular period) may be effected as participants may not remember how many times they were assaulted or assaulted their partner, especially if conflict is taken-for granted (Dietz, 2000; Giles-Sims et al, 1995; Benjet & Kazdin, 2003)

One also needs to question whether accounts are truthful as what is reported may not match actual behaviour particularly if it is socially undesirable and sensitive (Locke & Printz, 2002). For example, a husband may not admit to hitting his wife or may not admit to being hit by his wife and a parent is unlikely to disclose hitting an infant or a teenager. Moreover, men tend to underreport instances of their own aggression as compared to the accounts provided by their wives (Cano & Vivian, 2001).

In general, results provided by the CTS and CTS2 must be regarded as minimum estimates of intimate partner abuse.

A further problem with research in this field is related to sample size. Small samples undermine the generalizability of findings (Crouch & Behl, 2001). As we noted in discussion of South African research in this area, studies of intimate partner violence often draw

samples from battered women's shelters and family service agencies. These groups do not provide accurate indicators of prevalence rates in the wider community (Guille, 2003).

The methods used in these studies (including CTS2) often do not account for the complex nature of intimate partner violence and the context within which it occurs. Ideally, contextual variables need to be included, but this is not a simple matter (Locke and Prinz, 2002). It is often not practical to include the range of variables that would be needed to undertake a thorough appraisal of all the factors. Thus researchers tend to limit their focus and in so doing, the risk is that they will of necessity exclude important variables (Straus & Mathur, 1995).

## PARENTAL CORPORAL PUNISHMENT: INCIDENCE RATES AND RISK FACTORS

### Child Rights and corporal punishment

From a child rights perspective corporal punishment is commonly seen as a fundamental violation of the rights of children. Article 19 of the CRC states that:

"State Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse,...while in the care of parent (s), legal guardian (3) or any other person who has the care of the child".

The South African Bill of Rights, while not mentioning corporal punishment, affirms the CRC in Section 28 (1) by declaring that "every child has the right...to be protected from maltreatment, neglect, abuse or degradation".

In the CRC (with which South African law must articulate), the operative words are: "protect children from *all* forms of physical or mental violence" (italics ours).

On that basis it may be concluded that corporal punishment must to be outlawed because it is an act intended to cause physical pain, and as such is a form of violence. However, like all interpretations of law the matter is not so simple.

The *Preamble* to the CRC states that it has taken "due regard of the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the protection and harmonious development of the child." The term 'culture' is one that has bedeviled the international debate on children's rights to freedom from corporal punishment. While all cultural groups agree with the notion that exposure to violence is bad for children's development, they do not necessarily agree that corporal punishment by parents or teachers *is* violence at all. They also assert the right of adults to use corporal punishment in the best interests of children, precisely in order to promote the "harmonious development of the child". Others of course would see such an argument as a distortion of the intention behind Article 3.

This is not the place to examine this complex debate. It is sufficient to note that on the African continent as elsewhere, a belief in the rights of caregivers to use corporal punishment as a form of discipline is likely to be very prevalent (Nilsson, 2002). Similarly, as

will be seen below, 'culture' and 'tradition' are also widely used to support male abuse of women. It is evident that assault between intimates carries different weight to that between those outside the domestic sphere.

### **The Incidence of Corporal Punishment in South Africa**

According to Pete (1999), corporal punishment is interwoven into the way patterns of power were established and entrenched historically in South African society. Authoritarian systems tend to be ideologically based on the notion that discipline must come in the form of punishment because most members of the society are incapable of critical thinking and self-discipline, and thus need to be taught to fear disobedience. It was extensively used in parts of South Africa, which were under colonial rule.

It was sanctioned by law under Apartheid and later entrenched through the efforts of the Dutch Reformed church and Christian National Education schemes (Porteus et al, 2001). Corporal punishment became one of the ways in which the patriarchal, racial and authoritarian Apartheid system entrenched itself (Bower, 2002).

There is little good information available on the prevalence of parental corporal punishment in South Africa. However, the limited available evidence suggests that it is highly prevalent and socially accepted. For example, a survey conducted among 300 students from the University of the Witwatersrand found that only 41.2% of black students, 30.4% of English-speaking whites and 8% of Afrikaans speaking whites stated that they were *not* hit at home (Rakitzis, 1987).

There is however a definite need for updated quantitative and qualitative studies that address the incidence of parental corporal punishment in the South African context in light of the risk factors identified in international reviews and seminal studies to which we turn below.

### **Socio-cultural & Economic Context Risk factors for Corporal Punishment**

#### *1: Culture, Attitudes and beliefs:*

As we have seen in the previous discussion, families are embedded in a social-cultural context which impacts upon patterns of family interaction and the values and skills that parents transmit to their children through socialization. The socio-cultural context also provides the scripts for childrearing and belief systems that guide parenting.

Ideologies of the child, the family and of patriarchy are central background factors in determining the manner in which adults in our society construct their relationships toward children. It is the character of normative constructions of the power relations between adults and children and adult rights over children makes violence to the young by adults possible (but by no means inevitable).

It is attitudes to child rearing that lie behind the use of different discipline techniques, and it is important that these be understood if interventions to promote non-violent discipline are to be developed. Child rearing attitudes have their roots in taken for granted cultural

practices regarding discipline. The vast majority of cultures have used, and continue to use physical punishment of children, and believe it to be appropriate (Nilsson, 2002). Bartholdson (2001) notes that “in almost all cultures, corporal punishment is an integral part of child rearing” (p.5).

He cites studies that show that over 90% of American, British, and Indian parents say they smack or use sticks and other instruments to discipline young children.

The treatment of the women and the young tells us much about adult behaviour: about cruelty, abuse of power, willingness to commit excesses and flout norms, and the ease with which the women and the young were denied their humanity. It tells us about the uses and abuses of childhood that are sanctioned by society.

Lloyd De Mause (1982) has noted that cruelty to children has been the historical norm rather than the exception. The opening line of his volume *Foundations of Psychohistory*, reads as follows: “The history of childhood is a nightmare from which we have only recently begun to awaken” (p.1).

Of course in ‘we’ he presumably refers to his own late 20<sup>th</sup> century modern Euro-American community. For most others in the world perhaps, the nightmare continues.

Be that as it may, and noting the difficulties of inferring the behaviour of groups from often sketchy records, De Mause presents a compelling enough case that ill-treatment (by contemporary standards) and violence to children is commonplace across the western historical record, and it seems to be fundamentally related to the low status of children relative to adults.

The primary forces influencing the status and treatment of children through history have been and remain economic and religious / ideological. In pre-modern times and prior to about 7 years of age children were valued for their economic potential as workers and contributors to the family income. And punishments were frequently meted out in the context of the child’s failure to perform appropriately. Arguably, modern children occupy a contradictory position as precious beings but also economic burdens. (Scheper-Hughes, 1984). As she notes, when conditions for parents get tough, the risks of violence to burdensome children increase. Indeed, the cross-cultural literature suggests that child maltreatment is less likely in cultures where children are valued for their economic utility, cultural heritage, lineage, emotional pleasure and satisfaction (Ferrari, 2002). And when children are valued positively, there is more tolerance for misbehaviour and less use of punitive discipline (Rodriguez & Sutherland, 1999).

South Africa is no stranger to the institutionalization of physical punishment of the young. During the Apartheid era, corporal punishment was widely used as a sentence for juveniles in the justice system, and in schools as the primary method of discipline. In 1997, the Abolition of Corporal Punishment Act abolished the former practice, and the South African Schools Act of 1996 outlawed corporal punishment in schools. This policy decision followed shortly after South Africa’s signing of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

It was certainly not greeted with enthusiasm by all, as is evident in a letter to *'The Teacher'* (April 1999, p. 19). The moral tone and warrant for the author's position is clear:

"In the past, when you had the option of giving a hiding, the children were far more likely to behave and listen. I really dread to think of the caliber of adults we are going to be producing in the next ten years. I fear New Age philosophy is slowly eating away at the core of our moral fibre and destroying our children's lives."

The way adult-child relationships were understood before the Schools Act came into force, made it legitimate for a teacher to physically assault a pupil. Beyond the physical act was the cultural goal of producing good citizens through teaching obedience to authority. Coupled to this was the cultural belief that beatings served this purpose well, as is well illustrated in the above quote. While adults confirmed their power relationship with children, the young learnt a range of scripts about their place in society, as well as notions of power, justice, and the use of violence to solve problems.

During the South African Law Commission deliberations (SALC, 2001; 2002) that were associated with the drafting of the current draft Children's Bill (to replace the Child Care Act of 1983), the question of introducing legislation to ban physical punishment in the home featured strongly. This path was ultimately rejected by the Commission, which among other points, recognized the difficulty of policing private space, the risk of criminalizing caregivers, and perhaps most important, awareness that there might be significant resistance on the part of cultural and religious groupings.

The Commission did however recommend the removal of the common law parental defence of right to reasonable chastisement from the statutes. This provision raised the risk that parents accused of abuse could claim parental rights as a defense, and get away with violent treatment of their child.

When the community accepts corporal punishment, parents feel justified in using it. Straus, (2000) notes that corporal punishment is legal in all states of the USA, and that most Americans favour its use (Straus & Mathur, 1996; Straus & Mathur, 1995; Straus and Stewart, 1999). It is of interest that support for corporal punishment in the USA is declining. Studies conducted between 1968 and 1994, show a drop from 94% to 68% over time (Straus & Mathur, 1996). Higher rates of corporal punishment were found in rural areas and in southern parts of America even after controlling for demographic factors such as education, income, population group and religious affiliation (Giles-Sims et al, 1995).

Studies suggest that parenting beliefs are, not surprisingly, related to parenting styles (Crouch & Behl, 2001; Locke & Prinz, 2002).

Religion appears to play a role in the use of corporal punishment, but the evidence is complex and inadequate to draw profound conclusions. For example, conservative Protestant religions tend to exhibit higher approval rates of corporal punishment when compared to Catholics and atheists (Dietz, 2000; Giles-Sims et al, 1995). Other studies indicate religiosity or religious commitment plays a role – some research indicates that *positive child-oriented* discipline is associated with religiosity (Gerschoff, 2002).



The role of ethnicity is complex, and Straus and Stewart (1999) have shown in the USA, that the relationship between ethnicity and parental corporal punishment is inconclusive.

On the one hand it is argued that African-American parents are more likely to use corporal punishment than white parents as a function of their slave and oppressed heritage. Corporal punishment was used to secure obedience in a dangerous world. During the slave period in the USA, misbehaviour would result in being sold and lynched. Corporal punishment thus emerged as the most appropriate way of socializing a child to adapt to that type of society (Ferrari, 2002).

Baumrind (1991) and Belsky (1991) argue that the environment in which contemporary African American's live also promotes the use of corporal punishment as a way of preparing children for the harsh world. Ghetto life characterized by high levels of peer pressure to utilize drugs or engage in crime requires firm parental control; corporal punishment is thus a way of securing social control by deterring destructive behaviour. Social organization theory on the other hand argues that African Americans who live in situations of overwhelming poverty and instability need the family to provide more structure and stability for their children often in the form of corporal punishment (Straus, 1994).

In contrast, other studies have found that African Americans have similar or lower rates of corporal punishment (Straus & Lauer, 1992; Escovar, 1985). Straus and Stewart (1999) argue that such inconsistencies can be explained by methodological biases. Ferrari argues that mental health professionals judge parenting behaviour by Anglo-American standards and definitions of abuse and fail to include a sampling of family, friends and neighbours in large studies such as the National Incidence Survey from whom white children are likely to be reported (Ferrari, 2001). Straus argues that studies do not control for confounding variables such as low SES, ethnic/minority group status, violence between parents and parental abuse of alcohol and drugs (Ibid; Straus & Stewart, 1999). Instead of arguing that ethnicity does or does not cause the use of corporal punishment, one needs to regard socio-cultural factors as influencing proximal practices through the moderating influence of interpersonal relations and individual proclivities. Gender (Ferrari, 2003) and a history of violence in the family of origin (Rodriguez & Sutherland, 1999) have been identified as moderating factors.

Leaving the USA aside, studies of cultural practices and obedience in Africa suggest that corporal punishment is certainly used by parents to control their children in the face of danger. The need for obedience may arise in contexts that are perceived as dangerous for children. Strict discipline that promotes obedience is a source of protection. Compliant children, who listen to their care-givers, regardless of who they are, will be safer than those who are freer to exercise their will (LeVine et al, 1994).

While obedience scripts are often negatively associated with authoritarian and punitive approaches to child-care (Dodge, Pettit & Bates, 1994), they clearly have survival value in dangerous contexts. Among these are the dangers associated with living in violent poverty stricken communities.

However, an authoritarian context does not only produce the conditions for corporal punishment, it may be a vehicle for its reduction as Bartholdson (2001) argues. Korbin (1991) points out that in close knit communities the presence of elders who have authority beyond the confines of their families can protect children from parental disciplinary excesses. In addition, authority structures such as these can be used to drive changes in community practices. Once the elders are convinced of the merits of the change, their local authority can be used to implement changes for the better of children, as has occurred in China, resulting in reductions of child maltreatment.

Finally, there is evidence that rapid social change of the kind occurring in South Africa, particularly urbanisation accompanied by poverty and the loss of cultural patterns of relationship and surveillance (of caregivers), is associated with increases in child maltreatment. However the relationship between these factors is complicated and not well understood.

## *2: Low socio-economic status*

A number of studies and reviews have suggested that low socio-economic status is a significant predictor for the use of parental corporal punishment (Dietz, 2000; Keagan, 2001; Straus & Mathur, 1995; Straus & Stewart, 1999; Giles-Sims et al, 1995; Gerschoff, 2002). Low SES parents tend to use corporal punishment more often than middle class parents. Straus (1994) does however argue that incidence and chronicity is not significantly related to income. Rather, levels of stress determine the influence of socio-economic status on the use of corporal punishment. Stress is associated with increased parental depression and marital conflict both of which are predictors of punitive and hostile parenting practices (Crouch & Behl, 2001). The likelihood that stress is positively associated with child abuse and corporal punishment is moderated by beliefs related to parenting and corporal punishment in particular. In other words, parents who face high levels of stress but do not believe in corporal punishment and the use of physical force in interventions with children are not likely to use corporal punishment (Crouch and Behl, 2001; Gerschoff, 2002).

In addition, as noted above, the use of physical punishment by caregivers living in dangerous communities may have little to do with stress. Rather it may well be seen as an adaptive way of controlling their children and protecting them from danger.

## **Interpersonal Context Risks for Corporal Punishment**

### *1: Male-dominated household:*

Research suggests that parents in male-dominated households are more likely to utilize corporal punishment as a means of disciplining their children. Such households tend to be characterized by hierarchical and rigid gender roles. Parenting styles in these families tend to be aggressive, authoritarian and likely to be based on physical rather than verbal punishment techniques, all directly related to patriarchal attitudes (Ferrari, 2002; Straus, 2000).

## *2: Marital conflict*

Marital conflict has been shown to have direct and indirect effects on the use of corporal punishment (Keagon, 2001; Gerschoff, 2002; Straus & Yodanis, 1996).

Indirect effects are illustrated by children who witness marital conflict; they become distressed and aggressive, imitating their parent's conflict resolution styles. Parents then attempt to halt this problematic behaviour by using corporal punishment.

Another example of an indirect effect is when stressed abused women divert their anger and conflict from the spouse towards the child (O'Keefe, 1995).

Direct effects are evident when marital aggression spills over into the parent-child relationship, as is the case with violent fathers who are irritable and uninvolved in parenting practices. Holden and Ritchie (1991) show that violent husbands use less physical affection, and more negative control techniques such as physical punishment with their children.

Finally, conflictual parental relationships are a risk factor in the incidence of parental corporal punishment. Inconsistent disciplinary techniques may be the result of poor communication and disagreements about child rearing between maritally discordant parents. This may alter parenting behaviour in the presence of a spouse or result in inconsistent behaviour within one parent (Holden & Ritchie, 1991).

## *3: Family Structure:*

Family size as a risk factor has yielded contradictory results (Asdigian & Straus, 1997). Using data from the 1985 US National Family Violence Survey, they controlled for birth order and age. The results showed a linear relationship between the prevalence and chronicity of corporal punishment and the number of children in the family.

In fact Straus suggests that a decline in the American fertility rate may partly explain the decreasing use of corporal punishment noted above. High numbers of children influence parenting styles; because with more children, parents have less time and energy to reason with their offspring, and they resort to corporal punishment as the quickest disciplinary technique. Furthermore, larger families place economic pressure on parents who need to work more hours to support their families, become isolated from social supports, and resort to more harsh discipline (Asdigian & Straus, 1997; Gerschoff, 2002).

Finally, higher rates of corporal punishment have been found among single parents and stepparents (Giles-Sims et al, 1995; Straus & Stewart, 1999; Gerschoff, 2002). The argument is that such persons experience greater stress as a result of parenting alone, particularly when under conditions of economic hardship. For example, divorced women commonly experience a drop in income and financial stress. The additional strain may result in inconsistent discipline and physical punishment.

## Individual Characteristics and Corporal Punishment

### *1: Caregiver Psychological functioning, Temperament and Gender:*

Caregiver's psychological functioning and temperament predicts their use of corporal punishment, particularly those who are depressed, anxious and aggressive use corporal punishment more frequently. According to Keagon (2001) maternal depression is a significant risk factor for the use of corporal punishment.

Mothers use corporal punishment more often than fathers (Dietz, 2000; Gerschoff, 2002; Straus et al, 1998), and the difference is greatest for young children. This finding must be interpreted within the context of maternal and paternal roles in the family. Clearly, mothers have greater opportunities to discipline children simply because they assume the role of primary caretakers and tend to spend more time with their children.

The chances of mothers utilizing corporal punishment are thus higher than fathers even though fathers tend to assume the role of disciplinarians in the family. This is consistent with findings that fathers have more favourable attitudes to corporal punishment than mothers, even though increased chronicity (frequency) is associated with mother's use of corporal punishment (Straus and Stewart, 1999).

### *2: Age and educational attainment:*

A larger percentage of younger parents use corporal punishment than older parents (Giles-Sims et al, 1995; Straus, 1994; Dietz, 2000). In terms of chronicity, younger parents use corporal punishment at least 38% more often than older parents (Straus and Stewart, 1999). In other words, the number of incidences of parental corporal punishment and severe assaults decreases with the age of the parent. This is attributed to young parents' lack of experience with children, their propensity to abuse alcohol, and the greater economic stress that they face. According to Keagon (2001) and Giles-Sims and his colleagues (1995), this relationship is compounded when young parents have a low level of educational attainment. They argue that low education limits their knowledge of alternative disciplinary methods; alternative means of problem solving and hinders any understanding of the negative effects of corporal punishment. Furthermore, low levels of educational attainment are frequently correlated with low status and low paying occupations that are in turn associated with stress.

### *3: Violence in the family of origin:*

As noted previously, in our discussion of partner violence, a history of violence in the family of origin is a significant predictor of parenting behaviors and attitudes (Dietz, 2001; Ferrari, 2002; Rodriguez & Sutherland, 1999; Straus, 2000). For example, a study of university students found that those who were spanked were more likely to approve of corporal punishment and said they intended to use it to discipline their own children.

## **The Characteristics of the Child and the Risk of Corporal Punishment:**

### *1: Psychological Functioning and Temperament:*

Children who are spanked more often exhibit more socio-emotional problems in the form of hyperactivity, aggression and low self-regulation. It is not clear however whether these are the cause or the result of corporal punishment. Some authors argue that caregivers resort to punitive and harsh disciplinary measures as a means of stopping pre-existing undesired behaviour (Keagon, 2001). However, other evidence suggests that the presence of socio-emotional problems may be caused by corporal punishment rather than constituting a factor behind its use (Gerschoff, 2002). It is most probable that the two are closely connected. Difficult children provoke more controlling discipline, which exacerbates the child's problems. Independently, harsh discipline is likely to give rise to emotional problems.

### *2: Gender of the child:*

Corporal punishment is used more on boys than on girls (Dietz, 2000; Straus & Stewart, 1999; Giles-Sims et al, 1995; Gerschoff, 2002). Various explanations have been proposed for this relationship. For example, boys may be more likely to engage in misbehaviour more frequently than girls leading parents to adopt harsher disciplinary measures on boys (Straus and Stewart, 1999). Alternatively, and more likely, parents' decisions regarding disciplinary techniques are influenced by their gender role expectations - parents may believe that boys are more aggressive and require greater discipline. Parents may also use corporal punishment because they aim to socialize boys to be more aggressive in order to reinforce traditional gender norms (Giles-Sims et al, 1995).

### *3: Age of the Child:*

The use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure is largely moderated by the child's age (Dietz, 2000; Keegan Eemon, 2001; Straus and Mathur, 1995; Straus and Stewart, 1999; Giles-Sims et al, 1995; Asdigian and Straus, 1997; Straus et al, 1998; Gerschoff, 2002). Research in the U.S.A. suggests that 90% of children are smacked (Giles-Sims et al, 1995). Overall prevalence then declines after five years of age.

Just over half of a nationally representative sample of American parents interviewed in 1995 hit their children at age twelve, a third at age fourteen, and thirteen percent at age seventeen. Severity measured by hitting the child with a belt or stick was the greatest at ages five to eight (Straus and Stewart, 1999). The age differences in discipline practice is influenced by the extent to which the child is conceived to have the cognitive ability to understand the disciplinary message and by the involvement of alternative forms of authority such as peers who may be regarded as hindering the success of such punishment (Gerschoff, 2002).

## **Summary of Risk factors for Corporal Punishment**

In summary, the use of parental corporal punishment is associated with a range of complex interacting factors. Cultural scripts on parenting and constructions of childhood, impact on parent's beliefs about childrearing and consequently their tendency to use corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure. The relationship between ethnicity and corporal

punishment is inconclusive. The evidence does however suggest that such a relationship is confounded by variables related to low socio-economic status and the violence that often accompanies such poverty-stricken communities.

Within the family, risk factors include patriarchal and authoritarian households, high levels of marital conflict, single-parent status and large family size particularly in the presence of high levels of economic stress. Caregivers who use corporal punishment frequently tend to be young, have a low level of educational attainment and have experienced violence in their family of origin. Mothers tend to use corporal punishment more frequently than fathers because they spend more time with their children; however, studies show that fathers believe in the use of corporal punishment more than mothers.

Children who are often spanked tend to be male, between the ages of five and eight and tend to exhibit socio-emotional problems although these problems may be caused by the use of corporal punishment. Hence, various risk factors interact to ensure the incidence of parental corporal punishment. There is no information available on risk factors behind parental corporal punishment in the South African context.

## **LINKS BETWEEN PARTNER VIOLENCE AND CORPORAL PUNISHMENT**

This review of the literature shows that intimate partner violence and use of corporal punishment share a number of risk factors, with the exception of various child specific risk factors in the case of corporal punishment.

At the cultural / socio-economic level, common risk factors include patriarchal beliefs, beliefs in favour of violence, and socio-economic factors. Ethnicity was highlighted as a possible risk factor in both cases however the evidence suggests that its influence is moderated by socio-economic status and other factors at interpersonal and individual levels.

Within the family, hierarchical and authoritarian households, low levels of marital satisfaction and corresponding levels of marital conflict are common risk factors for both.

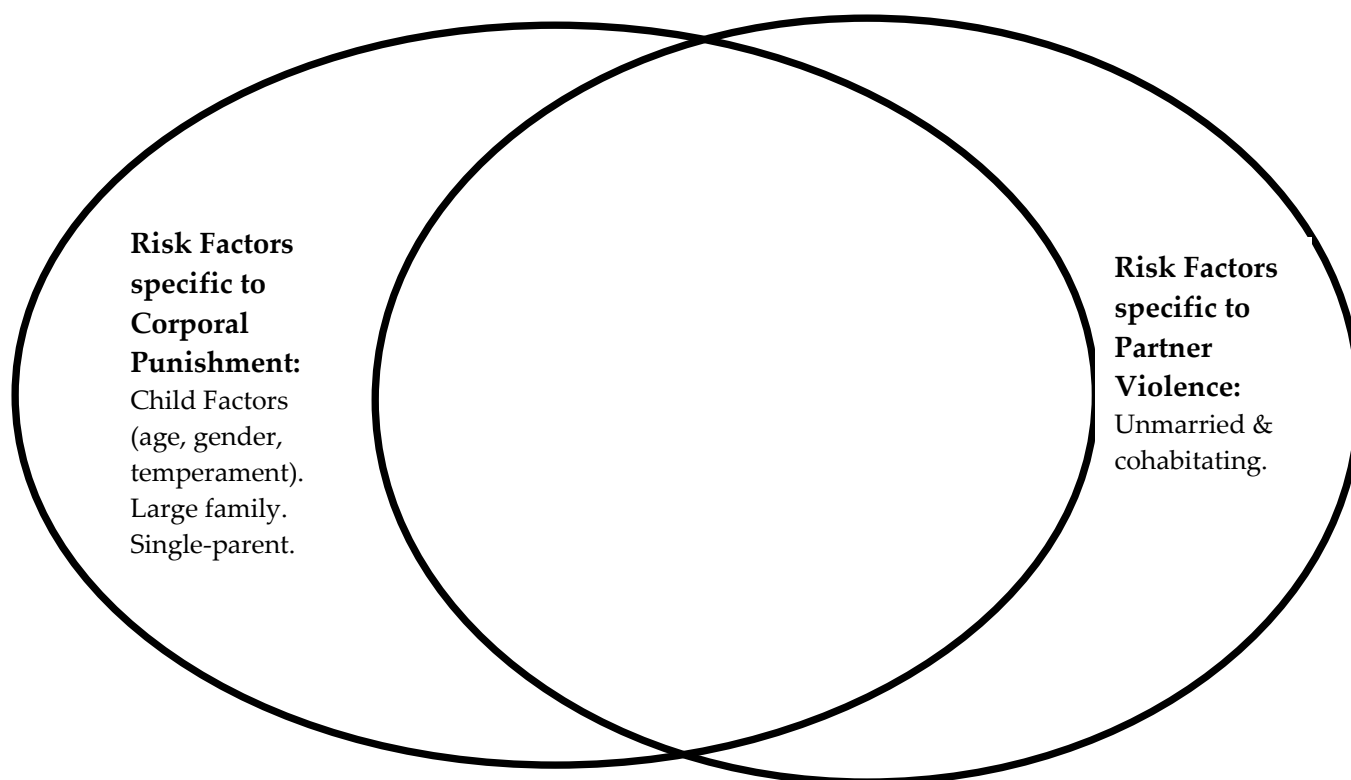
Individual psychopathology and mood disturbances (in particular depression), age, alcohol and drug dependency, violence in the family of origin, low educational attainment and low socio-economic status are additional common risk factors. In terms of individual factors the main difference between intimate partner violence and corporal punishment is gender. In both cases men tend to approve of the use of violence more than woman although women use corporal punishment more often. This is simply because they are in more frequent contact with the children in their care-giving roles. Other differences are largely related to the specifics of intimate partner violence and corporal punishment. In the case of the former, cohabitation rather than marriage has been defined as a specific risk factor. In the case of the latter, particular risk factors include child characteristics, size of the family and single parent status.

Nevertheless, the large number of common risk factors suggests that intimate partner violence and corporal punishment share some similar causal pathways. The evidence in

terms of overlaps between corporal punishment and partner violence are presented in Figure 2. It must be stressed that the incidence of corporal punishment in the studies to hand is of course far lower than that pertaining to partner violence. The point of the diagramme is to indicate the risk factors that exist when the two co-occur.

It must also be stressed of course that the vast bulk of this evidence is North American in origin, the reason being that that is where the extensive work has been done – particularly the surveys of incidence, chronicity and prevalence conducted by Straus and his colleagues. It is probable that many of the factors cited have relevance for South Africa.

**Figure 2: Common and specific risk factors for partner violence and corporal punishment**

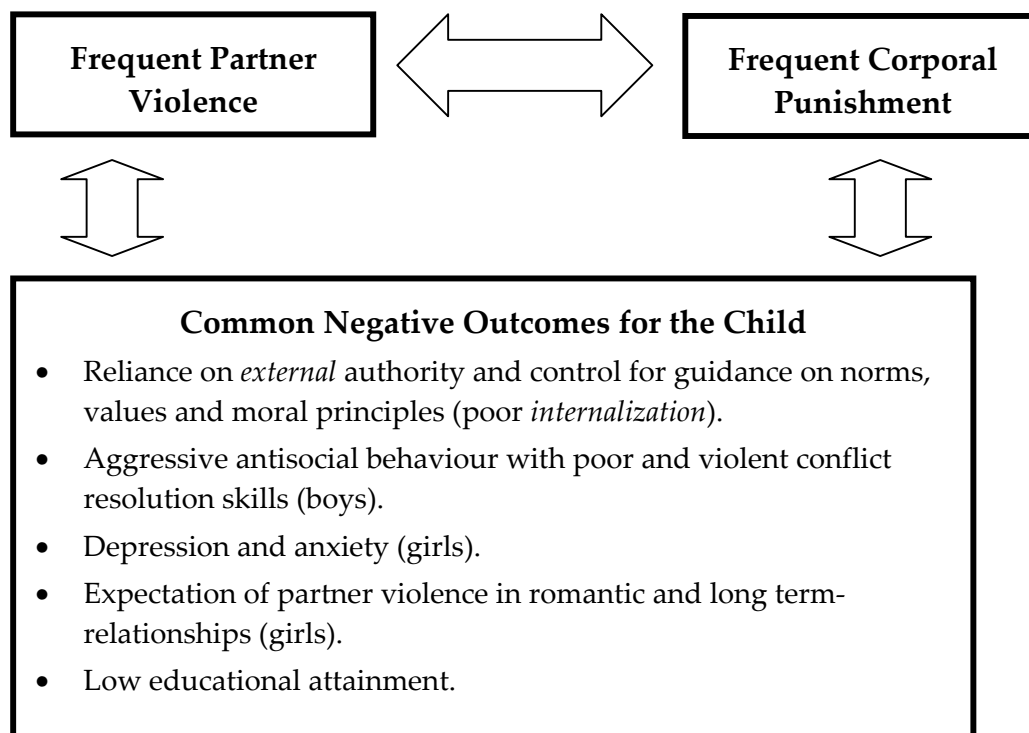


Men who abuse their wives are at a higher risk of maltreating their children. In addition, marital conflict may spill over into the child-parental relationship. It is likely to increase stress and/or lead to maternal depression, which may lead to negative or inconsistent parental practices. Mothers may divert their anger and frustration from their spousal relationship to their children. Fathers may abuse their children as a way to hurt their wives. Alternatively, after witnessing intimate partner violence on a frequent basis, children may respond by externalizing behaviour. In other words, they may imitate their role models, engage in parental abuse (child-parental violence) or engage in frequent acts of noncompliance or misbehaviour (Ulman and Straus, 2003). This may be met by increased use of harsh parenting practices including punitive disciplinary methods. Intimate partner violence may produce negative parenting practices which start out as corporal punishment to halt undesirable behaviour but may escalate into forms of physical abuse. The likelihood that it will escalate into maltreatment depends on factors at macro-, micro- and individual levels.

A further link between corporal punishment and intimate partner violence is related to the negative long-term effects of corporal punishment as shown in Figure 3 below.

**Figure 3: Links between the frequent co-occurrence of partner violence, corporal punishment and child outcomes**





### A Controversial Question: Is corporal punishment bad for children?

Straus (2002), Gerschoff (2002), Hester (2000) and Pete (1999) argue that the evidence is clear that corporal punishment has negative effects on children in both the short and long term. While the immediate effects may be compliance on the part of the child, the risk is that the child will not internalize the very morals and values that parents are attempting to teach them. Moreover they argue, corporal punishment serves to erode the parent-child relationship by inciting children to fear rather than trust their parents.

Corporal punishment is associated with increased adolescent depression and distress by replacing feelings of confidence and assertiveness with feelings of humiliation and helplessness (Straus and Mathur, 1995), feelings that may persist into adulthood.

Furthermore, the argument is that corporal punishment leads children to model aggressive behaviour (Ulman and Straus, 2003). In the long-term this may manifest in the use of violence against ones own spouse or children.

Straus (2000) argues that corporal punishment contains a 'hidden curriculum' that teaches children that those who love them are those that hit them. As the use of aggression against a loved one is seen as a legitimate way of resolving disputes or changing attitudes, men may learn that violence against their wives is acceptable and normative, and women may learn that experiencing violence from a loved one is justified (Straus & Yodanis, 1996; Straus, 2000).

However, not all are agreed. In the first place, and as we have pointed out above, we cannot make a simple link between childhood exposure to corporal punishment and partner violence. The factors are too complex for that.

Perhaps controversially, Baumrind (1996, 2002) and Larzelere (1994, 2000, 2002) both argue that corporal punishment does not necessarily have negative effects if it is administered in the “correct manner”. By that they mean its administration in a warm and nurturing context, combined with non-violent disciplinary techniques such as time out from the reinforcing environment, brief withdrawal of privileges and the application of reasoning and induction.

They argue that the *apparent* negative effects of corporal punishment may depend on other co-occurring conditions that are very difficult to separate out – it is hard to examine the effects of corporal punishment in isolation.

They note that the effects of corporal punishment are also moderated by the meaning that the child attaches to the punishment, which is in turn influenced by the child’s gender and age as well as the beliefs that the parents hold about parenting and how this feeds into the nature of interpersonal relations in the household. Larzelere (2000) goes as far as to argue that mild spanking may have positive effects in the form of internalization and reinforcement of authority.

Others such as Smith (2000) hold the belief that to “spare the rod, is to spoil the child”. In other words, refraining from spanking will lead to deleterious outcomes for the child and become manifest in the form of uncontrolled, disrespectful and acting out behaviour.

In terms of the empirical evidence, a review by Larzelere (2000) of 38 studies that assess the outcomes of spanking for preadolescent children concluded that the evidence shows that for younger children aged 2 to 6 years spanking is predominantly beneficial as it reduces noncompliance and fighting. In contrast Gershoff’s (2002) meta-analysis of 88 studies concluded that the only positive outcome of corporal punishment is immediate compliance; generally however the effects on children are negative.

### **Explaining the differences in research findings**

The controversy regarding the effects of corporal punishment does not help those concerned with the rights and well being of children. Why has it arisen?

The contrasting findings we have cited largely arise due to methodological differences between studies, particularly with respect to matters of definition and the use of different measures. For example, the terms corporal punishment, physical punishment, spanking, harsh punishment, punitive parenting are used interchangeably. The definitions used in prevalence studies have a significant impact on the results (Benjet & Kazdin, 2003; Appel & Holden, 1998). For example, some studies on corporal punishment exclude being hit with a belt or stick from the definition of corporal punishment because they are regarded as abusive. In other cases, broad definitions of corporal punishment, which include actions that would be classified as abusive, conflate prevalence estimates or overestimate the association of corporal punishment with negative child outcomes.

On the other hand, definitions that are too narrow tend to underrate levels of prevalence and underestimate the extent to which incidence is related to negative child outcomes. Gerschoff's (2002) meta-analysis for example utilizes the restrictive criteria of spanking to define corporal punishment while Larzelere (2000) included items such as frequently being spanked, hit with a belt, stick or similar object and beatings. Hence, their contrasting conclusions can be attributed to different study inclusion criteria (Benjet & Kazdin, 2003).

Definitions also vary across samples due to factors related to social class, ethnicity, geography or other moderating variables (Ferrari, 2003). This hinders attempts to compare the results.

Individuals also differ in their definition of punishment and abuse. This impacts upon the data collected because parents who do not regard corporal punishment as a form of abuse, may not report it because it is taken-for-granted behaviour (Ashton, 2001).

Finally, the relationship between spanking and a particular outcome may be due to the presence of another variable, which may cause both spanking and the outcome independent of each other; such confounding variables include parental stress, marital conflict, parental hostility, psychopathology and inconsistent parenting practices (Benjet and Kazdin, 2003). In addition, parental warmth, supportiveness and use of reasoning may protect the child against the negative effects of corporal punishment (Straus & Mathur, 1995). Whether corporal punishment is viewed as legitimate by the child, the parent and the wider community would also have an impact on the way it impacts on the child (Straus & Stewart, 1999).

The methodological and conceptual challenges are clear.

## METHODOLOGY

### SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

#### SASAS total Sample

Only brief points about the survey method and sample are made here. Technical aspects are included in Appendix 2. The SASAS sample consisted of 2497 participants, distributed by province and population group as reported in Table 1. Other key demographics for the total sample are reported in Tables 2 and 3, and Figure 4 below. Figure 4 refers to the sample with children under 18 years of age.

**Table 1: Provincially Stratified SASAS Sample Characteristics by population group**

	West Cape	E. Cape	N. Cape	F. State	KZNatal	N. West	Gauteng	Mpuma- langa	Limpopo	Total
African /Black	71	214	92	171	204	148	136	218	273	1527
Coloured	156	52	102	25	15	10	31	14	1	406
Indian/Asian	4	10	1		166	2	56	7	5	251
White	46	29	32	31	14	31	65	38	21	307
Other	1	2				2	1			6
	278	307	227	227	399	193	289	277	300	2497

For purposes of analysis, the age categories below were created.

**Table 2: SASAS Sample Characteristics by age group**

Age Range	Number & Proportions of Participants
16-24 years	509 (20%)
25-35 years	591 (24%)
>35 years	1393 (56%)
Total	2493 (100%)

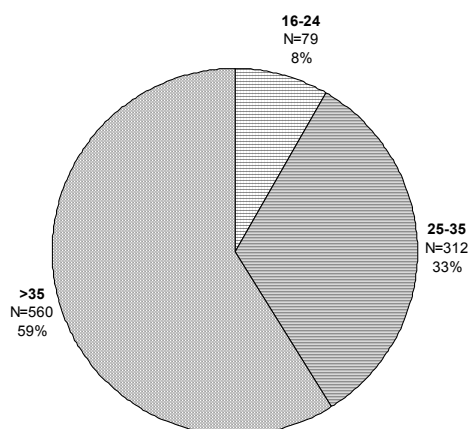
**Table 3: SASAS Sample Characteristics by Gender**

Gender	Number & Proportions of Participants
Male	1021 (41%)
Female	1476 (59%)
Total	2497 (100%)

From the total survey sample, it was necessary to extract groups for further analysis. Sample characteristics for the study of corporal punishment and partner violence are reported below.

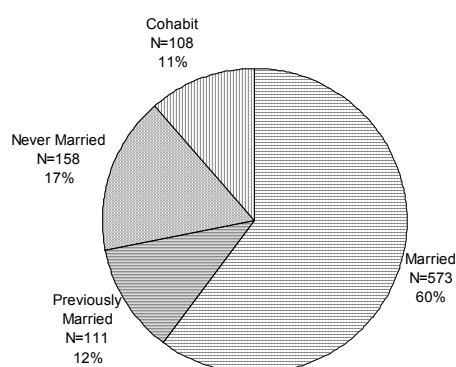
### **Sample characteristics: parents with children under 18**

A sub group of the SASAS participants who had children under 18, and who answered the questions on child discipline and corporal punishment was extracted, and labeled '*participants with children under 18*'. It was felt that the most valid responses to questions on corporal punishment would be provided by this group. Their characteristics are noted in Figure 4, Table 4, and Figures 5 and 6 below. According to the literature, these variables influence the use of corporal punishment (SES is considered later).

**Figure 4: Age Groups of Participants with Children under 18 in the household****Table 4: Gender of Participants with Children under 18**

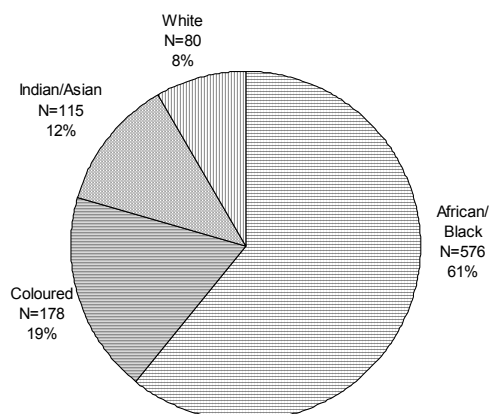
Gender	Number & Proportions of Participants
Male	298 (31%)
Female	654 (69%)
Total	952 (100%)

As is evident in Figure 5, most of the parents are married. Twelve percent of the parents are cohabiting and not then married. The never married and previously married groups do not live with a partner.

**Figure 5: Marital Status of Participants with Children under 18 in the household**

When attempting to examine possible cultural differences in disciplinary attitudes and use of corporal punishment, language and population group variables were considered. After preliminary analyses, population group was considered to be an appropriate proxy for cultural group. Groupings are reported in Figure 6. The majority are African.

**Figure 6: Population Group distribution of Participants with Children under 18 in the household**



### **Sample characteristics of Adults who responded to the questions on partner violence (CTS2 Physical Assault Scale)**

In order to examine partner violence, a sample defined as *participants with partners* was created on the basis of all participants who identified themselves as either *cohabiting* or *married* (having children was not a criterion for inclusion).

The number of *participants with partners* who completed the CTS2 Physical Assault Scale was 1198 {*married* = 998 (83.3%); *cohabiting* = 200 (16.7%)}. The refusal rate was (4%). This gives us confidence that the results are representative of the people with partners who participated in the SASAS. In addition, we believe that the sample is representative of South African couples who are married or cohabiting, because our partner violence sample constitutes 48% of the SASAS nationally representative sample, which is very similar to the married and cohabiting proportion of the South African population which was 45% in the 1996 Census.

## **MEASURES AND PROCEDURE**

SASAS comprises of two separate interview schedules covering a range of topics. Survey participants responded to either schedule 1 or 2. While some questions are common to both instruments, the modules constructed for the investigation of *partner violence*, *use of corporal punishment* and *child discipline* appeared in schedule 1. The schedule contains 324 questions including *demographic* items designed to tap such characteristics as the participant's age, socio-economic status, language group, population group, educational level and religious background. A number of these variables were used for the current study. They will be specified where appropriate.

The questions used to tap parental discipline attitudes, use of corporal punishment and partner violence are contained in Appendix 1. As will be evident, a set of questions to determine the marital and cohabiting status of participants is followed by items extracted from the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory, questions on the use of corporal punishment, and the Physical Assault Scale of the CTS2.

### *The Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory AAPI*

The AAPI (Bavolek, 1984) assesses four constructs relating to parenting: expectations of children; parental empathy; belief in physical punishment; and role reversal. It has been validated over twenty years of research. For the current study, and due to the need to restrict the volume of items in the SASAS, only the four highest loading items in the *parental empathy* scale and the three highest in the *belief in physical punishment* subscale were utilized. They were subjected to psychometric analysis to ensure their reliability. The final scale properties used for the analysis are included in Appendix 2.

### *The Conflict Tactics Scales*

The Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS) were developed by Straus (1979) and modified as the CTS2 (Straus et al, 1996). The CTS2 was used in the current study. The purpose of the CTS2 is to obtain the participants' statement and his / her claims about the partner's approach to dealing with conflict.

In this study we have used one of the CTS2 scales, that which measures *physical assaults* between partners. This is acceptable procedure (Straus et al, 1996).

As will be evident in Appendix 1, the CTS2 has two questions per physical assault item. One refers to violence that the *participant* admits to having perpetrated against his / her partner, while the other is the participant's account of his or her *partner's violent behaviour*.

For this report, two measures of partner violence were selected:

- *Lifetime prevalence* of partner violence for couples and for men and women respondents. Lifetime prevalence refers to violence in the current year and before.
- *Past year prevalence* of partner violence for couples (called *overall* prevalence) and for men and women respondents. Past year prevalence refers to events in the current year.

Technical details are reported in Appendix 2.

### **Administration of the interview schedule**

The interview schedule was administered face-to-face in the home language of the participants. Wherever possible the population group and language of the participant and the fieldwork interviewer were matched to facilitate maximum empathy and cultural sensitivity.

## RESULTS

### PARTNER VIOLENCE

All the results for partner violence reported below are based on *unweighted* scores on the Physical Assault Scale of the CTS2. We took the decision to label participants as ‘*perpetrators*’ (those who *report* assaulting a partner) or ‘*victims*’ (those who *report* being assaulted) on the basis of their responses to the CTS2. Clearly, many female ‘perpetrators’ are likely to have been *responding* to the violence of their partners – this is most likely in the case of women. As partners were not interviewed in order to ascertain such details, we cannot know who initiated the conflict. This is an inherent problem with the CTS2.

### Prevalence

Lifetime and Past Year Prevalence of partner violence is reported in Table 5.

**Table 5: Past Year and Lifetime Prevalence of partner violence (unweighted data)**

		Lifetime Prevalence	Past Year Prevalence
<b>Couples*</b>		19.2%	12.5%
<b>Perpetrators**</b>	Total	16.5%	10.4%
	Male	8.3%	4.8%
	Female	8.2%	5.6%
<b>Victims***</b>	Total	14.9%	10%
	Male	5.4%	3.3%
	Female	9.5%	6.7%

Scores for *couples\** are derived from the CTS2 scores of each participant: - what *he or she* reported concerning his or her own or the partner’s violent behaviour (clearly a potentially larger group than either the perpetrator or victim groups).

Scores for *perpetrators* are based on respondents’ statements that *he or she* assaulted his or her partner at least once.

Scores for *victims\*\*\**, are based on respondents’ statements that *he or she* was assaulted by his or her partner at least once.

The results show that nearly **20%** of South Africans, both men and women have experienced violent physical assault *in their domestic relationship*, either as perpetrators, victims or both in the lifetime of their relationships with that partner. That is almost **25% higher** than the United States of America (prevalence of 16%) using the same method (Straus & Gelles, 1990).



Some sixteen percent (16.5 %) of the married or cohabiting individuals who answered the CTS2 report having assaulted their partners, and 15% report being assaulted during the relationship. Nearly twice as many women as men report being assaulted.

Not surprisingly, rates for past year prevalence are lower, but the gender trends are very similar – women are much more likely to be victims than men.

It is essential to note that when we speak of the results for men and women we cannot say that the men and women are representative of all South African men and women. This is because they constitute a sub-sample who are married or cohabiting.

Ten percent (10%) of the women who answered the CTS2 reported lifetime domestic assaults, and nearly 7% reported assaults by their current partner in the past year.

While the methods and the questions are different, the results of the current study are perhaps most usefully compared with the only substantial community survey of partner violence to be conducted in South Africa - that of Jewkes, Levin and Penn-Kekana (2002), who studied the *lifetime* and *past year prevalence* of abuse of woman aged 18-49 in three provinces (Eastern Cape, Limpopo, and Mpumalanga). The study was conducted parallel to the 1998 South African Demographic and Health Survey (SADHS). There was a 90% response rate and the final sample contained 1306 women.

Jewkes and her colleagues did not use the CTS2. They only studied women's accounts, and asked participants whether they "*had been threatened with violence, had been slapped punched or beaten (one question), had been kicked, bitten, choked or burnt, and whether they had been threatened with or injured by a weapon or object*" (Jewkes, Levin & Penn-Kekana, 2002, p. 1606). They therefore used a broader definition of violence than the CTS2 (including threats), a broader definition of 'partner', and included reports of assaults by current *and* past partners in their measure of lifetime prevalence.

Using this approach, they found a *lifetime* prevalence of assault for women of 24.6%.

Their *past year* prevalence of assaults on women of 9.5%, is much closer to the findings of this study in which 6.7% of the women reported being assaulted by current partners in the same period. Given the breadth of the definition of partner used by Jewkes et al, past year prevalence is probably a better basis for comparison.

### **Socio-economic status, and population group**

The distribution of lifetime and past year prevalence partner violence across socio-economic and population groups for both men and women was examined, because these factors are known to be associated with domestic violence. The findings are presented in Figures 7 through 10 below. They must be examined cautiously because the numbers of respondents decline when we stratify the data in this way, and the participants classified into the socio-economic groups below are unlikely to be an accurate representation of the South Africans who earn in those income bands. The same problem attends the population group data. Nonetheless a good idea of the distribution of domestic violence across SES (based on income) and population group is discernable from this data.

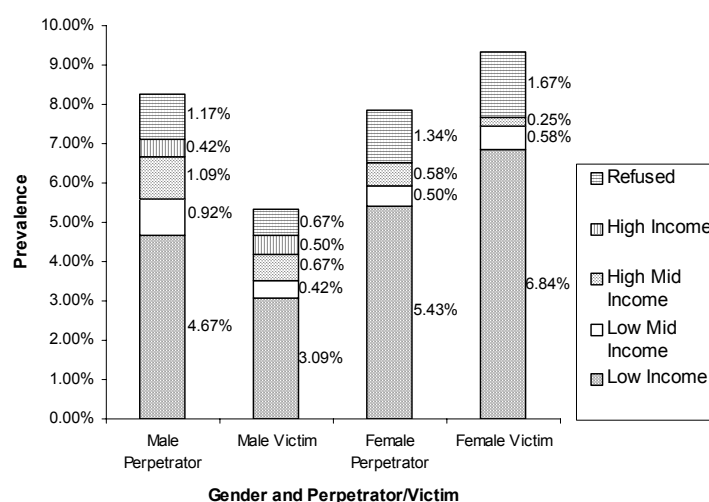
The reader is referred to Appendix 2 for the income bands. In the figures below, 'Refused' indicates those who did not disclose their income.

### *Lifetime partner violence and past year partner violence*

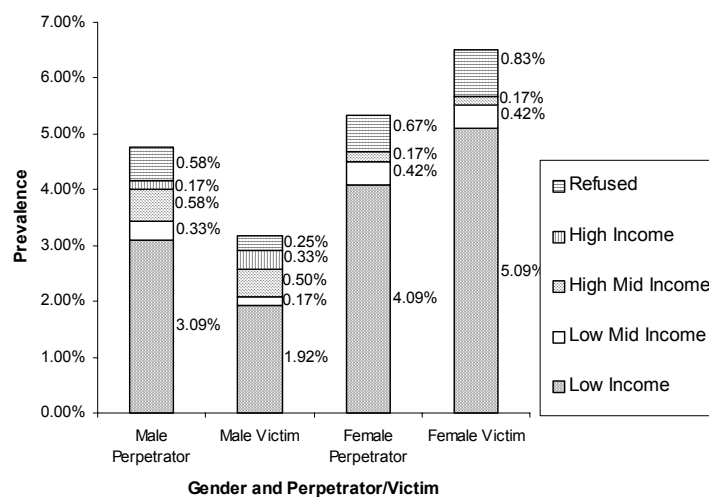
Which socio-economic groups are most vulnerable?

As expected, Figures 7 and 8 show that regardless of the period measured, more men in the lowest income bracket (< R1000.00 per month) assault their partners than any other group. Also more women in this group are likely to assault their partners and be assaulted. Double the number of low income women as men are assaulted.

**Figure 7: Lifetime Prevalence of Partner Violence by Gender and Socio Economic Status**



**Figure 8: Past Year Prevalence of Partner Violence by Gender and Socio Economic Status**



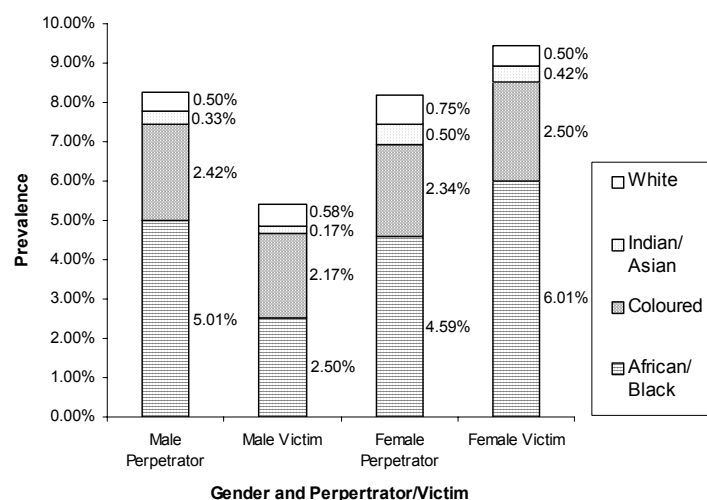
The prevalence of physical assaults in different South African communities (stratified by population group), are shown in Figure 9 (lifetime prevalence) and Figure 10 (Past year prevalence).

Which communities are most vulnerable to intimate partner violence?

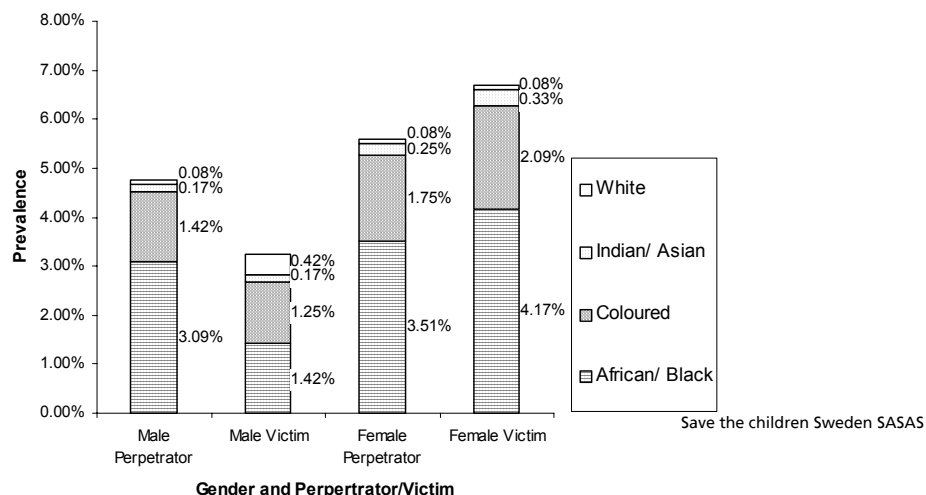
Regardless of the period, proportionally higher numbers of African/Black and Coloured women report assaults by partners, and more men in the same communities assault their partners than in others.

Of course we should note that African/Black and Coloured people in South Africa are far more likely than others to be in the *lower income groups*. Therefore what we are seeing in these figures is as likely to be a consequence of poverty as it is a function of ethnic grouping. However, we cannot rule out the possibility of patriarchal attitudes being overlaid on poverty, amplifying the risk of violence as reported by Jewkes and her colleagues (2002). We could not examine this question statistically as there were too few white participants in the lower income categories to permit analysis. We will return to this issue via another route at a later point.

**Figure 9: Lifetime Prevalence of Partner Violence by Gender and Population group**



**Figure 10: Past Year Prevalence of Partner Violence by Gender and Population group**



## Predictors of partner violence

The descriptive results presented above tell only part of the story. It is important to attempt to gain an understanding of the extent to which a particular factor influences the occurrence of intimate partner violence. As is evident in the literature review, the primary factors associated with partner violence are:

poverty (low income); ethnicity; low educational level; cohabitation rather than marriage; and age. Younger adults in relationships are more at risk.

In order to examine the contribution of these variables to partner violence in South Africa, we conducted *three stepwise regression analyses* (see appendix 2 for technical details). Ethnicity was excluded. The reason is that Black South Africans are also most likely to be in the poorest group. If African population group rather than SES had been used in the analysis, there is no doubt that it would have been a predictor. However, it would be misleading to see this as an ethnic influence rather than a class influence because the two are confounded and this violates one of the conditions for the regression analysis to follow.

Three Stepwise Multiple Regressions were computed. They allow us to determine the relative contribution of each factor of interest. They were as follows:

- Couples: the first examined the factors that contribute to *lifetime* prevalence of partner violence regardless of gender;
- Women Victims: the second examined the factors that contribute to *women* being assaulted by their partners over the life time of their relationship, and
- Male Perpetrators: the third examined the factors that predict male violence in the domestic sphere.

What was found? Of all the variables considered, the most powerful influences on partner violence for the three groups were as follows:

- Couples: lesser educated participants and those who are cohabiting are most at risk of being involved in a relationship characterized by partner violence.
- Women Victims: younger, less educated women are most at risk of being involved in a relationship where they would be victims of partner violence.
- Male Perpetrators: cohabiting men were most at risk of being involved in a relationship where they would be perpetrators of partner violence.

In the most comparable South African study to ours, Jewkes and her colleagues (2002) found that women most likely to be abused (past year prevalence) were African, of low socio-economic status, and to be cohabiting rather than married.

The results we have found for South Africa are the same as those found in developed regions.

## ATTITUDES TO CHILD REARING AND USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

### Patterns of Corporal punishment

It will be recalled that for this study, corporal punishment refers to “the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain but not injury for the purposes of correction or control of the child’s behavior” (Straus, 1994, p. 4).

A distinction is made between the use of the hand to *smack* or *spank* or slap the child, and the *use of a belt or some other object* to administer punishment. The intention here is to provide an index of the risk of injury to the child, as well as the risk of physical abuse. Arguably the latter acts are more severe forms of physical punishment that may border on abuse.

In order to assess prevalence of ‘mild’ corporal punishment among parents with children under 18 years, they were asked *when the last time was that he or she or a partner had smacked one of the children in their family with their hand (mild corporal punishment for present purposes)*. Regardless of the time frame, any parent who stated that he or she had smacked a child in the family was recorded as using smacking.

To assess the prevalence of ‘severe’ corporal punishment, the parents were asked *when was the last time was that he or she or a partner had beaten one of the children in their family with a strap, belt, stick or similar object*. Regardless of the time frame, any parent who stated that he or she had beaten a child in the family was recorded as using smacking.

The age of the child is also recorded so as to find out the most common age for the two forms of corporal punishment.

#### *Prevalence of corporal punishment – all parents with children under 18*

What proportion of parents admit to using corporal punishment?

Ninety three percent (93%) of the parents in the SASAS investigation answered questions related to smacking. The table below shows that 57% of them (or their partners) had smacked their children at some point. The rest, at 43% report never having smacked their children – a surprisingly large proportion given figures cited previously in relation to the USA and British parents, where over 90% report smacking (Bartholdson, 2001). Thirty percent of the parents who do smack, report having used this form of punishment in the last month.

Table 6: Period during which a child was smacked with a hand

Period	Proportion of parents using smacking
Child smacked in the past week	142 (16%)
Child smacked in the past month	124 (14%)
Child smacked longer than a month ago	243 (27%)
Child never gets smacked	378 (43%)
Total sample	887

Table 7. provides the prevalence of severe corporal punishment (beatings with a stick, belt or other object) for all parents with children under 18 (531 parents answered this question).

The *majority* of those who responded (59%) said they had used a belt or another object to beat one of their children (33% of the total parent sample).

Table 7: Period during which a child was beaten with a belt or other implement

Period	Proportion of parents using beatings
In the past week	56 (11%)
In the past month	66 (12%)
Longer than a month ago (in past year)	189 (36%)
Never get beaten	220 (41%)
Total	531

*How old are children who are smacked and beaten?*

The most common age of children who are *smacked* is 3 years of age and the most common age of children who are *beaten* with some or other object is 4 years old

In sum, the data presented above shows that 57% of all the parents with children under 18 reported using corporal punishment, with 33% using severe corporal punishment in addition to smacking.

We now turn to examine the parental factors associated with corporal punishment in more detail. All data is reported for use of corporal punishment in the past year.

*Gender differences:*

Of those parents who reported that they *smacked* their children in the past year, 30% were fathers and 70% were women. In the case of *severe* corporal punishment, 30% were men and 70% were women.

These results are similar to the United States in which women are more likely to use corporal punishment than men. Given the young age of the affected children noted above, it is likely that this difference between the men and women simply reflects the different child care roles of men and women and the fact that women are likely to spend more time with young children.

### Age differences:

If we examine age trends, fewer younger parents are smacking their children than those who are older.

**Table 8: Corporal punishment in different age groups**

Age Group	Proportion who smack children	Proportion who beat children
16-24 years of age	44% (N =29)	51% (N =15 )
25-35 years of age	57% (N =253)	50% (N =92 )
> 35 years of age	43% (N =307)	64% (N = 204)

Again, the trends in Table 8 are different to some of the results from abroad, where youth of parents is a risk factor for harsh punishment. The explanation in the South African case may be generational. It is possible that severe corporal punishment is less acceptable to younger parents.

### Population group differences:

The following figures should be treated with caution, because the numbers of parents in each population group are relatively small. However, an examination of the role of ethnicity in the use of severe punishment shows that Indian parents are *least* likely to use both forms of corporal punishment, and that greater proportions of black Africans and whites beat their children with a belt or a similar object. In the case of the Indian parents this is likely to be a function of cultural values regarding discipline.

**Table 9: Corporal punishment in different population groups**

Group	Proportion who smack children	Proportion who beat children
Black African parents	59% (N =309)	69% (N = 210)
Coloured Parents	61% (N =107)	48% (N = 55)
Indian parents	43% (N =44)	43% (N = 44)
White parents	61% (N =46)	61% (N = 46)

### Married and cohabiting parents:

The main results are reported in Table 10 below. Previously married parents in this study are defined as widowed, divorced or separated parents who are not living with anyone.

A greater proportion of *cohabiting (unmarried) parents* smack their children than other groups. (a similar risk factor to the case of partner violence). Unlike evidence reported from international studies, similar proportions of single to married parents use corporal punishment.

Of interest is the fact that a greater proportion of *previously married single parents* use severe corporal punishment. It may well be the case that this is stress related as suggested in the literature. However, the individual state of these parents was not investigated in the SASAS. The matter requires further exploration.

Table 10: Corporal punishment in the past year in relation to marital status

Group	Proportion of each group who smack children	Proportion of each group who beat children
Married parents	56% (N =237)	56% (N = 181)
Previously married single parents	59% (N = 61)	72% (N = 46)
Single parents who have never married	58% (N = 137)	59% (N = 84)
Cohabiting parents	68% (N = 68)	63% (N = 46)

### Predictors of corporal punishment

Primary factors associated with the use of corporal punishment of children established in the international literature are:

- Parental support for the use of physical punishment; non-empathic parenting attitudes; female gender; young parents; a positive attitude to the use of corporal punishment in schools; and cohabitation status rather than marriage.

In order to examine the extent to which these factors make corporal punishment more or less likely, a stepwise multiple regression was computed using these variables, all of which were measured in the SASAS. Technical details are to be found in Appendix 2.

These results show that:

- *Attitudes supportive of the use of physical punishment and non-empathic parenting attitudes* were the only significant predictors of severity of corporal punishment. Of these two factors, the first is the *strongest* predictor of the severity of corporal punishment. This does not mean that the other factors are unimportant. It does demonstrate the *overriding influence* of parental attitudes in the use of corporal punishment (when compared with the other variables measured in this study).

### Links between Corporal punishment and partner violence

As we have noted in the literature section, there is evidence for a link between partner violence and child *maltreatment*. This is not the same as saying there is a link between approval and use of corporal punishment and partner violence. The cross national evidence is that over 90% of parents in countries such as the US and Britain use corporal punishment, while the prevalence of self reported partner violence is a fraction of that figure.

To see whether people who agree or disagree with corporal punishment are as likely to have the same or different levels of partner violence in their households, we ran a Mann-Whitney U Test on the data available to address this question (See Appendix 2).

The results showed that participants who agreed with physical discipline of the children had statistically significant and higher levels of partner violence than those who disagreed with corporal punishment.



This result requires further investigation, but it certainly suggests that where the two exist together, the risk for South African children may well be greater, as they are elsewhere in the world.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### WHAT DO OUR RESULTS SUGGEST FOR INTERVENTION?

#### Partner violence summary of findings

As we noted in our discussion of the literature, violence has come to be regarded as normative and often desirable in the South African context (Jewkes and colleagues, 2002) In that research, 75% of women in three provinces believed that it was sometimes acceptable for adults to hit each other. No doubt men would have similar disturbing views.

There are a few prevalence studies of partner violence in South Africa, and most have involved women victims of violence rather than community studies. Recall that Jewkes and her colleagues' three province community study found a lifetime prevalence of partner physical abuse to women of 18 to 48 years of 26.8% in the Eastern Cape, 28.4% in Mpumalanga and 19.1% in Limpopo. In contrast to the present study, they did not use the CTS2, they did not include men, and the lower age cut off was 18 rather than 16 as was the case in the present study.

The results for the SASAS study suggest a *disturbingly high (20%)* lifetime prevalence rate for domestic violence - lower than Jewkes and her colleagues. Quite probably this is do to the different measurement criteria employed in the two studies.

Regardless of the period, the SASAS study found that *women are twice as likely to be domestic assault victims as their male partners*.

Bollen et al (1999) found that violence against women in South Africa cuts across the division of the employed and the unemployed, with 67.5% of the abusers in her study being employed. However employment does not rule out poverty.

However, poverty and intimate partner violence have been found to be strongly correlated in many countries. In the SASAS, the results are clear: the poor are at greater risk for partner violence than other groups – confirming the international evidence. And regardless of the reporting period, proportionally higher numbers of African/Black and Coloured women report assaults by partners, and more men in the same communities assault their partners than in others. Given the co-occurrence of race and class in South Africa, this suggests further that poverty is a significant risk factor for domestic violence in South Africa.

Indeed our analyses show without doubt that a cluster of characteristics predicts partner violence: men and women of low education who are young, and are cohabiting and living in poverty are most at risk of being involved in a relationship characterized by partner violence.

### **Corporal punishment summary of findings**

Our review of the literature showed that intimate partner violence and corporal punishment share a number of risk factors, including poverty, patriarchal beliefs, and beliefs in favour of the use of intimate violence and corporal punishment.

The use of corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure is largely moderated by the child's age with age 5 being modal for corporal punishment in the USA. In that country, the evidence suggests that 90% of children are smacked at some point (Giles-Sims et al, 1995).

There is little good information available on the prevalence of parental corporal punishment in South Africa. In a retrospective survey of 300 adult students, Rakitzis (1987) reported that 59% of Black students, 70% of English-speaking Whites and 92% of Afrikaans speaking Whites stated that they were hit at home.

In the current SASAS study, 57% of the parents reported using corporal punishment, with 33% using severe corporal punishment (beating with a belt or stick).

This is lower than the US data, but it must be remembered that the SASAS is not strictly representative of South African parents. However, even if it were, it seems probable from this study that the overall prevalence would be lower than the USA. Another problem to bear in mind is that the US studies did not use the identical questions to the SASAS.

Locally, we found that greater proportions of Africans and whites smack and beat their children than other groups. The most common age of children who are smacked is 3 – 4 years of age, not unlike the US data.

Cohabiting parents are most likely to smack their children and similar proportions of single to married parents use this form of corporal punishment. However greater proportions of single, previously married parents use severe corporal punishment and beat their children.

Similar to evidence elsewhere, it is women who are the overwhelming majority when it comes to administering corporal punishment (the ratio is 7 women : 1 man).

Finally, attitudes supportive of the use of physical punishment and non-empathic parenting attitudes are predictors of the severity of corporal punishment, and of these two factors, the first is the strongest predictor of severity of corporal punishment

In most respects, therefore, the SASAS evidence concurs with the international literature.

### **Change is a challenge: prevention targeting**

It is beyond the scope of this report to develop a strategy for changing prevailing attitudes and practices in South Africa. The attitudes that surround discipline practices and relationships between men and women are both powerfully entrenched in individuals, and

supported by local norms and the behaviour of others in the community. Changing attitudes and behaviour under such conditions is very difficult and takes time.

Single strategy interventions that focus on changing individual attitudes and behaviour are unlikely to meet with success. This is because the predictors of both forms of violence contain a mix of influences, and because both are strongly shaped by *prevailing norms* and local practices. Efforts to change attitudes and behaviour must be undertaken with an understanding of local embedded attitudes and everyday practices.

Corporal punishment, and in some communities domestic violence, are so 'ordinary' and commonplace that they resist change unless a systemic approach to the problem is undertaken that embraces the range of cultural, and individual factors we have discussed. In both areas, the influence of "what others" do is essential to address. And deviation from destructive community norms, particularly for women, is difficult and can invite further abuse.

In the case of partner violence, it is clear from the results that interventions aimed at changing the collective norms, attitudes and behaviour of *men* are essential. They are the main perpetrators, and women are the victims. Where they participate in violence, they are likely to be respondents rather than initiators. At the same time, Jewkes' work warns us that many women are complicit in their own violence believing that men have the right to assault them under certain circumstances.

In addition, our data also suggest that support for families and couples who are living in poverty is essential to reduce the risk of both partner violence and corporal punishment.

Both corporal punishment and partner violence can be addressed in the life orientation sections of the National Curriculum. Education interventions focusing on parent- child and gender relations starting in school and which include positive non-violent male role models and alternatives to corporal punishment constitute possible important universal intervention strategies. The focus should be on men as much as women.

However, education at school will not be enough. It is through assisting communities to change their ordinary everyday behaviour toward their children and partners that is most likely to make a difference over time.

Legislation is also a powerful tool. The Domestic Violence Act and the Schools Act which banned corporal punishment in schools are very positive moves. However in the latter case, unless teachers are assisted with other resources and techniques of discipline, attempts to reduce violence to children and assert their rights in the school context will struggle for success.

Legislating against corporal punishment in the private space of the home is a controversial matter. Regardless of its possible merits in changing parental practices, in a developing country such as South Africa, with an already creaking judicial system, it is unlikely to be operable.

If our figures are reflective of the true national situation regarding the prevalence of corporal punishment (and until further evidence is in, it remains a big *if*), there is at least some comfort in the finding that South African parents are less prone to smack and beat their children than those in some other parts of the world.

## LIMITATIONS

All studies have limitations and a finite scope. The current study is no exception. It is important to be aware of the limitations of this research so that inaccurate conclusions are not drawn from the results.

The present study provides us with the first national baseline information on parents' reports of their use of corporal punishment, as well as self-reports of partner violence by South Africans. While the study is robust on many levels, it has three primary limitations that must be taken into account.

The first is that the interview schedules were not translated into all South African languages, and in many cases, the interviewer translated the questions into the participant's home language. While rigorous training was given to all the field staff, it was not possible to control the translations used by the field workers in the field. It is probable that speakers of the various languages would have interpreted the meaning of certain questions differently from one another and this would have affected the results in ways that are not possible to detect. While this sort of problem is to some extent inevitable in a multilingual country, it does impact on the results and they need to be considered in this light.

The second limitation concerns sampling. The participants in the SASAS are representative of the South African population as they were drawn from a representative household survey.

However, it is important to note that *technically*, the parents with children under 18 whose approach to discipline and corporal punishment we have assessed in this report, are not strictly representative of the population of parents with children under 18 years (parents were not the universe from which the study population was selected).

Notwithstanding this observation, and given that households were representative and were thus likely to reflect the distribution of adults with children, it is unlikely that the parents we report on are markedly different to those in the general population. We would argue therefore that our findings for parental approaches to discipline and their use of corporal punishment can be accepted as an acceptable reflection of South African parents with children under 18 years.

Similarly, when it comes to partner violence, the universe for sampling participants from households was *individuals* and not couples. However, as noted earlier, the profile of married, single and cohabiting people who participated in this study is very similar to the profile in the 1996 Census. So we can be reasonably confident the prevalence data is representative of the South African population.

The third and final limitation is that the study does not include the voices of children or the adult participants' reflections on their own childhood punishment. This is not strictly speaking a limitation of methodology, rather it is a consequence of the choice of an adult population for study as part of an adult survey.

A national survey of *children's* experience of corporal punishment is the next necessary step needed to fill this gap in our information.

For now, there is clear evidence from the recent Children's Rights Poll conducted in five provinces (Save the Children Sweden, 2002), that safety and protection from abuse were the most important rights violations children were concerned about. This was not however a provincially representative sample of children.

Finally, in a subsequent SASAS survey, it would be desirable to ask the adults whether or not they witnessed violence between their parents, and whether or not they experienced corporal punishment as children. This would go some way towards collecting retrospective prevalence estimates of corporal punishment from adults.

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## APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE ITEMS

### MARITAL STATUS AND COHABITATION

1. "What is your current marital status?"

Married	1
Widower/widow	2
Divorced	3
Separated	4
Never married	5

2. "Do you live together with a partner?"

Yes	1
No	2
Not applicable (living together with spouse)	3

### CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

Child Discipline: Selected items from the Belief in Physical Punishment and Parental Empathy subscales of the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (Bavolek, 1984).

(note: item language was slightly modified for South African participants; item 3 was reversed).

Question to interviewee:

3. "To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?"

		Strongly agree	Agree	Neither nor	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Do not know
1.	Parents will spoil their children by picking them up and comforting them when they cry. (e)	1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	**If you leave children to cope on their own, they will often grow up to be more independent. (e)	1	2	3	4	5	6
3.	*Children should never be spanked when they misbehave. (pp reversed)	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	Children who are crying are usually best ignored. (e)	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	When children do wrong, it is always better to talk to them about it than to give them a smack. (pp)	1	2	3	4	5	6

6.	Children should be forced to accept that their parents are in charge. (pp)	1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Young children who are hugged and kissed usually grow up to be "sissies". (e)	1	2	3	4	5	6

4. "When was the last time you or your partner smacked one of the children in your family once with a hand?"

It has happened in the past week	1
It has happened in the past month	2
It has happened in the past 6 months	3
It has happened in the past year	4
It happened longer than a year ago	5
Children in this household never get smacked	6
Not applicable (no children in family)	7

5. "If it happened in the last week, how old was the child \_\_\_\_\_?"

6. When was the last time you or your partner beat one of the children in your family with a strap, a belt, a stick or a similar object?"

It has happened in the past week	1
It has happened in the past month	2
It has happened in the past 6 months	3
It has happened in the past year	4
It has only happened rarely	5
Children in this household never get smacked with such objects	6
Not applicable (no children in family)	7

7. "If it happened in the last week, how old was the child \_\_\_\_\_"

## PARTNER VIOLENCE (ADAPTED FROM THE CTS2)

Statement to Interviewee:

"No matter how well a couple gets along there are times when they disagree, get annoyed with each other, fight because they are in a bad mood or tired. Couples have many different ways of trying to settle their differences.

Please circle how many times you did each of the following things in the past year, and how many times your partner did them to you in the past year.

If you or your partner did not do one of these things in the past year but it happened before that, circle '7'. (If no partner, skip to Q.)"

	Physical Assault Scale Item	Once	Twice	3-5 times	6-10 times	11-20 times	More than 20 times	Not in past year, but happened before	Never happened
<b>1</b>	I threw something at my partner that could hurt.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>2</b>	My partner did this to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>3</b>	I twisted my partner's arm or hair.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>4</b>	My partner did this to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>5</b>	I pushed or shoved my partner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>6</b>	My partner did this to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>7</b>	I used a knife or a gun on my partner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>8</b>	My partner did this to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>9</b>	I punched or hit my partner with something that could hurt	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>10</b>	My partner did this to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>11</b>	I slammed my partner against the wall	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>12</b>	My partner did this to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>13</b>	I slapped my partner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>14</b>	My partner did this to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>15</b>	I burned or scalded my partner on purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>16</b>	My partner did this to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>17</b>	I kicked my partner	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>18</b>	My partner did this to me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

## APPENDIX 2: TECHNICAL DETAILS

### SASAS SAMPLING & SURVEY VALIDITY

The national SASAS sample was stratified explicitly by province and implicitly by population group to ensure adequate representation across the country. A maximum potential of 3500 households was selected in order to facilitate a realised sample of around 2500 participants.

The households were located within each of 500 census enumerator areas (EAs) that form part of the HSRC's Master sample. Within each EA, seven households were selected systematically. This represented two more than the five required to make up a total sample size of 2500, in order to ensure a realised sample of five per EA. Individual participants were selected from within each of the selected households using a kish grid. This ensured the avoidance of any systematic bias in favour of participants who happened to be available for interviews on the occasion of the fieldworkers' first visits to the households. Fieldworkers made up to three visits to the selected households to secure interviews with the selected participants. If this did not occur by the third visit, the participant was excluded from the survey and not replaced.

Certain areas or population groups were over-sampled to ensure adequate sample sizes that would facilitate provincial and group generalisability. The resultant realised sample was then weighted back to provincial, racial and area type distributions according to national census results.

The national sample was stratified explicitly by province and implicitly by population group to ensure adequate representation across the country. A maximum potential of 3500 households was selected in order to facilitate a realised sample of around 2500 participants.

### VALID RESPONSES TO PARTNER VIOLENCE, USE OF CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND CHILD DISCIPLINE QUESTIONS (AAPI)

Valid responses to the modules to the partner violence, use of corporal punishment and child discipline sections of the study are reported in Table 1:



**Table 1: Valid Responses to partner violence, use of corporal punishment and child discipline questions**

Interview schedule Section	Valid responses	Missing values*
Attitudes to child rearing and child discipline; use of corporal punishment	2447 to 2464	33 to 50
Partner violence	1501 to 1509	988 to 996

## CONSTRUCTION OF THE SAMPLE FOR ANALYSIS OF THE PARENTAL DISCIPLINE, CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND PARTNER VIOLENCE ITEMS

Not all those who were interviewed for the SASAS had children or had partners. It was therefore necessary to create sub-samples from the original total described above in order to take the analysis further. The main groups created were:

1. A sample of all participants who said they had partners was created.
2. From this group further sub-groups were created as follows:
  - those who said they were *not* married, but were cohabiting. (the **cohabiting** group).
  - We then assessed the proportion of the total sample who were *people with partners* and the proportion of this group who answered the CTS2. The proportion that did not answer these questions constituted *refusals*. This data tells us how representative of the people with partners group is.
  - We then assessed the proportions of refusals who were *married*, and what proportion were *cohabiters*.
3. We then extracted a sample of parents (participants with children under 18 years Two sub-samples of this group included):
  - **Couples** with children
  - **Single parents** with children (including previously and never married parents).

All the above subsamples were stratified by age, sex, population group and socio-economic status (SES) when necessary for various analyses.

## DEFINITION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AS INCOME BAND

There are a number of ways of determining Socio-economic status (SES). Normally, occupation, education and income are utilised for this purpose to form a composite variable. At the time this report was completed, the composite analysis was not available. Therefore, income band was used as a proxy for SES as follows:

Level 1: No income – R1,000 per month

Level 2: R1,001 per month – R3,000 per month

Level 3: R3,001 per month - R10,000 per month

Level 4: R10,001 per month - +R30,000 per month

## THE MEASUREMENT OF ATTITUDES TO PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT

### Reliability analysis of the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (AAPI)

Two subscales of the AAPI were used viz. the Attitude to Corporal Punishment and the Attitude to Empathic Parenting scales. Initial reliability analysis for the Attitude to Corporal Punishment (CP) for the total sample of 2497 participants resulted in *Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.350*. Cronbach's Alpha values were consequently calculated for gender, age and population group sub samples in an attempt to assess any differences in reliability due to differences in these groups. Results of the reliability analysis are presented in Table 2. None of these groups reported acceptable Cronbach's Alpha values.

**Table 2: Reliability of the Attitude to Corporal Punishment scale for Gender, Age and Population Groups**

Group	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of participants in group
Male	.3510	1007
Female	.3476	1445
16-24	.3183	502
25-35	.2933	577
>35	.3888	1369
African/Black	.2115	1500
Coloured	.3407	369
Indian/Asian	.5637	250
White	.5956	301

Due to the low reliability of this scale the item with the highest correlation to the total scale score (Question 193) was selected as an indicator of attitude to corporal punishment.

Reliability analysis of the Attitude to Empathic Parenting for the total 2497 resulted in Cronbach's Alpha values of *0.690* indicating acceptable reliability.

When only participants who were parents were selected, the Cronbach's Alpha value decreased slightly to *0.677*, which is still considered acceptable.

## THE MEASUREMENT OF PARTNER VIOLENCE.

### Creation of a sample to measure Partner violence

The CTS2 has a range of highly sensitive questions. Feedback from fieldworkers suggested that responses to the module on interpersonal violence ranged from complete candidness to blatant refusal to answer the questions.

In order to investigate partner violence, a sub sample of married and cohabiting participants (regardless of whether or not they had children), was created.

This group contained 1244 participants (533 men and 711 women); 1024 (82.3%) were *married* and 220 (17.7%) were *cohabiting*.

1198 (96%) completed the CTS2. (refusal rate of 4%). These 1198 participants thus formed the sample for whom analysis on the CTS2 was to be conducted.

The proportion CTS2 respondents who were married was 83.3% (N=998) whilst cohabiting participants accounted for 16.7% (N=200) of the group.

### CTS2 Items: The Physical Assault Scale

It is important to note that for the current study, and due to constraints on the number of items that could be included in the survey module, the number items in the *physical assault scale* was reduced from the original 12 devised by Straus and his colleagues, to 9 paired items. Apart from cost considerations, an omnibus multi module survey such as the SASAS involves time consuming interviews, and there is a real risk of participant fatigue, which leads to inaccurate responses and refusals – particularly where sensitive items are concerned. Straus et al (1996) note that it is acceptable for the most crucial scales to be selected, as was the case here. However he and his colleagues do not comment on the exclusion of scale items. The three excluded items are as follows:

*“Grabbed my partner”* (rated as minor physical assault): excluded because of the possibility of misinterpretation of the word ‘grabbed’ in the local context when the scale was administered in a range of languages. The other three minor items used were regarded as more appropriate and able to capture ‘minor assaults’

*Beat up my partner* (rated as severe physical assault)

*Choked my partner* (rated as severe physical assault)

It was difficult to exclude items. However, these two severe items were eventually excluded as other items that were included had similar reliability coefficients in the original psychometric investigation conducted by Straus et al (1996).

The exclusion of these items means that there is a chance that some physically violent couples would be missed in the survey (and prevalence reduced) because they were not given an opportunity to endorse these items. However this seems unlikely given the range of mild and severe items included and the manner in which the CTS2 is scored. Endorsement of any of the items on the scale constitutes a score for physical assault.

As far as possible, the analyses were stratified by male and female, by SES and by population group.

Prior to commencing the analysis of the CTS2, responses to the *“Never happened”* column of the SASAS, version of the CTS2 were recoded as zero.

*Assessing Lifetime and Past year Prevalence of partner violence.*

- **Lifetime prevalence of committing partner assault** was measured as the proportion of *all people with partners who answered the CTS2* and who say they did this at any time in the past (even items score 1-7).
- **Lifetime prevalence of being assaulted by one's partner** was measured as the proportion of *all people with partners who answered the CTS2* who say they were assaulted by their partners at any time in the past (odd items score 1-7).
- **Lifetime prevalence for both partners** (a couple score) was assessed from responses to the CTS2 S that covered the reported behaviour of either the respondent or the partner (both were taken into account in assessing prevalence).
- **Past year prevalence** was assessed as above for those who reported that the assault happened in the past year (scores 1-6 on each item).

## REGRESSION ANALYSES: PARTNER VIOLENCE

### Regression Analysis: Life time Prevalence Respondent & Partner

**Variables Entered/Removed (a)**

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Highest education level you have ever completed	nil	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove >= .100).
2	Proper Marital Status	nil	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove >= .100).

a: Dependent Variable: Lifetime Prevalence Respondent & Partner.

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1 (a)	.095	.009	.008	.393
2 (b)	.124	.015	.014	.392

a Predictors: (Constant), Highest education level you have ever completed.

b Predictors: (Constant) Highest education level you have ever completed, Proper Marital Status.

**ANOVA ©**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.646	1	1.646	10.641	.001 (a)
	Residual	179.899	1163	.155		
	Total	181.545	1164			
2	Regression	2.795	2	1.397	9.083	.000 (b)
	Residual	178.750	1162	.154		
	Total	181.545	1164			

a Predictors: (Constant), Highest education level you have ever completed.

b Predictors: (Constant), Highest education level you have ever completed, Proper Marital Status.

c Dependent Variable: Lifetime Prevalence Respondent & Partner.

**Coefficients (a)**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.270	.026		10.312	.000
	Q271 Highest education level you have ever completed	-7.406E-03	.002	-.095	-3.262	.001
2	(Constant)	.160	.048		3.339	.001
	Q271 Highest education level you have ever completed	-6.439E-03	.002	-.083	-2.810	.005
	Proper Marital Status	8.566E-02	.031	.081	2.732	.006

a Dependent Variable: Lifetime Prevalence Respondent & Partner.

**Excluded Variables ©**

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics
						Tolerance
1 (a)	Socio-Economic Status	-.016	-.491	.623	-.014	.817
	Proper Marital Status	.081	2.732	.006	.080	.976
	Age of respondent in completed years	-.074	-2.487	.013	-.073	.952
2 (b)	Socio-Economic Status	-.006	-.176	.860	-.005	.806
	Age of respondent in completed years	-.054	-1.732	.084	-.051	.862

a Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Highest education level you have ever completed.

b Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Highest education level you have ever completed, Proper Marital Status.

c Dependent Variable: Total Lifetime Prevalence.

### Regression Analysis: Female Victim Lifetime Prevalence

**Variables Entered/Removed (a)**

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Highest education level you have ever completed	.	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter $\leq$ .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove $\geq$ .100).
2	Proper Marital Status	.	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter $\leq$ .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove $\geq$ .100).

a Dependent Variable: Total Lifetime Prevalence.

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1 (a)	.136	.018	.017	.372
2 (b)	.190	.036	.033	.369

a Predictors: (Constant), Highest education level you have ever completed

b Predictors: (Constant) Highest education level you have ever completed, Age of respondent in completed years

**ANOVA ©**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.717	1	1.717	12.424	.000 (a)
	Residual	91.363	661	.138		
	Total	93.080	662			
2	Regression	3.356	2	1.678	12.342	.000 (b)
	Residual	89.724	660	.136		
	Total	93.080	662			

a Predictors: (Constant), Highest education level you have ever completed.

b Predictors: (Constant), Highest education level you have ever completed, Proper Marital Status.

c Dependent Variable: Total Lifetime Prevalence.

**Coefficients (a)**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.277	.034		8.169	.000
	Highest education level you have ever completed	-1.051E-02	.003	-.136	-3.525	.000
2	(Constant)	.466	.064		7.291	.000
	Highest education level you have ever completed	-1.300E-02	.003	-.168	-4.274	.000
	Age of respondent in completed years	-3.993E-03	.001	-.137	-3.472	.001

a Dependent Variable: Total Lifetime Prevalence.

**Excluded Variables ©**

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics
						Tolerance
1 (a)	Socio-Economic Status	.003	.068	.946	.003	.855
	Proper Marital Status	.105	2.714	.007	.105	.982
	Age of respondent in completed years	-.137	-3.472	.001	-.134	.944
2 (b)	Socio-Economic Status	.023	.559	.576	.022	.839
	Proper Marital Status	.073	1.807	.071	.070	.901

a Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Highest education level you have ever completed

b Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Highest education level you have ever completed, Age of respondent in completed years

c Dependent Variable: Spouse Lifetime Prevalence

### Regression Analysis: Male Perpetrator Lifetime Prevalence

**Variables Entered/Removed (a)**

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Proper Marital Status	nil	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter <= .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove >= .100).

a Dependent Variable: Respondent Lifetime Prevalence

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
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1 (a)	.096	.009	.007	.397
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a Predictors: (Constant), Proper Marital Status

**ANOVA (b)**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.727	1	.727	4.614	.032 (a)
	Residual	78.749	500	.157		
	Total	79.476	501			

a Predictors: (Constant), Proper Marital Status

b Dependent Variable: Respondent Lifetime Prevalence

**Coefficients (a)**

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.709E-02	.059		1.314	.189
	Proper Marital Status	.103	.048	.096	2.148	.032

a Dependent Variable: Respondent Lifetime Prevalence

**Excluded Variables (b)**

		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics
Model						Tolerance
1 (a)	Socio-Economic Status	-.078	-1.729	.084	-.077	.961
	Age of respondent in completed years	.024	.524	.600	.023	.916
	Highest education level you have ever completed	-.080	-1.781	.076	-.079	.968

a Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Proper Marital Status

b Dependent Variable: Respondent Lifetime Prevalence



## Regression analyses: Seriousness of Corporal punishment

**Variables Entered/Removed (a)**

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	Attitude to Corporal Punishment	.	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter $\leq$ .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove $\geq$ .100).
2	Attitude to Empathic Parenting	.	Stepwise (Criteria: Probability-of-F-to-enter $\leq$ .050, Probability-of-F-to-remove $\geq$ .100).

a Dependent Variable: Severity of Corporal Punishment

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1 (a)	.123	.015	.014	.86396
2 (b)	.165	.027	.024	.85933

a Predictors: (Constant), Attitude to Corporal Punishment

b Predictors: (Constant), Attitude to Corporal Punishment, Attitude to Empathic Parenting

**ANOVA (c)**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.057	1	8.057	10.793	.001 (a)
	Residual	521.752	699	.746		
	Total	529.809	700			
2	Regression	14.377	2	7.189	9.735	.000 (b)
	Residual	515.432	698	.738		
	Total	529.809	700			

a Predictors: (Constant), Attitude to Corporal Punishment

b Predictors: (Constant), Attitude to Corporal Punishment, Attitude to Empathic Parenting

c Dependent Variable: Severity of Corporal Punishment

**Coefficients (a)**

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	2.311	.130		17.817	.000	2.056	2.566			
	Attitude to Corporal Punishment	-.104	.032	-.123	-3.285	.001	-.167	-.042	-.123	-.123	-.123
2	(Constant)	2.676	.179		14.911	.000	2.324	3.029			
	Attitude to Corporal Punishment	-.104	.032	-.123	-3.298	.001	-.166	-.042	-.123	-.124	-.123
	Attitude to Empathic Parenting	-2.746E-02	.009	-.109	-2.926	.004	-.046	-.009	-.109	-.110	-.109

a Dependent Variable: Severity of Corporal Punishment

**Excluded Variables ©**

Model		Beta In	t	Sig.	Partial Correlation	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance
1 (a)	Proper Recoded Marital Status	-.012	-.329	.742	-.012	.997
	Attitude to School Corporal Punishment	-.046	-1.216	.225	-.046	.995
	Age of respondent in completed years	.032	.862	.389	.033	.999
	Gender	.022	.581	.561	.022	.998
	Attitude to Empathic Parenting	-.109	-2.926	.004	-.110	1.000
	Socio-Economic Status	-.056	-1.505	.133	-.057	.999
2 (b)	Proper Recoded Marital Status	-.019	-.497	.619	-.019	.994
	Attitude to School Corporal Punishment	-.046	-1.231	.219	-.047	.995
	Age of respondent in completed years	.020	.543	.588	.021	.987
	Gender	.025	.659	.510	.025	.997
	Socio-Economic Status	-.056	-1.491	.136	-.056	.999

a Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Attitude to Corporal Punishment

b Predictors in the Model: (Constant), Attitude to Corporal Punishment, Attitude to Empathic Parenting

c Dependent Variable: Severity of Corporal Punishment

Mann Whitney Test for independent samples: Attitudes to corporal punishment and partner violence

Participants	N	Lifetime Partner Violence Mean Scores
Agree with Corporal punishment	188	546.88
Disagree with Corporal punishment	847	511.59

Mann Whitney:  $U=74189.50$ ;  $Z = -2.14$ ;  $p = 0.033$ .

Those who agree with corporal punishment have higher prevalence of partner violence than those who do not.