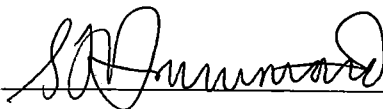# UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

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A Descriptive Model of the Offence Process in Domestic Violence.

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment

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Master of Arts in Psychology

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ABSTRACT

In the last fifteen years, the problem of domestic violence has moved from being a 'behind closed doors' phenomenon to an issue of increasing public concern. This concern has inevitably coincided with increasing research efforts. The majority of this research has focused on men who batter female partners. Attempted explanations for this problem have arisen from general theories of aggression as well as research identifying the unique characteristics of domestically violent men. This study proposed a new direction for domestic violence research, considering domestic violence as a process. The application of such a conceptualisation was intended to capture both the dynamic and complex nature of these events.

A qualitative methodology based on Grounded Theory was used to delineate a descriptive model of the offence process in domestic violence from interviews with ten participants currently incarcerated at Paparua Prison, Christchurch. These men had current or prior convictions for domestic violence offences.

The model that emerged from this study consists of four temporally sequential phases which are described and discussed. These consist of: background factors, build-up/offence context phase, offence phase and post-offence phase. It is suggested that this offence process model will provide a framework for the evaluation of current causal explanations, has the potential to enhance the development of new hypotheses and has utility in terms of alterring current conceptualisations of effective intervention packages.

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

The launch of the New Zealand feature film "Once Were Warriors" in 1994 provoked reactions of shock and disbelief from many New Zealanders, but to some it was an all too realistic reminder of the situation facing them in their own homes. It wasn't the poverty or the hard drinking that dismayed so many but the sheer violence in evidence throughout the story, but most particularly in the home setting. This illustration of domestic violence in a New Zealand context demonstrates that " violence doesn't need to be constant to create an environment of unremitting terror" (Adler & Denmark, 1995).

The screening of scenes of domestic violence, not only in this film but in television advertisements aimed at breaking the cycle of violence in families, is a reflection of how far the problem of domestic violence has moved from being a 'behind closed doors' phenomenon to an issue of increasing public concern. And this concern has inevitably coincided with increasing research efforts from psychological, sociological and criminological perspectives.

1.2   DEFINITIONS

Domestic violence has been variously described as domestic abuse, marital violence, intimate partner violence, spousal abuse, battering and more widely, family violence. The differences in these terms relate mainly to the nature of the relationship between the offender and victim. The nature of the relationship under consideration in this study is that of intimate partners. Neither marriage nor cohabitation are necessarily requirements and domestic violence in this context excludes violence towards other family members, for example, children.

While it is recognised that domestic violence occurs in both heterosexual and same-sex intimate relationships, and that perpetrators can be male and female, the majority of research has examined violence by men towards women. Not only is this the most common form of domestic violence, but data consistently demonstrate that husband violence has more detrimental effects than wife violence (Leibrich, Paulin and Ransom, 1995); husband

violence is more likely to result in physical injury and psychological symptoms" (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994a). For these reasons the focus of this study is on male perpetrators and female victims and as such domestic violence is considered to be a male being violent towards his female partner and the terms batterer, perpetrator, offender refer to such a male.

Just what constitutes violence is also important to clarify. The term violence has been used to describe a wide range of acts in relation to domestic situations (Crowell & Burgess, 1996). Gelles and Straus (1988, p467) provide the following definition: " Violence, battering, abuse and assault consist of any physical, sexual or psychological behaviour carried out with the intention or perceived intention of causing pain or injury to another person."

For the purposes of this study, the participants will be males who have been incarcerated as a result of convictions under the Crimes Act 1961 for violence against females whom they were in an intimate relationship with at the time. Physical violence forms the basis for such arrests and convictions under New Zealand law, but this study will also incorporate consideration of psychological, verbal and emotional abuse as these are considered inevitable correlates of acts of physical violence in a domestic setting. Arguably, the impact of the psychological, verbal and emotional abuse can be viewed as more devastating than physical violence. Indeed, it has been suggested (e.g., Briere et al., 1997) that the psychological aspects of interpersonal violence can serve as "significant risk factors for the development of later psychological disorders" and that "spousal battering has substantial psychological sequelae" (p.95). In addition, Crowell and Burgess (1996) consider psychological, verbal and emotional abuse as being an inherent part of the pattern of behaviour of serious physical violence between intimate partners.

In order to effectively conclude the definition of domestic violence it is necessary to detail what physical, emotional and psychological abuse encompass. Although such clarification may seem redundant, it is important when later considering participants' descriptions of events. Marvin (1997) provides useful definitions of these terms:

Physical violence - punching, choking, biting, hitting, hair-pulling, stabbing, shooting or threats of this type.

Emotional abuse - systematic degrading of the victim's self-worth. Name-calling, derogatory or demeaning comments, forcing the victim to perform degrading or humiliating acts, threats to kill, controlling access to money and acting in other ways to imply that the victim is crazy.

Psychological abuse - all of emotional abuse but also at least one violent episode or attack on the victim to maintain the impending threat of additional assaults.

To conclude, the definition of domestic violence appropriate for this study, considers that domestic violence consists of: physical, psychological or emotional actions by a male to his female partner which cause or are intended to cause pain, injury or distress to that partner.

1.3   STATISTICS

The justification for the current concern regarding domestic violence is evident when examining the statistics which represent the extent of domestic violence in our society. The increasing amount of research in the area of domestic violence is yielding more accurate estimates of its true extent. It still however remains that these offences occur typically in private settings and as a result prevalence figures rely on either victim or offender reporting. This may occur in the context of criminal justice proceedings, victims seeking help for the repercussions of offending or offenders attending treatment programmes.

Because of this limitation it is still not possible to fully comprehend the pervasiveness of domestic violence within society. In addition, Carden (1994) suggests that methodological problems such as inconsistent definitions of violence, the influence of social desirability on self-report and limited access to corroborating data have contributed to inaccurate estimates.

Prevalence estimates of domestic violence outside New Zealand use physical violence as a defining criteria. Myers (1995) suggests that in the United States " domestic violence is the second leading cause of injuries to all women" (p.493). Estimates suggest that between 1.8 and 4 million women are assaulted by current or former partners each year in the United States and that between 21% and 34% of all women will be physically assaulted during adulthood by a male partner

(Myers, 1995). Leibrich et al., (1995) state that "overseas research estimates that between 0.2% and 14.4% of women are physically abused by a male partner in a twelve month period and between 14% and 25% are abused by a male partner at some point in their lives" (p.28).

In relation to New Zealand, Leibrich et al., (1995) published the first national prevalence rates for domestic violence. A cautionary note in relation to these figures is that they are based on a study of males who have offended rather than women who have been abused, so it is possible that one man may have abused more than one woman or that one woman may have been abused more than once. In a study of 2,000 men, Leibrich et al (1995) found that 21% reported at least one physically abusive act in the past year and 35% at least one such act during their lifetime.

The New Zealand National Survey of Crime Victims (Young et al., 1996) further highlights the extent of this problem in New Zealand. This survey obtained information as to lifetime prevalence of partner abuse. Compared with only 7.3% of men, 15.3% of women who had ever been in a 'partnership' reported some form of partner abuse. In this sample, partner abuse was defined in terms of having experienced at least one of a number of violent behaviours which also included threats of such behaviour. This finding was consistent across ethnic groups as well as age groups and socio-economic status.

These figures, and the recognition that they are likely an underestimation of the true extent of the problem in this country, has resulted in increasing concern for the victims of these offences, and a more hard line approach from the Police and the Courts. Male assaults female is the charge most often brought in situations of domestic violence and in 1994, 9684 cases of this charge were reported. Acknowledgement of the seriousness of this problem has seen the implementation of mandatory arrest procedures wherever violence is believed to have occurred followed by incarceration upon conviction.

1.4   THE IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON VICTIMS

Understanding 'the figures' in relation to domestic violence does not provide a full understanding of the impact of this offending on its victims. The unpredictability of domestic violence makes its impact that much more devastating because it is impossible to organise how to protect oneself (Adler & Denmark, 1995). It is accepted (Walker, 1995) that repeated abuse in a family context has the potential to create serious psychological and traumatic injury.

The consequences for female victims of male violence include both short and long term problems covering physical injury and illness, psychological symptoms, economic costs and the ultimate consequence, death. Crowell and Burgess (1996) found that women who have been assaulted by their male partners disproportionately suffer from depression, thoughts of suicide and suicide attempts. Other symptoms include lowered self-esteem, guilt, shame, depression, anxiety, alcohol and drug abuse and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

The culmination of repeated domestic abuse has been labeled the Battered Women's Syndrome and was proposed by Walker (1979). This syndrome incorporates a number of the symptoms described above and also includes: numbed affect, flashbacks, increased startle response, sleep and eating disorders and recurrent nightmares. Battered Women's Syndrome has been put forward as a legal defence to murder in New Zealand but was rejected.

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders - IV (DSM-IV, 1994) includes physical/sexual abuse of an adult as part of the relational problems included in the category 'Other conditions that may be a focus of clinical attention' hence acknowledging the potential impact and prompting recognition of such abuse. Indeed, for psychologists, the existence of relationship abuse, whether it be physical, emotional or psychological, is important to recognise, however because of the relative recency of research in this area, many psychologists are inadequately informed about this problem (Holtzworth-Munroe, Smutzler, & Sandin, 1997). Given the numerous psychological sequelae that may result from domestic violence, this knowledge deficit warrants attention.

In further considering the consequences of domestic violence it is also important to look beyond the immediate victims. In this respect, children may suffer negative consequences both as a result of witnessing incidents of domestic violence but also, having to cope with its aftermath. Documented effects of domestic violence on children include behaviour problems, emotional distress, and impaired functioning in areas such as self-esteem, social competence, and social problem-solving. (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997a). These negative consequences may have long term effects as 'the cycle of violence' (Widom, 1989) is perpetuated in future generations. Children learn that violence is the means for handling interpersonal conflict.

The real face of this impact can be seen in the numbers of New Zealand women and children forced to seek shelter each year in refuges throughout the country. Iles, (1996) reported that over 15,000 women sought refuge help in 1995 and that each week 2500 beds are occupied in refuges throughout New Zealand.

Consideration of the devastating impact that domestic violence has on its victims, whether it be intermittent or constant, leads to the question, what is being done to stop it?

1.5 RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

1.5.1 LEGAL RESPONSE

It has been suggested (Marvin, 1997) that in the past abusive relationships were allowed to persist because of social trends which saw it the right of the male to discipline his partner as he saw fit but also because of restrictive legislation which promoted inaction on the part of police and the courts. At that time, it was not considered the place of the police to intervene in a domestic dispute, social attitudes deemed it inappropriate to intervene in everyday matters between a man and his wife. Indeed, even if the severity of an incident did provoke police involvement, rarely was any further action taken towards the perpetrator.

The 1980's and 90's have seen a gradual change in the way the police handle domestic disputes. From the peacekeeping strategies previously in evidence there was a shift to more aggressive strategies including arresting offenders, protecting victims and referring victims to refuges (Marvin, 1997).

In New Zealand, the culmination of these aggressive strategies can be seen in the Domestic Violence Act 1995 which not only allowed for implementation of non-molestation and protection orders against perpetrators of domestic violence but also enabled the police and the courts to take a harder line with offenders including mandatory arrest for offending and breach of protection and mandatory incarceration upon conviction.

Yet even with this hard line response from the New Zealand legal system and law enforcement, the problem of domestic violence persists and even grows. The front page headline of "The Christchurch Press" on September 22 1998 proclaimed "Alarm at Rise in Domestic Violence". This article reported that the number of victims of breached protection orders has risen over the last three years to an average of seven a day. This rise can not only be attributed to increasing violence but also to the increasing number of orders taken out by police to prevent further abuse. It is argued by Mike Moore, M.P., in this article that even tougher measures are called for to more effectively protect victims.

Whether this is the case, or whether more effective implementation of existing laws will address current levels of domestic violence remains to be seen. Suffice to say that the law and law enforcement agencies in New Zealand are taking a more involved and aggressive approach to dealing with incidents of domestic violence.

1.5.2 RESEARCH

The other avenue through which attempts have been made over the last 15 years to address the problem of domestic violence is research. It is only over this period that the existence and extent of domestic violence has been publicly recognised. Along with this recognition, has emerged an ever increasing body of research seeking to examine and explain this phenomena. The majority of the literature that has emerged as a result of this research has focused on incidents of males abusing their female partners. Initially, given that female victims tended to come to the attention of social or medical agencies as a result of the effects suffered, the focus of research was on the victims, understanding the impact and gathering information, about victims, offenders and the events from the victim's perspective.

With the increasing recognition of the need to understand and put a stop to this problem, this focus was broadened and attempts were made to implement effective intervention for male batterers. Such intervention has focused on anger management, improving communication, improving self-esteem, changing beliefs and stress management (Geffner & Rosenbaum, 1990).

With attention becoming more centred on intervention and prevention, and the need to establish the effectiveness or otherwise of existing treatment programmes, the focus of research has turned to clarifying relevant factors which may predispose, precipitate and perpetuate violence by males against an intimate partner. Concurrently, improvements in legislation such as mandatory arrests and court-ordered attendance at treatment programmes have given better access to offenders.

In order to place the current study in context, the following section will provide an overview of the research to date which has examined and attempted to explain why some males batter their female partners. Initially, there was a focus on causal theories, both single factor and multifactorial but more recent empirical research has sought to delineate particular characteristics of male batterers which impact on their offending. Both these aspects of existing research will be clarified in the following overview.

1.6 CAUSAL THEORIES - EXPLANATION AND EVALUATION

Early attempts to explain domestic violence were drawn from more general theories of violence and aggression and tended to focus on single causal explanations. Dutton (1995) suggests that such causal models " overlooked the specificity of the manifestations of violence exclusively in intimate relationships" (p.568). Nevertheless these early attempts at understanding why some males were abusive towards female partners served a purpose in that they prompted further empirical research looking for causal explanations and directed public attention towards the problem of domestic violence.

These theories can be divided generally into those from a sociopolitical, psychological perspective and biological/physiological perspectives. The following discussion will explain and evaluate these perspectives. Subsequent discussion will then

focus on examining specific characteristics of domestically violent men which have been identified, implicated and evaluated as causal mechanisms in such offending

1.6.1 SOCIOPOLITICAL PERSPECTIVES

The sociopolitical perspective, and in particular pro-feminist writers suggest that " the patriarchal infrastructure of our political, cultural and social relations, sanctions woman abuse in general and wife abuse in particular" (in Carden , 1994, p.552). Traditional sex role attitudes have been found to be the most powerful predictor of attitudes supportive of marital violence (Finn, 1986 in Browne, 1989). Dobash & Dobash (1979) cite evidence of batterers who excuse their violence by pointing to their partners' "unwifely" behaviour as justification. Such attitudes are considered to be culturally transmitted, differences in these attitudes may account for differences cross culturally in the acceptability of domestic violence.

Empirical findings to date suggest contradictory results. Several studies have found no relationship or even a negative correlation between sex role ideals and occurrence of domestic violence (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997). By contrast, other studies, for example, Stith and Farley (1993) have found a positive relationship. Crossman, Smith, and Bender (1990) found that minor violence was not related to sex role ideals but severe violence was. These findings make any conclusions difficult.

Carden (1994) aptly summarises the previously mentioned explanations of domestic violence. She suggests that males are violent in intimate relationships because social, cultural and political norms "support his belief that (a) violence is an acceptable and effective method of solving interpersonal conflict; (b) he is entitled to dominate and expected to control his wife; (c) it will get him what he wants and (d) he can get away with it" (p.552).

The media is also seen to play a role in perpetuating male violence towards intimates. It has been suggested (in Carden, 1994) that mass media romanticises violence, male dominance and female submissiveness. The need to dominate or have control over women is seen as a motivating factor for violence. Indeed it has been suggested that domestic violence results when one party attempts to re-exert control in the relationship that they feel they have lost (Browne and Dutton in Crowell & Burgess, 1996). The

research findings in relation to the need for power or control will be presented in a later section.

Institutions such as the family, schools and religion are also said to promote male dominance and subsequently the acceptability of domestic violence by males. Crowell and Burgess (1996) note research findings which suggest that sons of violent parents are more likely to abuse their intimate partners than boys from nonviolent homes and that males raised in households where traditional gender roles are encouraged are more likely to become violent as adults.

Other sociopolitical perspectives view socio-economic and structural factors within the family as important in promoting violence. Factors viewed as important are low wages, overcrowding, unemployment, poor housing and social isolation (Browne, 1989). The 'Economic' model proposed by Gelles suggests that the impact of the above factors causes stress for the individual which leads to violence (Browne, 1989). Situational stress is not limited to those factors outlined above, hence this model is not solely limited to lower socio-economic groups.

A further example of sociological attempts to explain domestic violence is the resource theory which suggests that "conflict is produced by the unequal distribution of resources and asymmetrical social relationships within the family" (Browne, 1989). The idea is that the more resources an individual can command, the less likely they are to resort to violence. Force is used to maintain order.

Finally, the 'Exchange' theory also proposed by Gelles (in Browne, 1989) suggests that because domestic violence takes place in a private environment, the potential cost of such behaviour (in terms of public repercussions) is reduced. This increases the probability of future domestic violence.

These latter sociopolitical theories represent early attempts at explaining the occurrence of domestic violence from a more socioeconomic perspective but it is now increasingly recognised that single factor explanations such as these are insufficient to account for the varying occurrences of domestic violence in society.

Research to date has provided only indirect empirical support for the sociopolitical perspective as a whole. It has been suggested that (Carden, 1994) this indirect support arises through the failure of research to identify a single batterer profile.

1.6.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Social learning theory - From a psychological perspective, Bandura (1973) views domestic violence as being maintained by observation and subsequent modeling, both in individual families and in society as a whole. It is maintained by observation of the seemingly positive effects that it produces in terms of conflict resolution and maintenance of power and control in intimate relationships. This learning through observation is said to account for the intergenerational transmission of abusive and violent behaviours. Support for this perspective on domestic violence comes from a study by Hotaling and Sugarman (1986) who discovered that, in a group of male batterers, "having witnessed interparental violence is a more reliable predictor of battering than having experienced child abuse" (Carden, 1994, p.553). Family of origin violence is currently perhaps the most often cited explanation of domestic violence and research has provided support for this relationship (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997).

Use of aggression or violence towards intimates is said to be maintained not only by the earlier learning process but also by ongoing factors such as the functional effectiveness of the violence and possible absence of deterrents to this behaviour, such as legal penalties.

Bandura (1973), in further explaining abusive behaviour, proposed that the individual's self-regulatory mechanisms employ neutralising tactics to explain the impact of their aggressive behaviours. Such tactics include justification; comparison of the behaviour with more serious violence; projection of blame (e.g. to drugs, alcohol, the victim); normalisation of the behaviour as acceptable; depersonalisation of the victim and minimisation of the consequences. Such tactics have been observed among batterers in treatment (Holtzworth-Munroe & Hutchinson, 1993) and identified in narratives of male spouse abusers (Stamp & Sabourin, 1995).

Attachment theory - a further psychological perspective on domestic violence, has been applied to male batterers and proposes a greater focus on affect. In attempting to explain why males abuse their female partners, attachment theory looks at internal working models. Bowlby defined these as "largely unconscious representations of self and other

shaped during the first year of life in accordance with infants' subjective experiences of their interactions with their caregivers" (in Carden, 1994,p.554). These models are incorporated into the emerging personality and are believed to become a stable influence over how the individual deals with intimate relationships in adulthood.

Researchers have suggested that men who engage in domestic violence have disturbed attachment to their partners as a result of their early childhood experiences of separation and loss. Holtzworth-Munroe et al. (1997) suggest that this disturbed attachment is reflected in a preoccupation with and over-dependence on their partner, along with being fearful of rejection or abandonment. Higher interpersonal dependency and higher spouse-specific dependency have been found in domestically violent men (Holtzworth-Munroe et al.1997).

From an attachment perspective, domestic violence is then seen as the perpetrator's attempt to prevent his partner from leaving. It has also been suggested that domestic violence occurs as a result of anger arising when he perceives his attachment needs are not being met. In support of this perspective, Dutton, Saunders, Starzomski, & Bartholomew (1994) compared domestically violent and nonviolent men and found that the nonviolent sample generally reported secure attachment while the violent men were high on fearful and preoccupied attachment styles.

Systems theory - This is the final psychological perspective to be presented here which as attempted to explain domestic violence. Systems theory views domestic violence as the result of the interaction between partners, it is seen as "a relationship issue with both parties participating (although not necessarily participating equally) in the violent sequence" (Neidig, 1984 in Carden, 1994, p.556).The systems theory explanation of domestic violence has not received a lot of empirical support or support from writers, partly because it is difficult to evaluate empirically but also because of its apparent victim-blaming conceptualisation. It is argued that explaining domestic violence as arising from an interaction between two people overlooks differentials between the two which inherently effect the relationship, such as physical power.

1.6.3 BIOLOGICAL/PHYSIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

Causal explanations for aggression and violence have focused on a number of physiological/biological correlates as potential contributors - testosterone, serotonin, neurophysiological abnormalities, and brain dysfunction have all been implicated. Findings supporting a relationship between these and violence are correlational only hence it is difficult to infer that they are causal mechanisms. In addition, it has not yet been possible to accurately establish whether any these factors do actually cause aggression or whether they result from aggression.

Attempts at explaining domestic violence from a biological/physiological perspective have emerged as a result of these findings and have thus far focused on examining the possible role of testosterone, serotonin and head injury. This perspective is not popular because it is perceived by many as providing an 'out' or an excuse for male batterers.

Research examining the relationship between aggression and testosterone has found that there appears to be a relationship between testosterone levels and aggression; high testosterone levels being linked to aggression and dominance. Some research in the area of domestic violence has found that testosterone levels in the males studied significantly predicted aggression towards partners (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997), the link is still considered weak until further research is carried out.

Studies linking aggression and the neurotransmitter serotonin have found that low levels of serotonin correlate with impulsive aggression. Research examining this effect in male batterers has found that levels of serotonin were not significant predictors of physical aggression towards a partner.

Crowell & Burgess, (1996) suggest that reduced impulse control and personality changes following head injury may lead to an increased risk of battering. Studies have found that batterers are more likely to have had head injuries than non-batterers (Rosenbaum and Hoge, 1989 in Holtzworth-Munroe, A. et al., 1997). The behavioural effects of head injury are similar to behaviours identified in male who assaults their partners e.g. irritability, and impulse control difficulties. Having said this, not all males who are violent towards partners have head injuries therefore the explanatory power of this as a causal mechanism is limited.

1.6.4 IDENTIFIED CHARACTERISTICS OF DOMESTICALLY VIOLENT MEN

Each of the perspectives presented thus far can be seen as relevant in implicating some possible mechanisms related to domestic violence. Research efforts have provided limited support for individual theories but as knowledge in this area expands it has become apparent that no single explanation is adequate to account generally for the occurrence of domestic violence.

Rather than attempt to explain domestic violence from particular perspectives, a more useful approach which has developed in an attempt to understand why some men batter their partners is to empirically examine the particular characteristics of these men and derive from these further causal explanations.

Dutton (1995) suggests that as these characteristics have emerged, it has become apparent that " existing theories of wife assault fail in a variety of ways to explain the empirical data generated" (p.567). Hence, research has turned to examining combinations of these characteristics in an effort to establish a more theoretically integrated understanding of this problem. These multifactor or integrated models of battering will be examined after discussion of empirical findings to date and the new causal explanations which they suggest.

Holtzworth-Munroe et al., (1997) provide an extensive review of research conducted looking at characteristics of male batterers, hence the following discussion will highlight only significant characteristics that have emerged. Holtzworth-Munroe et al., (1997) focused on studies where comparison groups of nonviolent males were available as they considered that differences between the groups could be considered causal of domestic violence.

Psychopathology - Several studies have found evidence of a high incidence of psychopathology amongst male batterers (Hamberger and Hastings, 1986, 1988; Dutton and Starzomski, 1993, Dutton et al, 1994, Dutton, 1995). Original conceptualisations of 'the wife beater' described him as "rigid, manipulative, deceitful, controlling and devoid of remorse or insight" (Carden, 1994).

The most consistent findings to emerge more recently across studies suggest elevated scores on scales tapping depression, anxiety, alcohol and drug abuse and aggression. It has also been suggested that male batterers are more likely to evidence personality disorders, particularly antisocial personality disorder and borderline personality disorder.

Depression is more frequently reported by maritally violent men than nonviolent men. Maiuro, Cahn, Vitaliano, Wagner, & Zegree, (1988) found that, in their study, domestically violent men were more likely to be significantly depressed than their nonviolent counterparts. This finding has been supported in subsequent research (Julian and McKenry, 1993 and Pan, Neidig and O'Leary, 1994 in Holtzworth-Munroe, A. et al., 1997).

Further research has also identified that domestically violent men are often characterised by low self-esteem. Marvin, (1997) suggests that this is thought to arise as a result of abuse as a child and disapproval or neglect by a parent or caregiver. Hotaling and Sugarman (1986) found in their review of the literature, low self-esteem was related to husband to wife violence in 60% of studies reviewed. Holtzworth-Munroe, A. et al. (1997) suggest that this summation should be interpreted with caution and that "low self-esteem is not one of the strongest correlates of husband violence" (p.68)

Only one longitudinal study has been conducted to examine whether personality variables can predict whether a male will be violent towards his partner (O'Leary, Malone and Tyree, 1994). This study found that levels of aggression and defendence (suspicion of others, tendency to offend easily) predicted subsequent psychological aggression which predicted physical aggression further into the relationship.

Borderline Personality - Dutton (1995) has focused on one aspect of noted psychopathology amongst domestically violent men, namely the frequency of Borderline personality traits, and has developed this into the notion of the Abusive Personality. This personality is based on the personality configuration, Borderline Personality Organisation (BPO) and represents a less severe form of Borderline Personality Disorder. BPO is characterised by " intense, unstable interpersonal relationships, characterised by intermittent undermining of the significant other, manipulation and masked dependency;

an unstable sense of self with intolerance of being alone and abandonment anxiety; and intense anger, demandingness and impulsivity, usually tied to substance abuse or promiscuity" (Gunderson, 1984 in Dutton, 1995, p.570).

A quick glance at these characteristics leaves little room for doubt as to their relevance in domestic violence. In particular, Dutton saw these characteristics as fitting into the three phases of Walker's (1979) cycle of domestic violence (see later discussion for details). In essence he suggests that for domestically violent men, there is the conflict between being dependent on their partner to maintain their own fragile sense of self but also being unable to maintain this relationship because they are too demanding and angry (Dutton, 1995). This contradiction inevitably leads to violence.

Dutton gained empirical support for BPO being a feature of domestically violent men in a number of studies (1994, Dutton and Starzomski, 1993) where a specific BPO measure was used (devised by Oldham et al, 1985 in Dutton, 1995). These studies of assaultive males found that many of these men had similar BPO scores to individuals diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder, and that BPO scores were significantly related to chronic anger, jealousy, use of violence and experience of adult trauma symptoms.

Other researchers have investigated dependency and jealousy in domestically violent men, the former receiving support as a characteristic, the latter still requiring further research.

It appears, according to findings to date that BPO does appear to be a prominent characteristic of the domestically violent men studied, and Dutton's explanation of these features as arising as a result of disrupted attachment in childhood and early traumatic experiences also appear to find empirical support. As an explanation for 'why does he do it?', Dutton's (1995) theory of the abusive personality does appear to hold some sway.

Anger/Hostility - " There is an ever growing database of empirical investigations examining the characteristics of maritally violent men suggesting that anger and hostility are important discriminating variables" (Eckhardt, Barbour & Stuart, 1997, p.333).

Eckhardt et al., (1997) suggest that the expression of anger and hostility in domestically violent men is a complex issue not only because of the acknowledged

heterogeneity of batterers but also because these constructs are most often ill defined, used interchangeably and varying assessment measures are used.

Acknowledging these difficulties, it is still possible to conclude that men who batter report or exhibit higher levels of hostility and anger than their nonviolent counterparts. This has been found to be the case both in general and in conflicts with partners. Studies reporting this finding have utilised self-report measures, simulated marital conflicts and observation of actual couple interactions.

While research has concluded that domestically violent men are more hostile than their nonviolent counterparts, it appears that they do not differ significantly from men that are generally assaultive. Conclusions about anger in domestically violent men are also not as clear cut particularly when considering the heterogeneity of batterers (as will be discussed below).

Eckhardt et al.,(1997) suggest that while the trait of anger is an important component to consider when studying domestically violent men, not all batterers are violent because of intense anger. These writers suggest that given that higher levels of anger and hostility have been established in domestically violent men, future research should focus on examining the differences in the experience and expression of anger towards a partner, and towards others. Such an approach will more effectively delineate the role these constructs play in domestic violence.

Alcohol - Crowell and Burgess, (1996) report that alcohol use has been reported in approximately twenty-five to eighty five percent of incidents of battering. It appears firmly established through numerous studies (e.g.Van Hasselt, Morrison, & Bellack, 1985; Julian and McKenry, 1993; Leonard and Senchak, 1993) that heavy alcohol use and abuse by the perpetrator is correlated cross-sectionally with domestic violence by males.

This finding was found to hold across social classes and ethnic groups (Crowell and Burgess, 1996). In New Zealand, 98% of a sample of 200 men who were randomly selected from the population stated their belief that alcohol was a trigger for domestic violence (Leibrich et al, 1995).

The majority of these studies have used self-report measures of alcohol consumption such as the Michigan Alcohol Screening Test (MAST) as indicators of alcohol use. One study (McKenry, et al.,1995) used a blood DCTest as an indicator of chronic alcohol consumption and found this to be one of the best predictors of husband physical aggression.

The only longitudinal study to look at the impact of alcohol consumption by males used pre and post-marriage samples (Heyman, O'Leary & Jouriles, 1995). Here it was found that alcohol (problem drinking and amount consumed) was a significant predictor of domestic violence pre-marriage and early into the marriage but this effect did not hold at 30 months post-marriage.

While the correlation between alcohol and domestic violence has been repeatedly demonstrated there has as yet been little focus on what exactly the nature of this relationship is. Suggestions include: that alcohol may interact with neurotransmitters said to be associated with aggression (e.g., serotonin); that alcohol may interfere with cognitive processes, in particular social cognitions; alcohol could lead to disinhibition or serve as justification for resorting to violence; alcohol abuse could lead to stress and relationship conflicts hence increasing the risk of violence; and that alcohol abuse may have some common basis with antisocial personality that puts an individual at greater risk of being physically aggressive towards a partner.

Research to date has not yet assessed these possible mechanisms, nor looked at the development of other pathways to explain the interaction between alcohol and domestic violence.

Social Skills - Many of the currently available treatment programmes for domestically violent men assume that these men have social skills deficits; assertiveness, communication and problem-solving skills training forming components of these programmes. For domestically violent men these deficits are said to result in difficulty resolving relationship conflicts and violence is resorted to as a conflict resolution strategy.

Importantly, research to date has not been conclusive in establishing social skills deficits as a consistent characteristic of male batterers (Holtzworth-Munroe, 1992). This

has increased speculation as to whether social skills deficits have explanatory power as to the cause of domestic violence and even whether they should be considered a relevant factor in the maintenance of such behaviour.

Research examining assertiveness amongst domestically violent men has found that while this group tends to be less assertive than nonviolent happily married men, they show similar levels of assertiveness to nonviolent maritally distressed men (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997b). Importantly, in studies examining spouse-specific interactions, particularly situations involving rejection, jealousy or challenge by the female partner, domestically violent men more consistently showed pronounced lack of assertiveness.

Cognitions- It is generally assumed that a positive attitude towards violence signifies a greater likelihood of using violence (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997). Studies examining attitudes towards violence in relation to domestic violence have generally found that a more favorable attitude towards domestic violence relates to greater use of aggression against partners. Leibrich et al, (1995) found that twenty five percent of a sample of 2000 New Zealand men taken at random from the population reported that physical abuse against a female partner was acceptable in some circumstances. In that same study, 35% reported a physically abusive act towards a partner at some point in their life.

Stith and Farley (1993) found in a sample of batterers in treatment and males attending an alcohol treatment programme, that severe husband violence was positively correlated with approval of marital violence. Arias and O'Leary reviewed available data in this area and concluded that " an individual's attitude towards the use of marital violence is an important variable in spousal aggression" (in Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997, p.78).

It is important to recognise however, that all research relating to attitudes to domestic violence has been conducted on those individuals already identified as batterers. It may be that such attitudes arose as a result of the use of violence, further investigation is required, possibly assessing the predictive power of positive attitudes towards domestic violence.

Another group of cognitions to be examined empirically is batterer's attitudes and standards about relationships generally, what is important in a relationship, what makes it

worthwhile. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart, (1994a) compared violent and nonviolent males, both maritally distressed and nondistressed groups. They found both violent and nonviolent distressed males endorsed more dysfunctional standards and assumptions; they also reported being less satisfied with how their standards were being met by their partners and reported greater upset when their standards were not met (Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart, 1994a).

Given that these dysfunctional standards appear to arise through relationship distress rather than violence in the relationship, it appears that the study of other cognitions may be more useful in attempting to understand domestically violent men.

Research examining the attributions that domestically violent men make about their use of violence against their partner have typically found that these men place the blame for their offending on external factors, most often, their partner.

Holtzworth-Munroe and Hutchinson (1993) found that maritally violent men, when faced with hypothetical situations of conflict were more likely than nonviolent men to attribute negative intentions to their partner. Coleman (1980 in Stamp & Sabourin, 1995) found that domestically violent men attributed the causes of their violence to three factors: chronic dissatisfaction with their partner, jealousy and retaliation for abuse (physical or verbal) by their partner.

In their study examining males' spousal abuse narratives, Stamp and Sabourin (1995) found support for attributions to external factors including partner's behaviour/personality, jealousy, abuse and control issues. In addition, they found that the males studied also avoided accountability for their behaviour by: making excuses for their behaviour, justifying their behaviour (e.g., provocation), minimising the amount of violence used and the type of force used and denying the use of violence.

These attributional characteristics of batterers have important ramifications in terms of treatment as it has been suggested that acknowledgement of responsibility for domestic violence is arguably the first step towards treating and stopping it (Stamp & Sabourin, 1995).

Control and Power - In examining characteristics of domestically violent men in relation to power and control there are two aspects to consider. Firstly, desire for

power/control and secondly, loss of control explanations for the occurrence of domestic violence.

Marvin (1997) suggests that domestically violent men have a need to control their partners and that their use of violence is directly linked to this desire as it is their method for enforcing control. It has been suggested (Hamberger and Hastings, 1986) that this desire arises out of fear of domination or an antisocial need to use others. Hotaling and Sugarman (1986) in their review of relevant studies found that 33% found a significant relationship between domestic violence by males and the need for power or control (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997).

Leibrich et al., (1995) found, of their New Zealand sample of 200 men, that thirty seven percent of the men believed that a major reason for hitting a female partner was in order to control them, further support for the hypothesis of desire to control as an explanation of domestic violence.

Prince and Arias (1994) conducted a study examining desirability of control and perceived control in a group of married men. Perceived control looks at how much control the individual perceives they have to alter events. Those they found to be at high risk of being domestically violent were those individuals who either had low self-esteem, low desirability of control and low perceived control or high self-esteem, high desirability of control and low perceived control. This suggests that, for the latter individuals they "turn to violence in order exert the control they feel comfortable or secure with and that they believe is best for them" (Prince & Arias, 1994, p.132). For the former group violence emerges in response to frustration.

This group can be seen as an illustration of the second hypothesis in relation to control, that is, that some men are domestically violent in an attempt to regain lost control. They perceive that they have lost power so they attempt to remove the feelings of powerlessness by being violent.

In addition to the study by Prince & Arias (1994), Rouse (1984 in Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997) found that batterers' perceptions of low personal efficacy were significantly related to abusive behaviour. Leibrich et al (1995) examined loss of control and found that 65% of their sample thought that this was a major reason for hitting a partner. Stamp and Sabourin (1995) also found that the men in their sample attributed

their violence to a loss of control. At the same time, however, they note that reports of restraint frequently arose, and they suggest that this enabled the batterer to cognitively reconstruct violent incidents as ones in which they did have control.

From the research findings to date, it would appear that control and power, whether in terms of wanting or losing it, are a common feature of domestically violent men.

Stress - Holtzworth-Munroe et al.(1997b) provide a succinct outline of the various theories that propose a link between violence and stressors (e.g. frustration-aggression hypothesis, social interactions perspective). While a review of these theories is beyond the scope of this discussion, it is, however, commonly accepted that stress in itself does not provide a direct causal link to domestic violence.

The types of stressors in relation to domestic violence that have been examined include relationship stress e.g. conflict or distress. Holtzworth-Munroe et al.(1997) report that most researchers have found a correlation between this and domestic violence. In addition, it can also be concluded that sociodemographic stressors such as low income also correlate with domestic violence.

In examining, narrower, individual stressors such as work stress, studies report mixed findings. Some studies (e.g., Julian & McKenry, 1993; Barnett, Fagan & Booker, 1991) have found a distinct positive correlation between domestic violence and life stress while others (e.g., McKenry et al, 1995) have found no such relationship.

Conclusion - While conclusions in this area are difficult, explanations offered to explain these findings suggest that other interacting variables whether past or current may have an impact when the individual experiences stress and may therefore be more likely to lead to violence.

On examination of the prominent characteristics of domestically violent men that have been discussed here it becomes increasingly apparent that it is difficult to pinpoint a profile of 'the male batterer'. Findings in each area considered report contradictions

which inevitably lead to the conclusion that male batterers as a group are inherently heterogeneous. Researchers have subsequently turned their attention towards the task of differentiating out specific typologies of batterers.

1.6.5 TYPOLOGIES OF BATTERERS

The many studies that have focused on attempting to subtype domestically violent men have focused on behavioural and/or personality features of these men. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) examined available literature regarding subtypes of batterers, both from behavioural and personality analyses and used three dimensions by which to distinguish among subtypes (severity of physical relationship violence, generality of the violence and batterer's psychopathology or personality disorder). From this metanalysis three distinct typologies emerged. These typologies were defined based on empirical, anecdotal and clinical data (Walker, 1995).

Family-only Batterers were considered to engage in the lease severe violence and only in the home. They were also considered the least likely to engage in psychological or sexual abuse. This group showed little evidence of psychopathology or personality disorder although it was suggested that any personality disorder evident in this group would be of the passive-dependent type. Numerous studies have supported this typology. For example Gondolf (1988) in his delineation of behavioural typologies named this subtype the 'sporadic typical' batterer. Saunders (1992) cluster analysis of features of domestically violent men also emerged with a 'family-only' subtype. Walker (1995) suggests that this subtype is motivated by abnormal power and control needs.

The second broad subtype which Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) suggest emerged from previous research was the *Dysphoric/Borderline Batterers*. These individuals were found to engage in moderate to severe levels of violence including psychological and sexual abuse. Again it is suggested that this group primarily confine their violence to the home but some aggressive and criminal behaviour outside the home is likely to feature. These men are considered to have serious psychological problems, evidence borderline or schizoid traits and may have problems with alcohol or drug abuse. This subtype is evidence in Saunder's (1992) 'emotionally volatile' group, Gondolf's (1988) 'chronic typical' batterer and Hamberger and Hastings (1986) schizoidal/borderline batterer.

The final subtype is considered the *Generally Violent/Antisocial Batterer.* It is anticipated that the violence evidenced by these men is not limited to the home and that they would have an extensive history of criminal/antisocial behaviour and involvement in the legal system. In the home it is suggested that they are moderately to severely psychically, psychologically and sexually abusive. Antisocial personality disorder and psychopathy are considered features of this subtype along with alcohol and drug abuse. This subtype parallels Gondolf's (1988) antisocial and sociopathic batterers, Saunder's (1992) generally violent batterers and Hamberger and Hastings (1986) antisocial/narcissistic subgroup.

A more recent study by Gottman, Jacobson, Rushe, Shortt, Babcock, La Taillade and Waltz (1995) has examined the relationships among physiological responses during relationship conflict, aggressive behaviour and violence in battering couples. This study suggests that not only should differences in terms of behavioural and personality be addressed when subtyping batterers, but also physiological responses. The measure of physiological response used in this study was heart-rate reactivity and on the basis of this Gottman et al.(1995) differentiated two subtypes of domestically violent men. *Type One Batterers* lowered their heart rates below baseline during marital interaction, and in comparison with *Type Two Batterers* were more verbally aggressive towards their partner, more violent towards others outside the home, and had greater elevation on scales reflecting antisocial and sadistic aggressive traits.

Type Two Batterers were those whose heart rate reactivity increased during marital interaction. These individuals displayed similar levels of violence to Type One batterers but their violence was restricted to the home setting. They also evidenced less anger than Type One individuals. On the basis of these findings, Gottman et al. (1995) suggest that Type One batterers fit the Generally Violent/Antisocial subtype as suggested by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart's (1994) review and the Type Two batterers fit the Family-only subtype.

It appears that research attempts to subtype batterers have proved fruitful in providing greater understanding of the characteristics of batterers. The number of studies

that appear to provide subtypes consistent with those proposed by Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) in their review, whether from behavioural, personality or physiological analyses suggest that this is a valid conceptualisation of domestically violent men.

1.6.6 MULTIFACTORIAL/INTEGRATED PERSPECTIVES

An alternative approach that researchers have taken looking for answers to the question 'why does he do it?' is to move towards more integrated accounts of domestic violence. This has involved taking previously identified characteristics of male batterers and looking at the explanatory power of combinations of these factors.

While research of this type is at a relatively early stage, what emerges from studies examining the interaction of different variables (e.g. Leonard & Blane, 1992, Stith & Farley, 1993 and O'Leary, Malone & Tyree, 1994) is that marital distress is a common interacting factor with individual risk factors (e.g. alcohol abuse, aggressive personality) which leads to domestic violence (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997).

In a more integrated approach to explaining domestic violence, McKenry, Julian and Gavazzi (1995) undertook to develop a biopsychosocial model of domestic violence hence incorporating all three of the perspectives discussed earlier as causal theories.

They found that only the biological and social variables produced statistically significant results in relation to domestic violence and that there was no significant interaction between biological, social and psychological variables. It was found in this study that the social variables, in particular, family income and relationship quality were the best predictors of domestic violence while in the biological domain only alcohol use was a significant predictor. From the psychological perspective only hostility was found to be significantly related to domestic violence.

In conclusion of their study, McKenry et al (1995) suggest that " the influence of biological and psychological factors on violence probability estimates may be seen as secondary to and perhaps dependent on social context variables" (p.317). This study appears to provide limited support for a more integrated approach to understanding male batterers.

A somewhat different, but still integrative approach to domestic violence was taken by Dutton (1985) in his 'ecologically nested' theory of male violence towards female intimates. This theory is a combination of the sociopolitical and psychological

perspectives. Rather than looking at a combination of individual factors Dutton (1985) proposed that individual factors must be considered in the context in which the individual lives. Therefore, his theory proposes that "whether or not a man will assault his wife is influenced by an intricate network of variables within each of four nested layers of environmental experience" (Carden, 1994, p.563). These layers consist of the ontogenic core (individual experience) within; a microsystemic layer which incorporates nuclear and extended family within; an exosystemic layer: occupation, social, religious associations within; a macrosystemic layer of society's rules and norms.

While this theory has utility in examining domestic violence from a more wide ranging perspective, there has been little empirical investigation of this theory because of the predominant focus on research at the individual characteristics level. Future consideration of the utility of this theory in explaining domestic violence is warranted particularly as knowledge about individual characteristic of male batterers reaches saturation point.

1.6.7 CULTURAL INFLUENCES

Dutton's (1985) ecologically nested theory prompts the consideration of the influence of culture on attitudes towards and use of violence against an intimate partner. Domestic violence is increasingly recognised as a 'culturally transmitted disease' (Carden, 1994, p.539). Cultural identity has been recognised as playing an important role because of the differences that exist between cultures in terms of definition of gender roles and acceptance of intra-familial violence and violence more generally.

Crowell and Burgess (1996) state that a review by Counts et al. (1992 in Crowell & Burgess, 1996) of fourteen different societies found that physical punishment of female partners was accepted in all societies and in some was even considered necessary. There was however a huge range in the frequency of battering between different cultures, from almost nonexistent to very frequently.

Leibrich et al (1995), in considering the likely existence of differing attitudes and practices towards domestic violence in New Zealand, opted not to conduct ethnic analyses in their survey. While they acknowledged that "different cultures have different belief systems towards violence" (p.157) and different ways of dealing with conflict, they considered that the wide-ranging nature of their study did not allow for implementation

of correct protocol for information gathering within each culture. They considered that different cultures have fundamentally different research philosophies and that in order to undertake research within a particular group, each philosophy must be adhered to.

So although the influence of culture on domestic violence has been repeatedly acknowledged by research findings, the problems have also been recognised. In particular, the difficulty of designing research comparing differences between cultures that maintains cultural appropriateness for each group while still allowing for the delineation of any differences.

1.6.8 METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

In order to fully understand the area of research presented here, there must be some consideration given to methodological difficulties that have arisen in this area. Issues regarding samples and sample selection featured prominently in early studies investigating male batterers. It is now acknowledged that the use of a maritally-distressed but non-violent comparison group when studying domestically violent men is essential in order to most accurately distinguish why some men resort to violence (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997). Earlier studies utilised only violent-nonviolent comparisons, relationship distress was not accounted for.

Another issue related to sampling which occurred mainly in earlier studies related to the limited access to such individuals, meaning that comparison groups between, for example, those who were ordered to attend treatment versus those who sought help voluntarily were rare. The issue has been addressed in more recent research and may help furnish further evidence for the existence of subtypes of batterers.

The almost exclusive reliance by researchers on self-report measures when studying domestically violent men is a further methodological issue warranting consideration. This is especially important when considering the subjective and retrospective nature of such measures as well as biases in terms of social desirability and difficulties categorising variables. Indeed a number of studies have examined social desirability in the responses of domestically violent men and found that it apparent and must be corrected for (Dutton &Starzomski, 1993).

Holtzworth-Munroe et al.(1997) consider that the major problem in this area of research is the use of correlational study designs. Such methods preclude any implications of causality or even temporal sequence. There have been very few attempts at studying domestically violent men longitudinally. Holtzworth-Munroe et al. (1997) suggest that "until additional longitudinal studies are conducted, it will be impossible to know which variables are simply correlates of marital violence versus which are precursors or consequences of marital violence" (p.94).

1.6.9 CAUSAL THEORIES - CONCLUSION

A brief overview of the findings presented here indicates that, in relation to nonviolent males, domestically violent men experience greater psychological distress; are more likely to experience personality disorders, particularly antisocial or borderline; have low self-esteem; have attachment and dependency problems and show more anger and hostility. They are also likely to have observed interparental violence in their family of origin; have difficulty with assertiveness and be more inclined to heavy use or abuse of alcohol.

It also appears that domestically violent men tend to exhibit positive attitudes towards violence, attribute responsibility for their offending to external factors and tend to excuse, minimise, justify or deny their violent behaviour towards their intimate partners. Findings also suggest that these men use violence in response to a desire to control their partner or because they wish to regain control they perceive as lost. Finally, they appear to more often experience relationship stress.

What emerges from this discussion of empirical findings in relation to domestically violent men is that a lot of information has been gathered but research currently is at the stage of attempting to consolidate these findings in the search for explanations of domestic violence which offer both explanatory breadth and depth.

Recent attempts to adopt this approach have seen the development of typologies of batterers and the investigation of the interaction of multiple variables as causal explanations. To date, research has focused on comparisons between nonviolent and violent men in intimate relationships. In order to more fully explore new directions in seeking to understand domestic violence, Holtzworth-Munroe et al.(1997) suggest that

attention should turn to examining variability amongst male batterers as well as continuing to examine how variables may interact to predict domestic violence.

1.6.10 IMPLICATIONS FOR TREATMENT

While a variety of treatment modalities have been used in intervention with batterers (psychoeducational, individual psychotherapy, couples and family therapy), Geffner and Rosenbaum (1990) suggest that there is a general similarity of content across programmes. The focus of such programmes is on eliminating violent, coercive behaviour within a relationship; getting the offender to accept responsibility for his aggression; fostering empathy; providing anger management skills; improve self-esteem and stress management skills.

Given the findings presented here regarding particular characteristics of batterers it appears that these points of focus in intervention do flow from established findings. However, the effectiveness of these treatment components has not been firmly established. A contribution to difficulties concerning treatment effectiveness arises where offenders are ordered to attend treatment programmes rather than voluntary attendance. Still, acknowledging this difficulty, Myers (1995) suggests that " there is little consensus or conclusive evidence of what skills are needed and how these skills should be taught in assisting men to adopt non-coercive alternatives to battering and psychological abuse" (p.502).

Carden (1994) in reviewing the treatment outcome literature regarding male batterers concluded that similar to findings regarding causal mechanisms, that the focus on single factor explanations has flowed over to treatment strategies. It was suggested that examination of the interaction between variables, acknowledgement of the heterogeneity of batterers and continued attempts to substantiate multilevel explanations of domestic violence would also lead to the identification and implementation of more appropriate and effective intervention strategies.

1.7 RATIONALE: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AS A PROCESS

An alternative approach for future research is to examine incidents of domestic violence as a process. This approach forms the basis for the current study. It is generally accepted that incidents of domestic violence comprise not only physical but

psychological and emotional abuse. But an important difficulty which can be seen as contributing to the limitation of current causal explanations is the tendency for domestic violence to be viewed as a discrete incident rather than an ongoing process. This viewpoint is reinforced by New Zealand's legal system by the way in which criminal behaviour is identified and measured, quantification into a discrete episode or event is essential and the focus for such episodes when domestic violence is being prosecuted tends to be physical abuse.

It has been suggested (Bowling, 1993) that despite the primacy of incidence-based accounts of crime, crime should not be seen as an event but as a process. While Bowling (1993) was referring to racial harassment in this article, he makes the point that potentially any crime involving interpersonal violence is most accurately viewed as a process. This leads to due consideration of: the social relationships between actors involved in the process; the continuity across physical, emotional and psychological aspects; the repeated nature of victimisation and the historical context of such offences (Bowling, 1993).

The application of such a conceptualisation to domestic violence would conceivably capture both the dynamic and complex nature of these events. If the repeated physical violence, threats and intimidation which are common features of violent intimate relationships, are conceptualised into discrete events, the result may be the loss of essential elements of the experience.

In domestic violence, 'process' can be conceived in both a wide and narrow sense. The narrower view of process captures the dynamics involved in an incident of domestic violence. But it is not limited to the actual battering, rather, the 'process' also includes the antecedents and consequences to such behaviour, the factors that lead up to and result from an incident of violence. 'Process' in a wider sense encapsulates not only the narrower sense but also looks to the triggers or factors which lead to repeated or cycles of abuse. Dutton (1995) suggests that "until recently, little attention has been paid to the dynamics generating cyclical abuse by males" (p.570). It is these dynamics and the process of domestic violence in both senses that this study will examine.

While many causal mechanisms have been proposed to explain why males may be violent towards intimate female partners, few have considered domestic violence as a

process and attempted to delineate the nature of this process. Walker (1979) in a groundbreaking study proposed a process account of domestic violence through interviews with female victims of such abuse. This account conceptualised domestic violence as a cycle consisting of three stages: the Tension-Building Stage; the Acute Battering Stage and the Honeymoon Stage (see Figure 1.1). Walker (1979) suggests that these stages vary in time and intensity between couples.

The *Tension-Building Stage* heralds an escalation of tension between the couple. Hostility, name-calling, friction in the relationship and possibly minor incidents of violence are said to occur during this phase. The woman senses negativity coming from her partner but attempts to act in ways that will prevent this from escalating for example, by being more compliant. The man is typified as being 'on edge' and prone to react heatedly to any trivial problems. Walker (1979) suggests that at this point the female victims tend to accept their partner's anger as legitimate and internalise responsibility for the tension in an attempt to prevent it from escalating.

The *Acute Battering Stage* of the cycle, is, as it suggests, the phase where violence occurs. "It is characterised by the uncontrollable discharge of the tensions that built up during stage one" (Walker, 1979, p.59). As discussed earlier, batterers may have various aims in being violent (e.g. to assert control, fear of losing partner, jealousy) and Walker (1979) suggests that this phase will be as long and as severe as necessary for the batterer to achieve this aim. It is estimated (Walker, 1979) that this phase could last anywhere from two hour to two days.

The third or *Honeymoon Stage* of this cycle is characterised by extremely loving, kind and contrite behaviour by the batterer. Tearfulness, apologies and promises never to do it again are typical. Walker (1979) found that at this point, what she described as 'symbiotic bonding' occurred between victim and perpetrator such that the victim genuinely believed the offender's apologies and promises and subsequently the honeymoon phase ensued.

Carden (1994) suggests that while this "cycle of violence theory has proven to be an educationally and clinically useful model since its introduction McKenry et al, 1995 years ago, it is best viewed as a qualitatively derived measure of central tendency of a highly variable and complex set of behaviours" (p.550). Indeed, on consideration of the

FIGURE 1.1: WALKER'S (1979) CYCLE OF VIOLENCE (FROM CARDEN, 1994)

PHASE 1 - TENSION BUILDING

Tension begins to mount as the abusive partner increases his threats of violence, often calling the woman names and pushing or shoving her around. During this phase, the abused woman often will make increasing efforts to please the abuser or calm him down. Usually, though, her efforts to prevent the battering are useless and only serve to postpone the violence.

Denial by woman of impending violence.

Denial by woman of severity of abuse and the reality of future abuse.

PHASE 3 - HONEYMOON

The abuser apologizes, often excessively, and expresses guilt and shame. He promises the violent behavior will not happen again; he often buys his partner gifts. Sometimes the abuser will minimize the violence or blame it on the woman, saying it never would have happened if she hadn't said or done something to make him angry.

PHASE 2 - ACT OF VIOLENCE

Violence erupts as the abuser throws objects at his partner; hits, slaps, kicks, chokes, or beats her with his fists; abuses her sexually; or uses weapons, such as belts, sticks, knives, or guns.

Denial by woman of partner's responsibility for what is happening.

findings that have emerged empirically, particularly the heterogeneity of male batterers, it does seem probable that this cycle may overly simplify occurrences of domestic violence. It does however maintain importance particularly as possible the only account of domestic violence adopting a process view. Indeed other writers (e.g. Dutton, 1995) have attempted to fit their theoretical propositions into Walker's (1979).

Of relevance for this study is that while Walker's (1979) model qualitatively describes the process of domestic violence, she gathered all her data from female victims. Given that this study took place twenty years ago, this is not surprising. The victims were generally the only accessible actors in this process at that time.

Given that this theory of the process of domestic violence has endured over the last twenty years, it is surprising that there has been little attempt to describe this process from the perspective of the other major actor, the offender. It is arguable that in order to understand why some men batter their intimate partners, it is important to not only identify the particular characteristics of these men but also to clarify their understanding of the process of offending. As mentioned previously, clarification of this process would entail consideration of all aspects considered influential to the actual occurrence of violence, both before, during and after the abuse occurs.

Iles (1996) provides a descriptive account of the domestic violence process from the offender's point of view. This account is based on anecdotal data obtained from a group of New Zealand men who attended batterer treatment programmes and had successful outcomes (in terms of being in a relationship free of physical violence and with minimal other abuse). Again, this process was considered cyclical (see Figure 1.2).

Stamp and Sabourin,(1995) suggest that what actually occurs in domestic violence is viewed quite differently by offender, victim and observer. Arguably, then, in order to understand why men abuse their partners, it is necessary to examine their description of events. Iles' (1996) recent attempt to describe the process of domestic violence suggests the utility of focusing on the offender's viewpoint of this process. This is not only for consideration of the actual events that occur but also for consideration of internal factors such as emotions and cognitions in attempting to more fully evaluate proposed causal mechanisms for this type of violence.

FIGURE 1.2: ILES' (1996) CYCLE OF VIOLENCE (FROM ILES, 1996)

Cycle of Violence

The Male Belief System:
Men control as of right
Self-esteem attached to control
I need to control to feel OK

Needs and wants
not declared or met

Undeclared feelings
Controlled feelings

Tension building
Distancing

SOS – Same old shit
Controlling behaviour
Belief system reinforced

DANGER

If not broken, the cycle will
speed up, jump sections,
and the violence will
become worse

ABUSE
Verbal threats.
Emotional intimidation

Denial
Blaming

'Hearts and Flowers'
Promises

FEAR MOMENTS
Service denied
Authority challenged
'Fatal Peril'

Guilt, remorse

VIOLENT ACT

DECISIONS
'Thingifying' — name calling
Chase

The utility of adopting a process and descriptive account of offences has been established, in research describing the offending process for other offence types, for example child molesters (Ward, Louden, Hudson, & Marshall, 1995). Ward et al. (1995) examined existing treatment strategies for child sex offenders which were based on the relapse prevention model generally applied to addictive behaviours. The relapse prevention model incorporates the notion of an offence chain. In relation to child sex offenders, Ward et al.(1995) suggested that this offence chain provided insufficient detail and a more comprehensive, qualitative examination of the offence chain was needed. They stated a need for a " clear description of this process and the interaction of the various cognitive, affective and attributional components" (Ward et al., 1995, p.454).

In addressing this need, Ward et al., (1995) utilised a systematic method of qualitative analysis, namely Grounded Theory, to delineate this offence process out of the descriptions given by offenders.

While qualitative methods have traditionally received little attention in psychology (Henwood and Pidgeon, 1992), the potential contribution of such methods is being increasingly recognised and utilised (Rennie, Phillips and Quartaro, 1988). Indeed, Bowling (1993) suggests that in order to ensure a holistic analysis of a crime that can be conceptualised processually, qualitative research is important to effectively capture the dynamics involved. Given the evidence put forward in this discussion that incidents of domestic violence are indeed best conceptualised as a process, a qualitative methodology based on Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) will be used in this study to transform interview data into categories.

Grounded Theory consists of a set of systematic procedures that seek to inductively derive a theory or a set of categories from qualitative data (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). This method involves constant comparison of data which enables the discovery of connections between identified consistencies in the data. By this method of constant comparison, data are extensively collected and coded. " The focus of analysis is not merely on collecting or ordering a mass of data but on organising many ideas which have emerged from analysis of the data" (Strauss, 1987, p.23). These ideas are merged into categories based on similar meaning. The process consists of constant comparison

between established categories and new data, this serves to establish the empirical adequacy of the categories. An essential component of Grounded Theory is that initial stages of research are more open but theoretical sampling directs data collection and comparative analysis is ongoing from the outset.

The use of this qualitative methodology as regards interviews with child molesters, resulted in a descriptive model of that offence chain that has not only enhanced the evaluation of previously proposed causal mechanisms and allowed for the generation of new hypotheses but has also prompted the development of more effective treatment strategies.

Such an approach is viable in the situation of domestic violence, even if varying subtypes of batterers are being considered, because of the family-specific social and structural factors which tend to emphasise the uniqueness of this context as opposed to more general violent offending. The utility of describing an offence process, particularly with regard to male batterers is that by allowing the offenders' to describe their experience in their own words, what emerges is not only their perspective on what occurs but also their attempts to explain why they are violent. This is important given that no causal mechanisms for domestic violence can be considered firmly established. Indeed, Carden (1994) suggests that "our current understanding (of domestic violence) would be greatly enhanced by creatively designed and exactingly executed qualitative studies..." (p.572).

1.8 AIM

The purpose of the current study is to devise a descriptive model of the offence process in domestic violence using a qualitative methodology based on Grounded Theory. It is anticipated that the development of such a model will encompass cognitive, behavioural, emotional and contextual (e.g., social) factors significant to domestic violence offenders. It is expected that such a model will not only enhance understanding of this social problem but may also enhance the development of treatment strategies of particularly relevance to this offence type.

2   METHOD

2.1   PARTICIPANTS

Participants consisted ten males who are currently incarcerated at Paparua Prison, Christchurch, having current or prior convictions for domestic violence offences. They ranged in age from 25-43 years. As acknowledged previously, cultural identification is considered to have an influence on the individual's attitudes towards and use of violence against an intimate partner. In addition, methodological difficulties make cross-cultural comparison problematic. Because of the inherent differences that may exist in these respects, it was recognised that different models may be required for different cultural groups. Given the researcher's cultural identification as Caucasian, it was deemed most appropriate to consider only Caucasian males. It is anticipated that future research will examine the applicability of this model and develop models specific to other cultural groups.

Of the ten participants, two had current convictions for male assaults female, one had a current conviction for killing his partner, five had prior convictions for male assaults female including one who had four prior males assaults female convictions; and two had prior convictions for male assaults female which did not relate to a domestic incident but they agreed to participate on the basis that they had assaulted partners in the past.

2.2   MEASURES

While a qualitative methodology was employed in this study, the following psychometric measures were administered. These measures provided information about the participants regarding particular characteristics that have previously been identified in male batterers. This information was used to describe participants as an initial starting point prior to embarking on the description of the offence. This information is presented at the beginning of the results section.

Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus, 1979) - was used to indicate the frequency and intensity of violence towards female partners. Specifically, participants were asked to complete the measure with regards to the relationship which would later form the basis of the interview. Items are listed in severity from discussing an issue calmly to hitting with an

object and yield three scales: reasoning, verbal aggression and physical aggression. Higher scores indicate more frequent use of that tactic. The CTS has been found to be a valid and reliable measure (Straus, 1979, Arias and Beach, 1987 in Prince and Arias, 1994).

Communication Patterns Questionnaire (Christensen and Sullaway,) - was designed to examine how couples typically deal with problems in their relationship. The scale examines communication patterns when a problem arises, during problem discussion, and after problem discussion. Scoring is on a nine point scale examining how likely a couple is to employ a certain response, from 1 (very unlikely) to 9 (very likely). Scoring yields five subscales: Mutual constructive communication; Total amount of demand-withdrawal communication; Man demand/woman withdraw communication; Woman demand/man withdraw communication; Roles in demand/withdraw communication and Mutual avoidance and withholding. A higher score on these subscales indicates the likelihood of engaging in the communication pattern

Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory-III (MCMI-III) (Millon, 1994) is a personality measure designed to provide information to clinicians making assessment and treatment decisions about clients with emotional and interpersonal difficulties (Millon, 1994). It was used to assess the personality style of participants. This measure also provides an indication of the presence of clinical syndromes. It consists of 175 statements which participants must answer true-false as to whether a statement accurately describes them.

Hostility Towards Women Scale - is a scale designed to assess attitudes towards women. There are 30 questions answered using a true-false format. Answers indicating hostility towards women are scores one point, a score greater than six indicating hostility towards women. This scales is deemed useful for the information provided for individual items.

Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence Scale (Burt, 1980)- is a measure designed to examine attitudes towards interpersonal violence. It was devised as part of a questionnaire looking at more wide-ranging attitudes towards violence. It consists of six items which are scored on a seven point scale ranging from disagree strongly (1) to neutral (4) to agree strongly (7). This scale provides useful qualitative information. Lower scores indicate attitudes accepting of interpersonal violence.

2.3 PROCEDURE

With the approval of the Department of Corrections, participants were identified through file information listing current and prior convictions. Those with convictions for male assaults female or common assault (domestic) were interviewed to determine if these convictions arose as a result of an assault on a female partner. If this was the case they were asked to participate. The interviewer, an assistant clinical psychologist, completed the consent process, oversaw the completion of psychometric measures and conducted the interviews with all participants.

Consent was obtained after prospective participants were given access to an information sheet explaining the nature of the study, the information that would be required, the amount of time involved and that information given would remain confidential. The prospective participants were also verbally advised that interviews would be recorded by audio tape.

It was emphasised that participants could withdraw at any time if they felt it necessary. It was also explained that there might be a risk of some emotional upset as a result of participation. It was explained that in the event of this happening every effort would be made to ensure that they would not leave the interview in a distressed state and that, if necessary a referral could be made to the appropriate agency (e.g. Psychological Services, Department of Corrections) for further help.

On completion of the consent process, a time was arranged to complete the psychometrics and interview, in most cases, a few days later.

At the commencement of the research phase, participants were again advised of their rights and of the interviewer's responsibilities and were invited to ask questions if any of the information presented was unclear to them. This initial phase helped to establish rapport with participants. Participants were advised that the session would last approx. two hours and that they could take a break as required. The sessions took place in interview rooms in the administration wing of the unit in which the participant was incarcerated.

Participants firstly completed the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory-III (MCMI-III), the Conflict Tactics Scale, the Hostility Towards Women Scale, the Communication Patterns Questionnaire and the Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence

Scale. Completion of these generally took one hour. The completion of these measures prior to the interview taking place enabled the participants to become accustomed to the environment, the interviewer and likely topics for later discussion in the interview.

Following this, the participants were offered the opportunity to have a break, they were then interviewed for approximately one hour. Interviews were semi-structured to ensure coverage of all appropriate subject areas and in order that a similar format would be followed with all participants.

The interview format was developed to incorporate some consideration of all the factors outlined in the Aim of this study at the conclusion of the Introduction section. These include behavioural, contextual, emotional and cognitive factors. The interview format attempted to capture descriptions of these factors at a number of points throughout the offence process.

The interviews were recorded by audio tape. The interview schedule can be viewed in Appendix A. It should be noted that this schedule was modified after each interview to incorporate relevant information that had emerged previously. Appendix A represents the final version of the interview schedule.

The focus of the interview was to capture, as precisely and in as much detail as possible, the process of offending for each participant. As mentioned previously in the introduction section, this idea of process can incorporate both the narrower (i.e. a description of the antecedents, actual offending and consequences) as well as a wider (i.e. looking at more distal factors implicated in offending and repeated offending) notion of offending. The interviews tapped into both these aspects of process

The centrepoint of the discussion was one particular incident of domestic violence which the participant had perpetrated, in almost all cases (except for the two subjects not actually convicted for any incidents of violence towards a partner) this incident was that for which they were convicted. It was the participant's perspective of the offence process which was the important consideration.

The interview began with general information pertaining to family background, violence growing up, schooling/vocational history, relationship history, attitudes towards relationships and standards or expectations of relationships. These general subject areas provided an opportunity for both the interviewer to tailor questions appropriately for the

individual participant and for the participant to become accustomed to the types of questions being asked.

Following on from this, the participants were asked about general conflict resolution styles, in intimate relationships and with others. In addition, the use of violence generally was examined, including questions pertaining to beliefs about the use of violence, empathy towards victims and degree of planning involved in previous violence.

This was narrowed to past incidents of domestic violence other than the index offence. This also involved looking at past incidents where the participant had refrained from being violent and the means by which this was achieved. The gathering of this information was intended to establish the wider context of the offence process: relevant background factors and links between offences.

The remainder of the interview was centred around their index offence. Details of the relationship were first gathered, how long they were together, the nature of the relationship, how conflict was generally dealt with, the positive aspects of the relationship. From there, the participants were asked to begin at a point that seemed relevant to them and describe in as much detail as possible, what happened before, in terms of relevant antecedents; during; and after the incident, the consequences or aftermath.

As the participant described this sequence of events, the researcher recorded these details on a time line in order to refer back to specific points in the offence chain. After this description, the participant was questioned in more detail about different points in the offence chain. Aspects examined at each point included thoughts, intensity of thoughts and feelings, control of thoughts and feelings, feelings towards his partner, feelings within himself and about himself, and what he recalled about his partner's reaction. The interview concluded with further questioning regarding links or similarities where repeated offending was involved; what made them more or less likely to offend again.

On completion of the interview, participant's were offered the opportunity to debrief and ask questions after which, the session was ended.

Interview tapes were then transcribed and listened to repeatedly before being analysed.

2.4 ANALYSIS

After each interview, the data was transcribed and repeatedly read over and listened to. In the first stage of analysis, the data were broken down into discrete concepts or "meaning units" (Rennie et al, 1988). The sentences or phrases deemed concepts contained information about the index offence, relationships, use of violence, developmental history and lifestyle factors relevant to offending.

A list of concepts was devised and concepts were added only where they contained a different content meaning. These concepts were then labeled or summarised and were subsequently arranged into provisional categories based on semantically similar meanings. These categories were named or labeled in such a way to be more abstract than the concepts they comprised but so that data meaning was retained. For example, references to trust issues were categorised under 'relationship beliefs'.

Reliability of the provisional category formulations to account for the data was constantly verified during open coding by deductive analysis. The provisional categories were used to code new concepts derived from additional transcripts not used in the initial category generation process.

As interviews progressed, new concepts were slotted into existing categories. If they didn't fit, a new category was created. The final set of categories was then developed through a process of searching for similarities and differences between the provisional categories and collapsing or refining them where necessary.

Modification and refinement of the final categories continued until saturation was reached. This means that any new data obtained was subsumed into existing categories without requiring generation of new categories. In this study, saturation was achieved after the analysis of 5 transcripts, although all ten were analysed to provide verification. Rennie et al (1988), suggest that saturation typically occurs after the analysis of 5 to 10 protocols.

Defining features of these final categories were then described and relationships between the final categories were established to formulate the initial version of the model. This involved constructing, evaluating and reconstructing to ensure that the resulting model was sensitive to the data. Similar to the earlier stages of coding, constant

comparison between the data and attempted model formulations resulted in appropriate modifications to the model in order to incorporate the data.

Transcript coding and subsequent data analysis were performed by the author in conjunction with a co-rater, who, while experienced in the use of this methodology was relatively unfamiliar with research within the area of domestic violence.

3   RESULTS

3.1   PSYCHOMETRIC MEASURES

The following results pertain to the psychometric measures completed by participants prior to the semi-structured interview which formed the basis of the model development. As mentioned in the Method section, these measures were completed to provide descriptive information about this group of domestically violent men.

The personality measure used - the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory - III (MCMI-III) indicated that the predominant personality features evident in these men were antisocial traits. Aggressive traits were also a feature of this group although for some this was evidenced in the passive-aggressive form. An examination of other clinically significant results using this measure indicated the majority of men exhibiting problems with alcohol and/or drugs. In addition, a number of the participants displayed significant borderline personality traits with accompanying anxiety and dysthymia.

The participants' scores on the Hostility Towards Women Scale (HTW) indicate that the majority generally exhibit hostile attitudes towards women. Scores from the Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence scale (AIPV) however suggest that the participants for the most part are not accepting of interpersonal violence, but in relation to the statement " a man is never justified in hitting his wife", opinion was equally divided between agreeing and disagreeing with this statement.

The participants responses on the Conflict Tactics Scale (CTS) related to the relationship that later formed the basis for the interview, participants were asked to indicate conflict tactics used in the year prior to the offence taking place, both for themselves and their partners. The participants scores on the Reasoning subscale

suggested that for the most part they considered that they engaged in reasoning tactics more frequently than their partner did but that these tactics were used relatively infrequently.

Again on the Verbal Aggression subscale, participants indicated that their partners used verbal aggression as frequently if not more so than themselves. Verbal aggression as a tactic was indicated as being used more frequently than either Reasoning or Physical Aggression by both participants and partners. In relation to the use of Physical Aggression, the majority of participants reported using this very infrequently. They also indicated that their partners frequently resorted to physical aggression although not as often as verbal aggression.

Finally, the participants responses on the Communication Patterns Questionnaire (CPQ) suggested that the relationships under consideration exhibited little mutual constructive communication, while mutual avoidance and withholding was reported by the majority of participants as a common pattern. Demand-withdraw communication was indicated as a frequently-occurring pattern, with participants identifying their partners as demanding and themselves as withdrawing as the most common form of this. In fact, participants consistently identified themselves as playing the withdrawing role.

3.2   THE OFFENCE PROCESS MODEL

The offence process model developed in this study is presented in Figure 3.1. The process consists of four distinct phases: **Phase 1: Background Factors, Phase 2: Offence Context/Build-Up, Phase 3: Offence,** and **Phase 4: Post-Offence.** Each of these phases is presented and described individually.

3.2.1   PHASE 1: BACKGROUND FACTORS

A number of factors were delineated as relevant background factors to the offence Process and will be described here. The factors that emerged can broadly be divided into two categories. To be examined firstly are those that appeared consistently across the data. Secondly, of a number of factors which again emerged consistently, contrasting expressions were evident in the data, suggesting that different dimensions of these factors need to be considered. These polarities will be highlighted as appropriate.

FIGURE 3.1: OFFENCE PROCESS MODEL

Phase 1

BACKGROUND FACTORS

OFFENCE CONTEXT: VULNERABILITY FACTORS

Phase 2

**RELATIONSHIP
DYNAMICS**

CONFLICT

ESCALATION TO VERBAL ABUSE

APPROACH BY OFFENDER
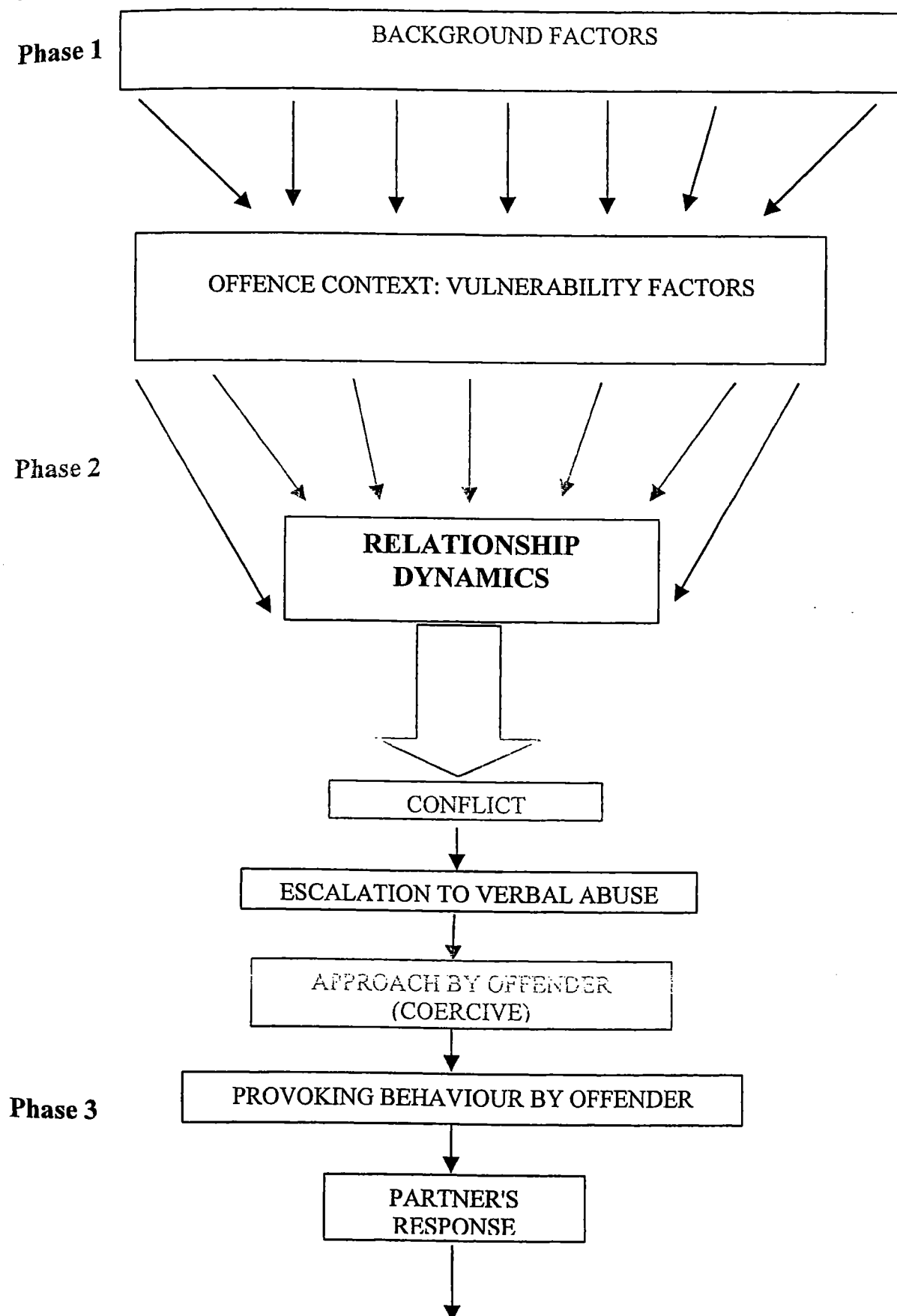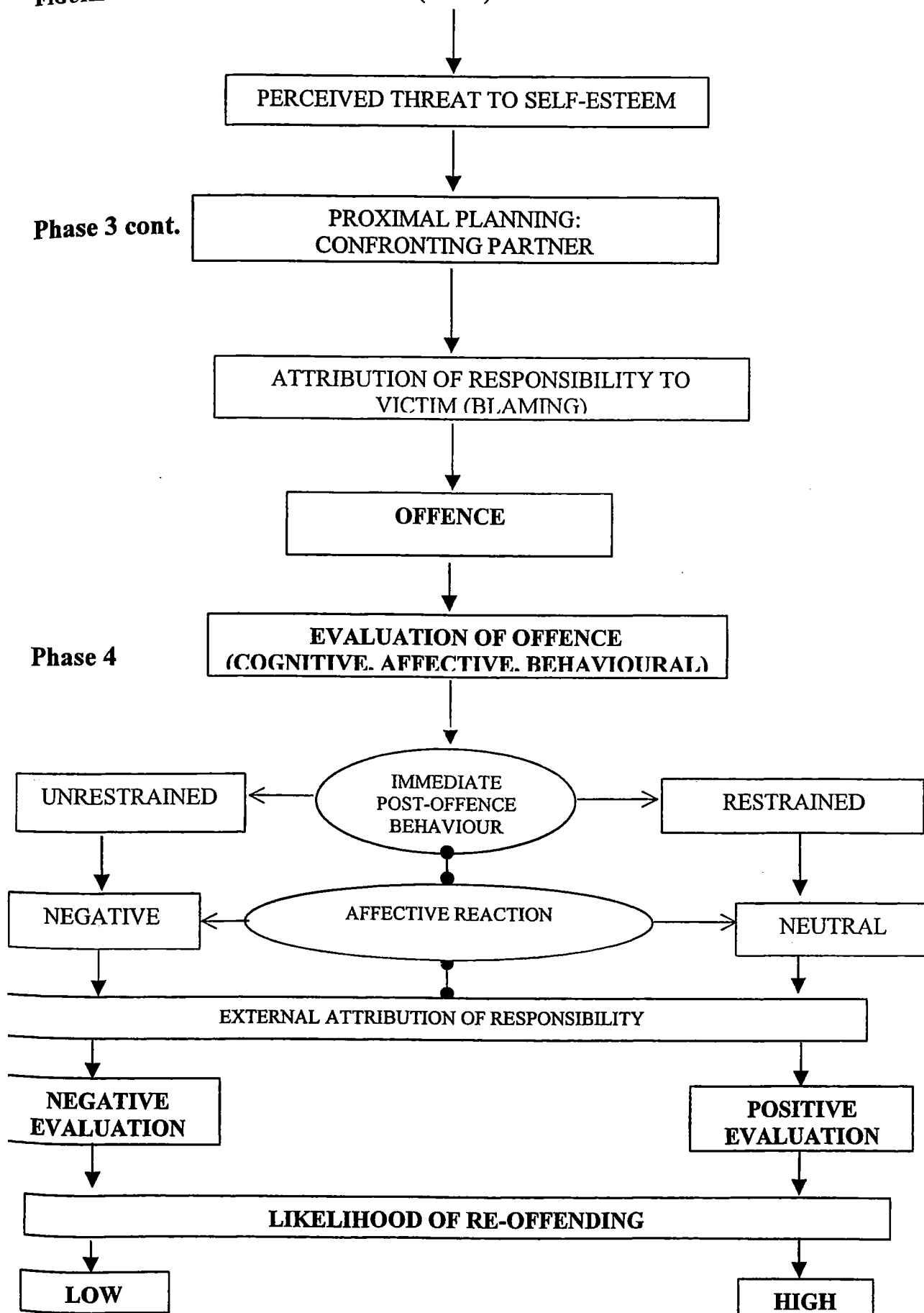(COERCIVE)

Phase 3

PROVOKING BEHAVIOUR BY OFFENDER

PARTNER'S
RESPONSE

FIGURE 3.1: OFFENCE PROCESS MODEL (CONT.):

Consistent Factors

The first group of background factors - **developmental adversity**, explores relevant distal variables which may have links to later domestic violence. A consistent factor to emerge through this analysis was **exposure to violence in the family of origin**. The following excerpts provide illustrations:

> *Yeah, pretty violent. My father. He used to hit us kids as well. A couple of times a week, it didn't seem to take much for him to get like that.*

> *Yes, a lot of violence. That's about all I remember really.*

This generally involved the offender witnessing physical violence and verbal abuse between his parents, more particularly, from his father (or father figure) to his mother. This exposure to violence also included being physically or verbally abused himself, by his father. **Paternal alcohol use** was commonly associated with the use of violence. Another common pattern to emerge from the analysis was the perception by the participants of the **father as authoritarian and rejecting** .

> *He would come home and generally sort out any behavioural problems with the kids. He would call us in one by one, and it was a bit like the army I suppose. The problem or misconduct would be told and punishment dealt out.*

> *He was kind and cold. Kind as in possessions, and cold in feelings. He wasn't very affectionate.*

With regard to educational and vocational background factors, it emerged that antisocial behaviour particularly violence towards peers, was a common feature of schooling. For example:

> *I was deemed a special child, they tried to monitor my behaviour, if I felt uncomfortable in class or I didn't want to do something, I could leave and go talk to the headmaster. It was a way to keep me calm and out of trouble.*

I found that I was a bit bigger than most, fights, and could get away with quite a lot (laughs). I got into trouble a lot for violence.

Along with this behaviour, **failure to achieve academically** resulted in leaving school, generally shortly after commencing secondary education. By contrast, a consistent feature to emerge was a **stable employment history**.

Heavy substance use from early teens (both alcohol and drugs) was also a common factor. The following excerpt provides an example:

Probably drinking regularly from about age 9. Drugs from 14, at that age I would have maybe 20 joints a week.

Background factors with regard to relationships were divided into **relationship characteristics/history, relationship skills** and **relationship beliefs**. A factor that emerged with respect to relationship history was the offender having had a number of **serious live-in relationships** which could be considered long term. Such relationships were generally described as **stable** but were identified as being beset with **frequent conflict**.

We used to argue about everything. If I said it was one o'clock, she would say it was two o'clock. That was pretty usual for us, we could argue over nothing for an hour. That was fairly stressful.

No issues ever got solved. We always struggled with the same issues - trust and worrying about each other.

Another feature of previous relationships that was consistently identified was **unfaithfulness**. This issue was frequently only considered problematic for the relationship if it was the female who was being unfaithful.

She was very (pause) you know, like very, flirty, which caused a lot of problems. She just couldn't keep her pants on.

In relation to **conflict resolution skills**, the self-regulatory strategies generally employed were **escape or avoidance** of the conflict situation. If these tactics were not utilised, violence or threats of violence were generally resorted to.

> *I have resorted to violence. But I have walked away too. I've probably withdrawn into myself more than I have hit out. I'd be more likely to storm out or leave the room.*

As regards other relationship skills, **intimacy skills** appeared to predominately consist of **distancing** techniques. While this can be likened to the escape or avoidance self-regulatory strategies, it also extends to positive incidents. Linking to this, a particular **belief** regarding relationships that emerged was that emphasis was placed on **physical** rather than emotional aspects of a relationship as important, with **emotional independence** being regarded as important.

For example:

> *Depends what she looks like. Looks have always been important to me for some reason.*

> *Its important for them to be emotionally stable within themselves, not to rely on the other person to prop them up.*

In terms of **relationship beliefs, trust** was considered to be an essential ingredient in a relationship, with loss of trust leading inevitably to conflict. Examination of the data relating to relationship belief and skills suggests that a **dismissive attachment style** (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) was predominantly evident.

As regards **past use of violence**, some form of violence had been used prior to the index offence. This violence primarily consisted of assaults, either of a partner or others with the latter including both instrumental and expressive aggression. A consistent **belief** to emerge was that violence was used in response to attack or threat by others, that it was essential to retaliate when attacked, and this belief held irrespective of who the attacker was. The following extracts illustrate this belief:

Everyone is really grossed out by a man who hits a woman but when a woman hits a bloke its really funny, you know? It's very confusing. I've always lived by the rule that I don't let anyone touch me at all.

Well you wouldn't believe it but J usually starts it (laugh). Things like, I'd be working late at night and I'd come home fairly late in the morning and she wouldn't let me sleep and would poke me and prod me and kick me to wake up and I would lose it, I'd push her around yeah. Poke and prod her back.

A **personal theory** about the role of anger in violence also emerged. This suggests that when angry, some kind of settling action is required (as mentioned above, escape or avoidance) and if this was not achieved then loss of control and subsequently violence was likely to ensue.

> *I think I vent pretty well (laugh). I vent at about 300 decibels but I vent all the same. I usually just get it out, it may take 10 minutes it may take 20 minutes but once its out I'm calm.*

Factors consistently identified as leading to anger included: stress, antagonism, challenge to authority, others taking control and threats to self-worth.

Polarity Factors

The first of the polarities emerged here in relation to the offender's response to the father's interpersonal style. Responses appear to consist of either anger or fear directed towards the father.

Differing forms of difficulties with **emotional regulation** emerged in analysis. The first type related to a skill deficit in accurately **labeling affect** while the second consisted of difficulty **expressing affect** appropriately. For can be considered misregulatory strategies. An example of the latter was shown in a number of incidents discussed in which smashing objects appeared to be one of the only identified ways of expressing anger. The former is illustrated by data which emerged suggesting that some individuals, while able to identify some positive incidents in a relationship, were not able to identify the positive emotions associated with the relationship. While appearing as two distinct skill deficits, broadly these emotional regulation deficits can be considered problems with **emotional awareness**.

Also, a polarity emerged in relation to the impact of substances on violent behaviour. It appears that for some individuals, substance use is linked to their violent behaviour, whereas others identify themselves as capable of being violent irrespective of whether or not they are using alcohol or drugs at the time. An example of the latter follows:

I can snap sober or drunk or stoned, it doesn't really make any difference.

A further polarity emerged in relation to **beliefs about roles** within a relationship. The difference here related to either **traditional** or **equality** beliefs. For example:

> *Its important to be an equal basically, equal in everything. When I say equal, I don't mean that she should earn exactly the same amount of money, I mean if she earns more, that's great. But equal emotionally, input to the relationship, decision-making.*

Compared with:

I used to even occasionally get sophisticated and do the washing,

From the findings that emerged in relation to past use of violence, it appears that offenders would fit at one of the following points on the following continuum as regards past use of domestic violence. It is possible to move to different points on this continuum, although the findings that emerged suggests that a consistent style is generally maintained.

Instrumental (detached from affect)

↓

Instrumental (affect related)

↓

Expressive (affect related)

To conclude, relevant background factors have been identified in relation to developmental adversity, education/vocational history, relationship history, skills, beliefs and past use of violence. Together these factors contribute to the emergence of the more immediate build-up process to the index offence. This process will now be considered.

3.2.2 PHASE 2: BUILD-UP/ OFFENCE CONTEXT PHASE.

This phase of the offence process model is represented in Figure 3.2. and considers specifically the relationship and surrounding circumstances which resulted in the index offence. For the purposes of this discussion, this relationship will be called the **index relationship.** As Figure 3.2 suggests, this phase of the model is not so much temporally defined but rather reflects the build-up of a number of impacting variables which act in combination on the central construct, the relationship dynamics. The joint impact of these variables on the relationship dynamics culminates in the particular incident of conflict which sets in motion the offence phase. Each of the contextual variables will be described before considering the central construct - the relationship dynamics.

The first contextual variable is the index **relationship characteristics.** In the majority of situations the relationship was one of co-habitation, and, similar to past relationships discussed as background factors, was plagued by frequent conflict. Difficulty identifying the actual issues in conflict was a feature of this relationship . Violence had occurred previously in the index relationship, physical and also verbal abuse were considered to have occurred quite frequently.

> *That was pretty usual for us, we could argue over nothing for an hour. That was fairly stressful. My first three convictions for assault for domestic violence came from S.*

Violence in the index relationship prior to the index offence had performed a tension reduction function, bringing an end to an argument. The following excerpt illustrates this function:

FIGURE 3.2: PHASE 2: BUILD-UP/OFFENCE CONTEXT
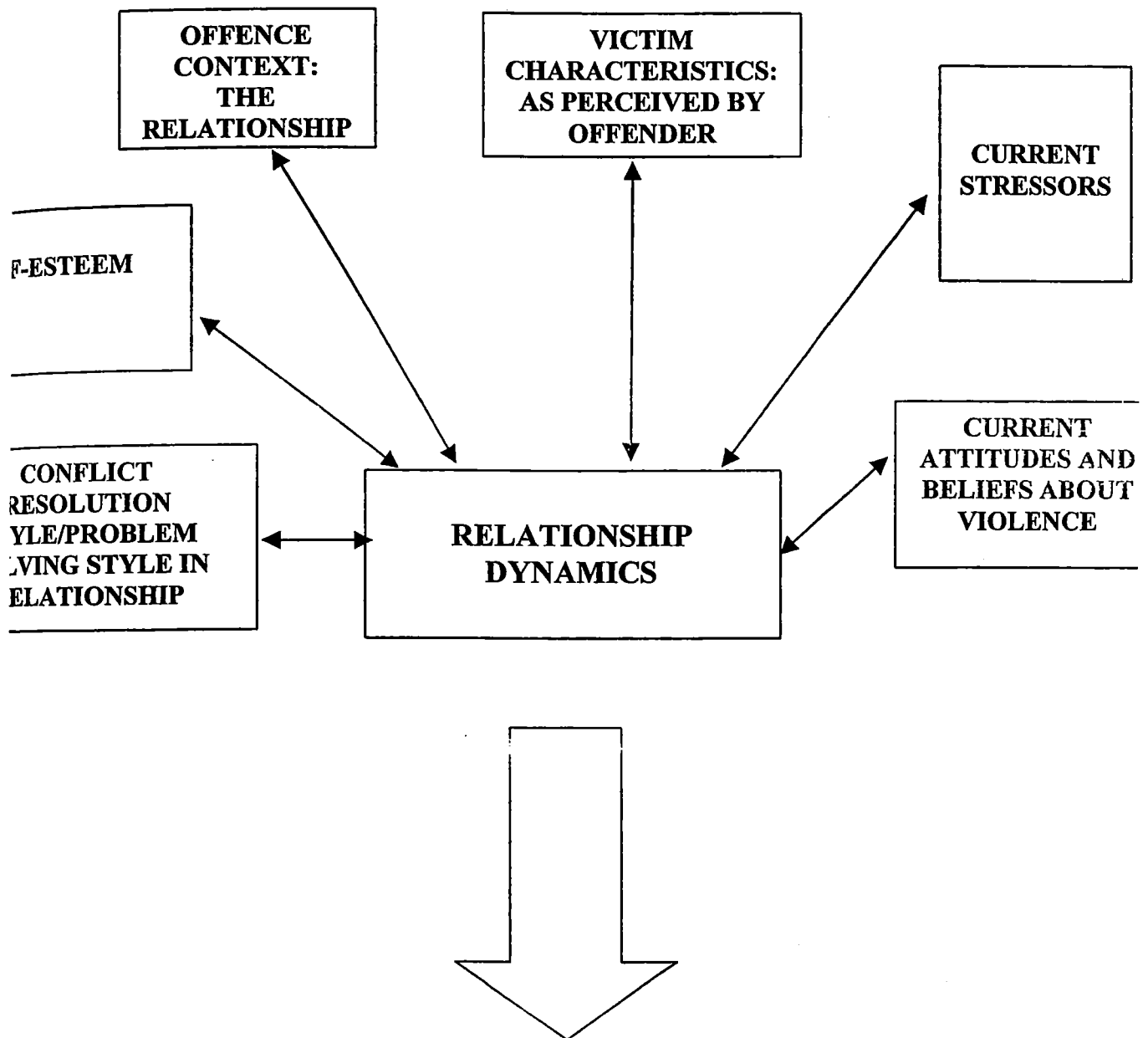
> *I stopped and turned round and pushed her against the, pushed her away, pushed her against the wall. And it was sort of a relief because it stopped, the arguing, the everything just stopped, it just went like completely go away, get away.*

Most of the participants suggested that both themselves and their partner had been violent in the past towards each other, but their own violence tended to end any dispute. The partner's reaction to instances of violence was generally described as fearful.

The next contextual variable is the **perceived victim characteristics.** Common terms used to describe the partner included: moody, aggressive, unpredictable and a good liar. In addition, the victim is consistently perceived as the instigator of any violence.

> *She could use emotion really really well, I mean she could play the frightened and terrified housewife shaking in her boots.*

Very few positive characteristics were described about partners, those that were related to the initial stages of the relationship. This may be a reflection of the fact that all index relationships were broken up, either as a result of the index offence or at some later point of conflict. In attempting to explain conflict within the index relationship, the partner was considered to have changed in some way that was unacceptable to the offender. For example:

> *She started changing on me. Her morals become different. Just that we always used to be party, party,. She started not wanting to have anything to do with our circle of friends.*

Self-esteem of the offender was a further impacting variable of the relationship dynamics. The predominant feature here was high self-esteem although this appeared to be unstable and vulnerable to threat. The following extracts provide an examples:

> *I've always had pretty high self-esteem. My upbringing taught me to be fairly hard, and to think of myself pretty right.*

> *It would get very heated because I felt, and J has admitted this, she used to put me down in front of the kids. If she wanted to have a go at me she wouldn't do it in private, it would be in front of the kids and I felt humiliated.*

> *Disrespectful. Just her mouth. The way she would talk to me and think that she could just talk to me like that.*

The combination of a negative view of the partner with this positive view of self is affirming of a **dismissive attachment style** (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991).

A **build-up of stressors** had an impact on the relationship dynamics. The types of stressors varied but all tended to have the same effect, straining the offender's (and it would be assumed, the partner's in the case of shared stressors) cognitive and emotional resources. Stress variously related to loss of a loved one, work commitments, ex-partners, custody or access disputes over children and legal proceedings arising from criminal activity. Some examples follow:

> *My Grandad was dying. I had been spending my days with him.*

> *There was a lot of pressure on us, we'd bought a section ready to build a house. I lost my job, tried to start self-employment. Just too much pressure, too much going on. Then the baby was premature. Just everything, money, and then whammo.*

> *I had just been arrested and charged with assaulting them (his friend and girlfriend).*

The **attitudes and beliefs about violence** in evidence throughout the index relationship present a contradictory picture. On the one hand, the memory of his father being violent towards the family acted as an inhibitor to violence. But on the other hand, the offender maintains a 'self-preservation' attitude towards the use of violence, in other words, if attacked, attack back. It appears that at this point in the offence process, the offender has modified this somewhat such that having reason to believe that someone is <u>about</u> to attack is also justification for the use of violence. Such an attack could involve a physical or verbal threat. For example:

> *I've always lived by the rule that I don't let anyone touch me at all and its, 90% of the people who I believe are going to hit me, <u>are</u> and the other 10% just shouldn't be in that position in the first place. I like to get them in first.*

Conflict resolution/problem solving style can be seen as similar to those identified as background factors, namely escape or avoidance of the conflict or argument or resorting to violence to end a dispute. For example:

> *I was trying to do the right thing. I wanted to get the hell out of there, I didn't want to have a bar of it, I just wanted to talk to her.*

Even though by the time of the index relationship, the offender has been in a number of conflictual relationships, there appeared to have been few attempts to adopt a strategy more conducive to conflict resolution. For the offender, the strategies employed result in a deferring and maintenance of the problem under discussion.

Relationship Dynamics is the major construct in this phase of the offence process model. The contextual variables outlined above feed into and impact on this dynamic which forms an integral part of the offence process. The relationship dynamic can be conceptualised as a cycle of coercive interactions between the offender and his partner as outlined in the diagram below:

Relationship Dissatisfaction

```
        Both
      Partners
```
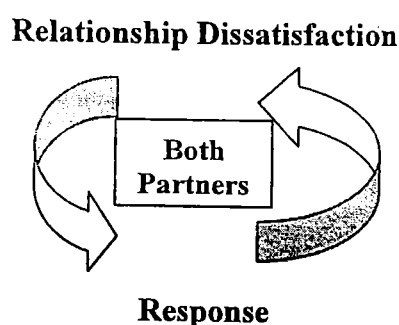
Response

This represents the finding that the way in which each partner responds to conflict reinforces dissatisfaction with the relationship and reinforces the likelihood of future conflict. Evidence for this coercive cycle is suggested by the finding that offenders were able to identify how they attempted to solve arguments with their partners but were also consistently able to identify that arguments or conflicts were rarely resolved. This was seen as contributing to further discontent as unresolved relationship issues frequently arose again in later conflict.

An example of this is provided by the following excerpts:

> *We'd only just sorted this crap out and here we are again, back to the same old spot. Yeah, just, yeah, no issues had been solved, there was a lot of apologies on both parts but no issues solved.*

> *She would tell me how she felt and I would tell her how I felt. Right. And we'd discuss it and I would feel that it was resolved but bugger me days if it wouldn't come up in the next argument. And I'm thinking, I thought we dealt with that.*

Oh, the fact that we had even talked about it, the decision had been made not to do it and she just went ahead and did it!

When examining the description provided here of the relationship dynamic as a coercive cycle revolving between relationship dissatisfaction and ineffective responses to this, it becomes apparent that this phase of the model is very accurately described as the 'build-up' phase. Such a cycle of interaction can not be maintained indefinitely without seriously impacting the ability of the partners to function within that relationship. In the situation of domestic violence, the offence can be conceived as an attempt, albeit maladaptive to break this coercive cycle.

3.2.3 PHASE 3: OFFENCE PHASE
Overarching Variables

Figure 3.3 provides an outline of the offence phase of this process model. As is evident from this diagram, there are three factors which can be considered as overarching or having an influence right across this phase. These will be explained firstly in order that they can be later understood in the context of the process.

One variable which was identified as playing a role across the offence phase was the **interpretation of meaning for self**. More specifically, at various points in the offence phase, the offender perceived some words or action of his partner to be threatening to his self-esteem. Self-esteem for the purposes of this phase of the model refers specifically to the offender's perception of his own worth or value in relation to the relationship. The following extract illustrates this idea:

Yeah and I just wasn't going to let her leave. I said stop that, we're committed here. She tried to pack her gear and leave the house and I said to her, you are not even going to leave the house. I felt like I'd been treated like a piece of garbage cos she was the only one that I ever even tried to treat like a lady.

Interpretation by the offender of his partner's action as **threatening to his sense of self-worth** is seen to lead to an increase in **energising negative affect**, predominantly anger. This is the second factor which overlies this phase of the model.

Increasing energising negative affect refers to an increase in emotions such as anger, frustration, annoyance, humiliation. These are considered energising in the sense

FIGURE 3.3: PHASE 3: OFFENCE PHASE
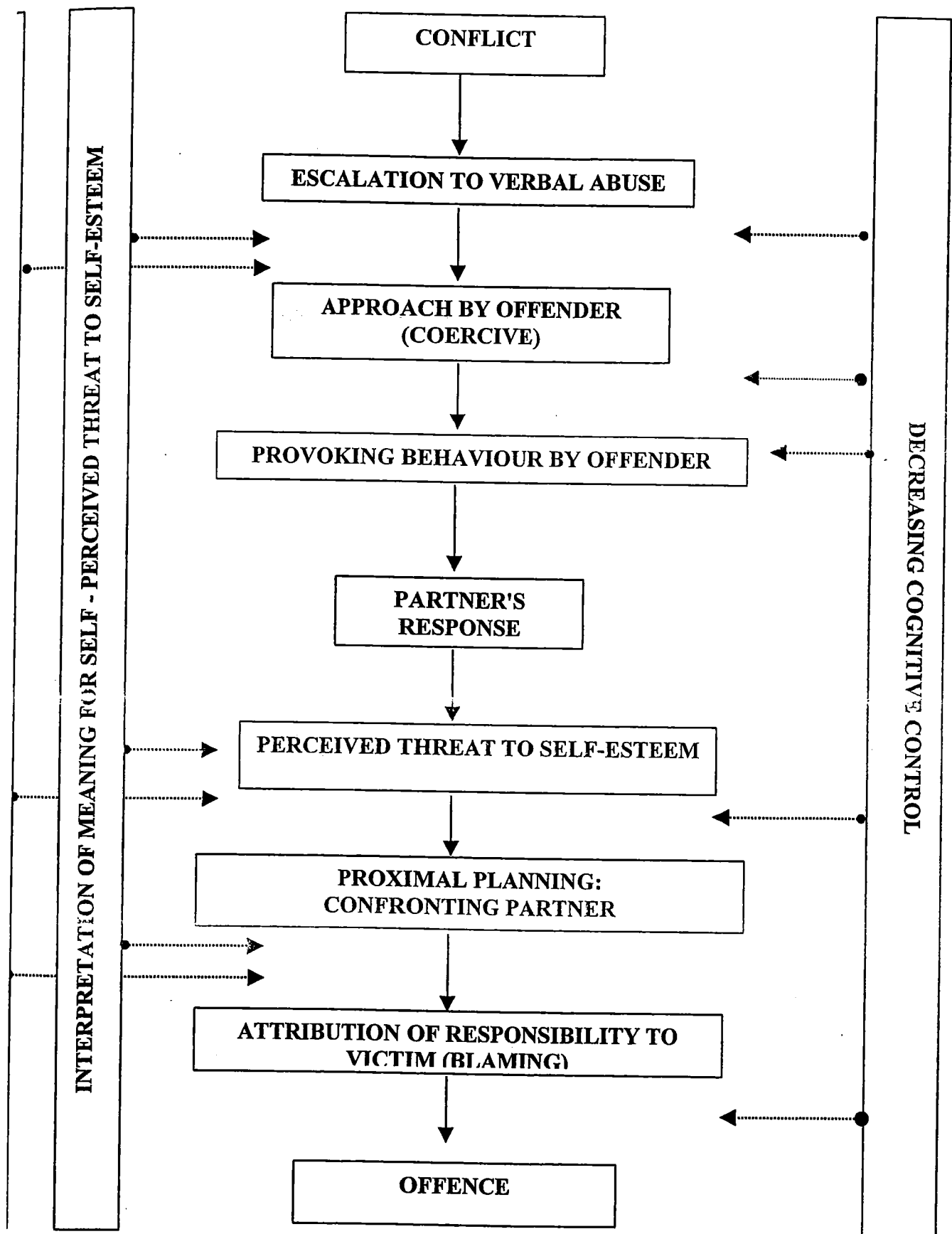
that they generally prompt action on the part of the person feeling them. Typically this is some form of expression of the affect. By contrast, other negative emotion such as sadness or misery can be seen more as de-energising or indicative of inaction. The following extracts provide an example of increasing energising negative affect:

> *As she was denying it I was getting angrier and angrier... at the instant I did it it was pure hate. Pure hate and anger, it really is.*

> *I was getting really annoyed. I was starting to get really pissed off with her. And then the frustration just got the better of me I suppose.*

In the context of the offence process being described here, there are certain points in the chain (which will be mentioned below) at which there is a distinct shift or increase in what, for most participants was described as anger. This negative affect appears to build to a point where expression is necessary. Whether this expression resolves this affect and results in a decrease determines whether the offender continues in the offence chain. For all participants, the commission of the offence was the final expression of this energising negative affect.

Decreasing cognitive control can be seen as a process operating in conjunction with the increasing negative affect and again, occurs at various points in the offence phase and influences the continuation of the offender through this phase. This process can be seen as the gradual removal of previous cognitive inhibitors which may have been in place to stop the offender being violent and may in fact have stopped him being violent in the past. An inhibitor mentioned by several participants is that of having witnessed their father being violent towards their mother, as illustrated below:

> *I always promised myself that I would never become like my father. I knew as a kid how disgusting it was.*

> *But what always goes through the back of my mind is what I saw as a kid. My old lady being smashed around and yeah, it made me feel sick.*

A further skill which the offender may have employed as a cognitive inhibitor whether consciously or otherwise was the avoidance or escape response described earlier as a typical self-regulatory style for managing conflict or stressful situations. Other cognitive skills may well be used to inhibit violent behaviour but these were the two identified consistently in this study.

A gradual **decrease in cognitive control** was identified as occurring at a number of points in the offence phase, in conjunction with and as a result of increasing negative energising affect. The following excerpt provides an example:

Oh no, I wasn't thinking, I was just getting angrier and angrier.

This decrease in control and the accompanying increase in negative affect results in the detachment of the previously inhibitory strategies outlined above. This then makes it more likely that the offender will rely on previously learnt habitual behaviours, for example, resorting to violence. Such behaviours generally arise from early learning situations and are well ingrained. Given the background factors identified as relevant for these offenders, violence seems a likely outcome of this decrease in cognitive control.

Offence Phase

The offence process was found to originate in conflict between the offender and his partner. This conflict frequently took the form of an argument regarding the relationship and surrounding issues, for example, unfaithfulness in the relationship, access to children, and amount of time spent away from the home. An example of this is provided by the following excerpt:

> *Well, we used to fight quite often actually. A lot of pressure was going on with the kids behaviour and different values of bringing up the kids. It always felt as if the kids were involved you know.*

As mentioned in the Lead-Up Phase of the model, conflict was a consistent feature of the perpetrators' relationships. The particular conflict which can be seen as an initial trigger leading to the index offence is different to previous conflicts because in this

case, the perpetrator is prevented from or chooses not to implement his typical self-regulatory/ conflict resolutions strategy of avoidance or escape. With the continuation of the conflict, there is an **increase in energising negative affect** (which typically takes the form of anger but could also be frustration, humiliation) and the subject matter of the argument shifts from resolution of the topic under discussion to more personal, wide-ranging insults.

This **escalation to verbal abuse** is interpreted by the perpetrator as **threatening to his self-esteem** and results in a further **increase in negative affect,** typically anger. An illustration of this escalation to verbal abuse is provided by the following:

> *Things got really nasty between us, you know, she would say things about my sexual performance, me about her, the things would get nastier and nastier.*

At this point of escalation, the offender again is prevented from or chooses not to employ his typical conflict response style and instead adopts an **approach** response to his partner. This indicates more **coercive** action on the part of the offender and can be considered the initiation of an aggressive response. Whereas previously, his verbal abuse may have been retaliatory, there is now a shift such that the offender alters the focus of the abuse in an attempt to strike back at his partner for the previous perceived threats to himself. This alteration is illustrated when considering the previous extract, this participant then went on:

> *then I started saying how glad I was her brother was dead.*

This **approach** response sees a shift on the part of the offender (whether overtly or covertly) away from any attempts at conflict resolution and can be viewed as early preparatory action for the later offending. This alteration of response style is prompted by his **increasing energising negative affect** and can be seen as an illustration of the offender's gradual **decrease in cognitive control.**

The next stage of this process sees a continuation of the offender's newly adopted response style. This stage sees a shift from the attempted maintenance of the coercive interaction by verbal abuse to some **provoking behaviour** on the part of the offender.

This has taken the form of threatening phone calls, attempting to detain his partner, or damaging or threatening to damage some of his partner's property. **The partner's response** then becomes a crucial variable at this point in the offence chain. Consideration of the data reveals that at this point, the partner would generally attack the offender, either physically or in some cases with threats to leave or remove something of value to the offender, for example, children. This is illustrated by the following:

> *and she said 'You're never ever going to get access to Jason'.*
> *Then things got right out of hand, she tried to shove a glass in my face.*

This action on the part of the eventual victim was again perceived by the offender as a **threat to his self-esteem.** At this point, there is again, a significant **increase in energising negative affect** which is paralleled with **decreasing cognitive control** and the offender moves into what can be considered the immediate preparatory or **proximal planning** phase. This stage of the process sees the offender directly **confronting his partner** with the implied goal of resolving the situation but only on the offender's terms (which at this point generally consists of some kind of harm to their partner). For example, with reference to the glass incident above:

> *When she tried to glass me, that was enough.*

Further excerpts provide examples of partners' responses:

> *And we were lying in bed one night and she tried to stab me with a pair of scissors, she just reached over and bang! She got the waterbed.*

> *The worst thing was she slashed the tyres on my bike.*

Having no knowledge of the offender's terms for resolution and given the heightening negative affect and decreasing cognitive control exhibited by the offender, it becomes virtually impossible for the partner to respond in any manner that would result in a peaceful resolution.

The final stage of this process prior to the actual offence taking place sees the offender engaging a disinhibitory tactic, **externalising responsibility** for what he is about to do. In other words, blame is placed on his partner. This allows the offender to avoid any negative feelings towards himself and instead direct further negative affect towards his partner. For example:

.....as far as I was concerned, she was trying to kill me.

The only reason I would hit a partner is if they hit me first. I call it survival skills.

It happened because she used to put me down in front of the kids.

The culmination of this process is the actual **offence**. For most participants this consisted of physically attacking their partners, generally without the use of a weapon. There was some variety in terms of the length of the attack, ranging from a single punch, shove or kick to a beating, as illustrated below:

Yeah, we've had pretty big punch ups before and they wouldn't stop until... you know we'd go from one end of the house to the other, pretty full on punchups. Fighting the whole time.

And then I lost it and dragged her outside and beat the crap out of her.

....and I picked up a fish slice and whacked her on the leg with it, she ran to a girlfriends next door and rung the police.

3.2.4 PHASE 4: POST-OFFENCE PHASE

Figure 3.4 outlines the post-offence phase of the offence process model. While not part of the process itself, the offender's **awareness** or lack of, of what he did, impacts on how soon after the offence the initial **evaluation** takes place. The following excerpt illustrates an example where the evaluative process was delayed:

FIGURE 3.4: PHASE 4: POST-OFFENCE PHASE
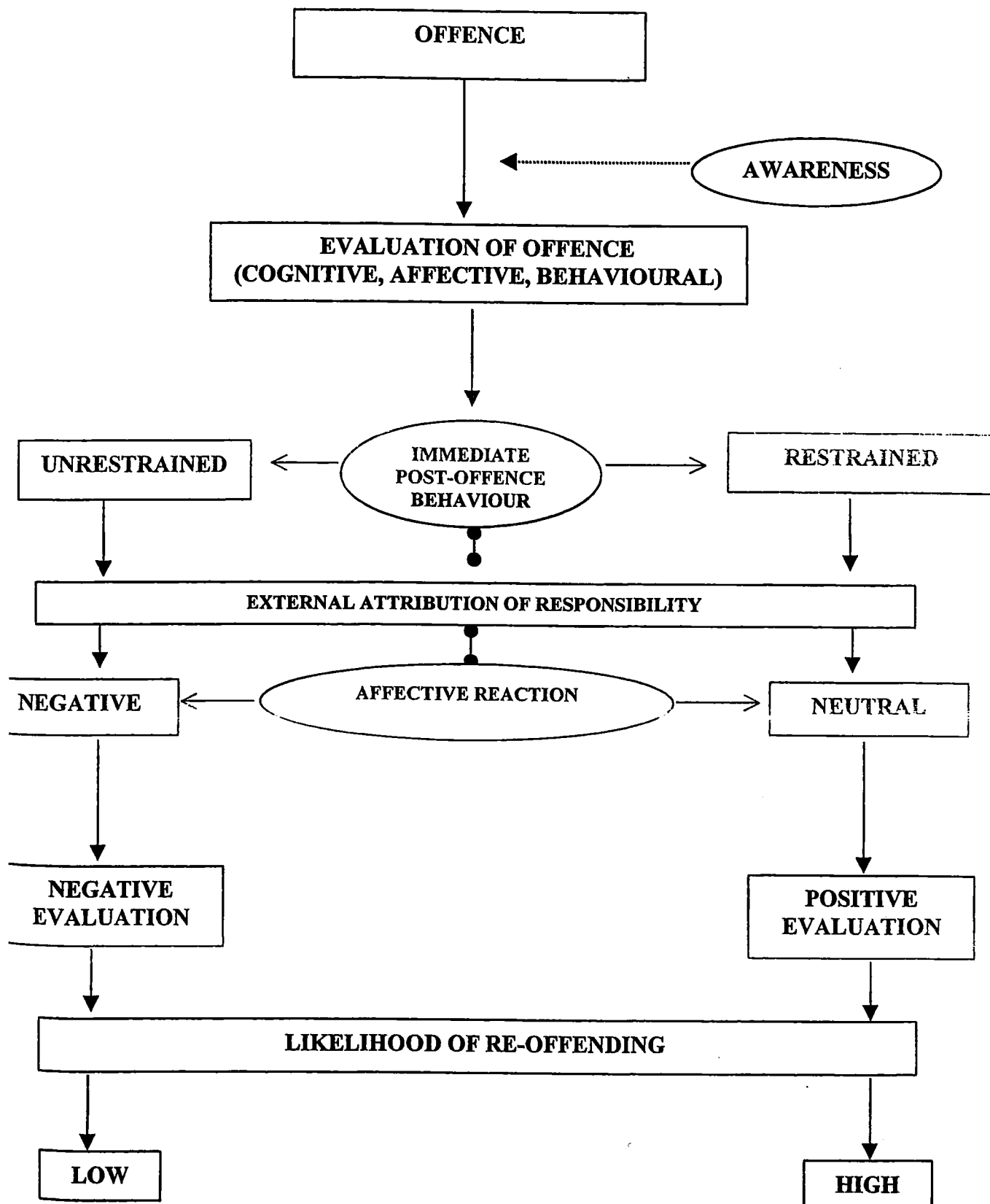
Well, I can't actually remember hitting her. But I did. I can remember, dragging her to the doors and then M coming out at the end of it all, and it being split up. I just remember waking up the next morning and seeing her lying beside me.

The next example illustrates an offender who was aware of what he had done:

I wasn't taking any chances, I hit her, I actually decked her out, I only hit he once. But it was a good one.

Depending on the offender's **awareness** of what he did, at some point, generally between minutes and a number of hours after the offence, he moves into the **evaluation stage.** This stage incorporates **post-offence behaviour, attributions of causality** and for some, an **affective reaction.** These three components combined result in an overall **positive** or **negative evaluation** of the offence by the offender.

In relation to the offender's **immediate post-offence behaviour,** from the data gathered here, it appears that this ranges between restrained and unrestrained. An example of each follows:

And then I walked out and the Police were there and they went in.

And then I went mad with the knife. I cut all the clothes in the house and I cut the car, the seats in the car, the curtains, the carpet, the lounge suite, all her clothes, all my clothes, I was just wild, insane.

In relation to post-offence behaviour it appears that the more restrained behaviour is more likely to result in a positive evaluation of the offending. For example, the offender whose statement was used above to illustrate restrained post-offence behaviour goes on to state:

It was my way of releasing without being what I consider to be violent.

This statement suggests that the offender found his actions to be positive or rewarding in the sense that they allowed him to release his negative feelings and

resulted in a reduction of the tension that he was feeling. By comparison, unrestrained behaviour by the offender, post-offence, suggests an initial maintenance rather than a reduction in the levels of negative affect experienced. This would effect the evaluative process and suggests the offender would follow a negative evaluative perspective. For example, the offender who described his unrestrained behaviour above then goes on to state:

> *Oh yeah, as soon as I'd done it, I straight away thought oh Jesus! Look what I've done! I was so hurt, felt so remorseful. Just completely gutted.*

Whether the post-offence behaviour is restrained or unrestrained also has an influence on the offender's consideration of the consequences of the offending. The influence occurs in respect of the temporal relationship between the offence and the evaluation process. An offender whose initial post-offence behaviour is restrained appears to display a more immediate awareness of the consequences of his actions. For the offender whose behaviour is unrestrained, this awareness is delayed.

As regards **attributions of causality** that occurred as part of the evaluative process, the data suggest that the offender attributes responsibility for his offending to external factors, more specifically his partner. This attribution appears to contribute to both negative and positive offence evaluations. The following extracts provide an example of firstly a negative evaluation and a positive evaluation both with externalising of responsibility:

> *In the morning when I seen her, I was just devastated, I was just disgusted. But, (pause) I felt there was some justification. If she had had just left me alone....*

> *She had this black eye and, I was quite happy about that. I thought it was fairly fair. I've never gone out of my way to do a violent thing, I never instigated the violence. My partner always did.*

This **externalising of responsibility** to the partner appears to be linked specifically to the offender's perception that he was provoked or that his partner's

behaviour just prior to the offence taking place meant that he was justified in the action he took. Yet, as illustrated in the offence phase, the partner's action which is supposed to justify the offence taking place can in fact be identified itself as a reaction to initially provoking behaviour by the offender.

The offender's **affective reaction** comprises the final ingredient in the evaluative stage. What emerged in this study was that rather than experiencing a positive or negative emotional reaction post-offence, it appears that some individuals experienced a negative reaction while others appeared not be aware of an emotional reaction to the offence. Some examples follow:

Negative: *I was very hurt, I felt terrible...I was disgusted, I wished I could have killed myself.*

I felt so guilty, I was wild, angry with myself, so pissed off with myself.

Neutral: *I was thinking I was a complete idiot for ever having trusted her.*

I just got on my bike and went round to my parents place and said I'm going away for a couple of days, G and I split up.

It was quite funny, really. I was driving down the road and she ran after me for a short distance, it must have looked quite, comical (laughs),

The culmination of post-offence behaviour, externalising of responsibility and affective reaction result in an offender emerging with an overall either negative or positive evaluation of the offence. It was found in this study that the offender that emerges on the negative evaluative perspective is likely to experience feelings of remorse, guilt, disgust at himself and possibly consider self-harm. By comparison, the offender that emerges with a positive evaluation of his offending lacks remorse, feels justified, rewarded and even relieved.

The final phase of the post-offence stage of the model is the **likelihood of re-offending**. Whether an offender is considered high or low at this stage can be seen as related to the pathway they have taken through the post-offence stage, that is, the

negative or positive. Those offenders considered to hold a negative evaluative perspective are considered to be at low risk for re-offending and are more likely to be committed to avoiding such offending in the future. Those for whom the evaluation is positive are seen to be at high risk for future offending of this type and indeed may have specifically stated an intention to re-offend.

The outcome of this post-offence stage model is not considered a finishing point. Rather, the individual's future risk for re-offending feeds back into his existing background factors and may result in a change in existing skills, beliefs or attitudes. The following excerpt demonstrates for an offender that followed a negative evaluative path, how the index offence became an reference point for future conflict in the relationship:

> *With N I used to leave, because I'd get so angry and I always swore that if things got that bad like they did that time, that I would leave. That's what I used to do, just leave.*

4   DISCUSSION

The results of this study suggest that conceptualising domestic violence as a process offers a fresh perspective in the search to understand why some men abuse their female partners. This offence process model, while preliminary in nature, allows not only for consideration of existing research within this framework, it also enables the identification and opportunity to investigate further, psychological constructs which are, as yet, unconsidered in the attempt to understand domestic violence. The following discussion will outline where this model fits with existing research, what the clinical implications of this model are, limitations of this study and finally what this model can offer in terms of future research.

4.1   EXISTING RESEARCH AND COMPONENTS OF THE MODEL

Several of the existing research findings on domestically violent men, as presented in the introduction to this study, can be encompassed in the offence process model. In examining how background factors impact on contextual variables, as well as the offending itself, the social learning theory proposition of violent behaviour being learned by observation and modeling, has applicability. Interview data demonstrated repeatedly the vividness of recall of incidents of violence from childhood for these offenders. Although these were stated by the offenders to have an inhibitory effect, their actions reflect the result of the intergenerational transmission of abuse.

Bandura's (1973) suggested 'neutralising tactics' are also encompassed in the model presented here. Predominantly, what emerged from analysis, was the justification of the use of violence by attributing responsibility to or blaming the victim. This type of neutralising tactics has been consistently noted across research with domestically violent men as discussed in the introduction. While the analysis here did not yield evidence for any of the other tactics discussed by Bandura (1973) or Stamp and Sabourin (1995) for avoiding accountability for their behaviour, some further investigation is warranted.

While existing research in relation to the construct of anger suggests that domestically violent men report higher levels of anger than nonviolent men, the model

presented here attempts to take this finding further by examining the offender's explanation for anger and the link to violence. In addition, during the offence phase, the acknowledgement of an increasing energising negative affect, which is often anger, yields a greater understanding of the role of anger in the offence process. The finding that not all batterers experience intense anger when offending is allowed for in this descriptive model. While the energising negative affect is most commonly experienced as anger, other negative emotions were recognised as fulfilling this energising role, for example frustration, and humiliation.

There appears to be some support for the finding that offenders have strict standards about relationships and that violence may be a result of upset about these not being met. In the model, references to the partner 'changing' in the build-up/context phase are an indicator of this. The impact of stress also emerged as an important contextual variable at this phase, although it is important to consider that in the offence process model, stressors were critical in terms of how they impacted on the relationship functioning rather than how they may have actually led to violence.

The retaliation or 'survival skills' theory on the use of violence by the offender, fits with existing research that states that domestically violent men have positive attitudes towards violence. However the model expands this existing research in terms of providing an explanation for these positive attitudes, both in terms of this theory and background factors.

The centrality of the relationship dynamic in the build-up/offence context phase of the model is supported in existing research using multivariate analyses in which martial distress has been consistently identified as a crucial variable in domestic violence. This relationship dynamic, while described in the offence process model, can also be placed in a theoretical context. Gerald Patterson's (1982) coercion model explaining the role of family interactions in the development of antisocial behaviour in children, could be applied in this context to the relationship dynamic. This model suggests that coercive interactions between parent and child arise when the child finds the demand of the parent aversive and responds in a way that is aversive to the parent, resulting in the parent giving in and complying with the child. Thus both parties are negatively reinforced and this pattern of coercive interaction is maintained and escalates as demands and aversive

techniques increase over time. While this model is intended to explain parent-child interactions, it is a small stretch to conceptualising the relationship dynamic evident in the offence process model in this way. Both parties are negatively reinforced for avoidance of conflict resolution but this also leads to an escalation of demands and aversive techniques towards each other. Future investigation of this type of coercive interaction is warranted, particularly in relation to solving conflict.

At the offence and post-offence phases, some support for the cognitions of control and power playing a role is evident. In the offence phase, this refers to the offender's experience of losing control. This is described as decreasing cognitive control and examination of the behavioural components of this phase suggests that these all represent, in some way, an attempt by the offender to re-assert the control perceived as lost. Again, in the post-offence phase, restrained behaviour can be seen as an attempt to reassert control. Arguably, for those who follow the negative evaluative pathway, loss of control remains a feature at the post-offence phase and attempts to re-assert control do not emerge until the completion of the evaluative process.

A further finding to emerge from this model is that it appears possible that the overarching construct of decreasing cognitive control which emerges in the offence phase, can be likened to and appropriately considered a form of cognitive deconstruction (Baumeister, 1990). Cognitive deconstruction refers to " an attempt to avoid the negative implications of self-awareness in order to escape from the effects of particularly traumatic or stressful experience". (Ward, Hudson, & Marshall, 1995). This escape from self-awareness involves narrowing the focus of attention from abstract or higher levels to concrete or lower levels. This shift essentially detaches self-evaluative processes and hence prevents the individual from experiencing negative emotional states. This construct would appear to have application to the offence process model, in that decreasing cognitive control and increasing negative affect occur in parallel and as the individual moves to the lower levels of cognitive deconstruction, that is, around the time of the actual offence, the negative affect being experienced is resolved. Although further investigation is warranted with respect to domestically violent men, cognitive deconstruction appears to have utility in terms of the model developed here.

Attachment style is a characteristic of domestically violent men that has been recognised as significant in the literature. Predominantly, fearful and preoccupied attachment styles have been proposed in relation to domestically violent men (Dutton et al., 1994). The model presented here provides for attachment disruption with the offender and although this was not specifically pinpointed as a particular subtype, this disruption appeared to relate to a dismissive attachment style. The defining features of this style are a positive view of the self and a negative view of others. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) who defined this subtype suggest that individuals with a dismissive attachment style protect themselves against disappointment by avoiding close relationships and maintaining a sense of invulnerability and independence. Intimacy skills, or lack of them, which consisted of distancing techniques provide evidence of this attachment style.

Related to attachment style, is the description in the model in terms of the offender's self-esteem, high but unstable and vulnerable to threat. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) suggest that in a dismissive style, " people downplay the importance of others whom they have experienced as rejecting and are thereby able to maintain high self-esteem" (p.241). Baumeister, Smart, and Boden, (1996), have investigated the relationship between self-esteem and the use of violence. They suggest that unstable high self-esteem may be most prone to encountering threats and hence to resulting in violent behaviour by that individual. The study conducted by Prince and Arias (1994) examining desirability of control and perceived control was one of the few to investigate high self-esteem. Their finding that individuals with high self-esteem, high desirability of control and low perceived control were more prone to domestic violence appears to be supported by the offence process model.

It seems then, that the variable of high self-esteem described in the model has some basis in existing research but there has been little research specifically relating it to domestically violent men. Given that research attempting to establish a link between low self-esteem and domestic violence has been inconclusive, investigating the links with high self-esteem may provide a more fruitful avenue of research.

A question that emerges from existing research is; where, if at all, do the identified subtypes of domestically violent men fit in this model? This model has

brought together similarities between offenders but it important to recognise, that further evaluation may allow for the delineation of distinctly different pathways. The aggression continuum proposed as part of the background factors can be seen as an initial attempt at examining potentially different pathways. The negative/positive pathways in the post-offence phase could also be seen as a further acknowledgement of differences between offenders. This study overall can not be said to support subtypes in the form of different offence pathways. It may be possible that different subtypes, does not necessarily mean that these men have different ways of carrying out their offending.

In examining the structure of the post-offence phase that has emerged, it appears possible that the negative and positive pathways and the factors that comprise them may relate to the two types of coping behaviour proposed by Lazarus (1993) to explain how individuals respond to threatening situations. These two types are emotion-focused and problem-focused and arguably can be likened to the negative and positive evaluation pathways. The result of emotion-focused coping is that the individual will re-interpret the meaning of the event. This could be likened to an offender with a negative evaluation of his offending who decides that he will not offend again. The problem-focused coping sees the individual appraising the situation and acting accordingly. This could fit with an offender who uses aggression instrumentally, does what he believes needs to be done, and as a result evaluates the offending positively. Again a preliminary suggestion, this warrants future research.

Finally and most importantly, this offence process model must be compared with the process model proposed by Walker (1979) that has guided so much research in the last twenty years. While these two models are different in terms of the information providers, some similarities do emerge. In terms of the concept of process, while not temporally narrow, Walker's model must be considered narrower than that proposed here, in that it does not capture any consideration of background variables. While this would not be expected given that victims would generally not have access to a lot of this information, it does mean that the model proposed here may be more useful in terms of establishing links with past and current behaviour.

Walker's tension building phase can be likened to and has a lot of similarities with the build-up/context phase of this model. Likewise, the acute battering phase offers

superficial similarities to the offence phase of this model. The concept of discharge can be likened to the increasing energising negative affect proposed here but Walker's model does not describe this phase in as great a detail or in terms of delineating the steps that are gone through that result in the offence. Walker's honeymoon phase only appears to fit with the current model in so far as the offender moves through the negative evaluative pathway. Those that move through the positive pathway, would be unlikely to display the contrite behaviour evident in this phase of Walker's model.

To conclude this section, it would appear that as regards existing research, this model appears to incorporate a number of important findings. What is probably more important however, is that the development of this model has resulted in the application of new psychological constructs to the area of domestic violence. This has important implications for future research which will be discussed below.

4.2   CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS

The model developed in this study has important implications in terms of intervention with domestically violent men. As mentioned in the introduction, the development of an offence process model for child molesters (Ward et al., 1995) led to significant break-through in terms of intervention with this group of offenders. The important ramification for this in terms of domestic violence offences, is that if it is possible to get an offender to identify the process that he goes through in offending, then it should also be possible to identify points where the offender can learn to exit the process and hence prevent further offending.

Current treatment packages which focus on skills training components, could well benefit from the identification and utilisation of an offence process, both in terms of providing an explanation of what occurs in offending and providing a rationale for specific interventions as "disrupters to the process". As regards these particular intervention strategies, it would appear that several variables can be identified from the offence process model which can be viewed as crucial to address when considering an intervention package.

The first of these which it is important to address even prior to commencement of any intervention is the attributional style of the offender. Externalising responsibility for

offending is a variable that occurs at a number of phases in the offence process and may preclude the effectiveness of any intervention. The other variables which can be seen as crucial to address in any intervention programme are the offender's self-esteem, dismissive attachment style, lack of emotional awareness and conflict resolution deficits. The latter two could be addressed in skill components of an intervention package and to some extent the latter is already a component of existing treatment programmes. Enhancing emotional awareness appears to have received little intervention attention and it needs to.

It is important to recognise that it is crucial to address self-esteem and attachment style issues in order to effectively engage an offender in treatment. Without addressing these issues, adherence with treatment is likely to be difficult at best. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) for example, suggest that dismissively attached individuals may be so much less invested in other people that they would likely refuse to engage in any treatment package that involved exploration of interpersonal interactions (which is an important feature of existing intervention packages).

What emerges from the model presented in this study is that new suggestions emerge for enhancing current intervention strategies which may have importance both in terms of components of intervention but also in terms of motivational issues for offender participation.

4.3   LIMITATIONS

Several issues warrant consideration here which provide an appropriate caution to interpreting this model and its implications. The first of these relates to the participants in this study. As mentioned, all were incarcerated and were either currently or had, in the past, served sentences for domestic violence. A number of issues can be raised here. Firstly, it is questionable how representative these men are of individuals in the community who were not incarcerated for domestic violence and indeed, those individuals who were not even arrested for such offending. Drawing exclusively from a prison setting has advantages in terms of the availability of participants but it has disadvantages in that generalisability is difficult.

The influence of being in a prison setting must also be considered. It is possible that these participants may have more antisocial tendencies generally, not just specifically in relation to domestic violence, than domestically violent men in the community. It would seem possible to argue that these participants may represent one end of the continuum in terms of severity of domestic violence offences. Firstly, they could represent the more severe group of offenders because they were actually incarcerated for their offending. But secondly, they could also fall at the less severe end of the continuum. Because of New Zealand's mandatory sentencing laws, arrest results in incarceration, these offenders are given less opportunity for further offending and the possibility of facing further prison sentences may act as a deterrent.

As is evident here, several explanations can be offered as to why this sample may not be representative of domestically violent men as a whole. An additional point to note is the small number of subjects used in this study. Again this may limit the generalisability of the model developed. It would be possible to rectify both the issues relating to generalisability, the type and number of participants, by undertaking an evaluative study incorporating a larger number and wider range of subjects.

A further limitation to this study relates to the information obtained through the interview process. In some cases, aspects of narratives lacked sufficient depth. This resulted in inclusion of potentially relevant variables but only to the extent that they were identified. More in-depth description was not possible. Given that this model is preliminary at best, future attempts to evaluate it could gather more in-depth information in relation to already identified constructs.

A further limitation to this study, that has been mentioned previously in relation to studying domestically violent men (Holtzworth-Munroe et al., 1997) is that the data collected here, is, by necessity, retrospective. It is questionable that some of the constructs that are described in the model may have arisen as a result of the offending. The model does account for a feedback loop in that it is recognised that the post-offence evaluation result may effect previous background factors. Hence it is important to be aware that the temporal portrayal of this model may have limitations.

Leading on from this, it is also important to recognise that the participants index offences' occurred at varying times in the past. Thus it is important to bear in mind the

possibility that the offender's recall of the offence may result in overemphasis of some aspects of offending and neglect of others.

Finally, qualitative methodologies are receiving increasing attention in psychological research as mentioned previously by way of introduction. They are still, however, not without difficulties, particularly where some deviation from the strict protocol is attempted. In Grounded Theory, the reliability of the categories and later, the model which emerges is based on two factors, grounding the categories in the data and using independent raters to establish categories. In this study, the raters worked in conjunction hence inter-rater reliability cannot be established at this point. Again, this problem could be addressed by undertaking an expansion of this preliminary investigation.

4.4   FUTURE RESEARCH

The preliminary investigation presented here results in potentially numerous suggestions for where this model could point us in terms of future research. Salient considerations for future research will be considered here.

Firstly, it is important to recognise the preliminary nature of this study, hence any future research attempting to expand on it, should look more in depth at each of the phases proposed. The descriptive and explanatory power of each phase could be enhanced by gathering data with a specific focus on each phase. An example of this is the background factors. It is anticipated that it should be possible to expand on the descriptive nature of this phase by actually devising relationships between the variables identified.

A further area that could be considered in terms of looking at the social validation of the model would be to not only conduct a group of interviews with offenders but also conduct collateral interviews with their victims. This would yield more in-depth information about the occurrence of events in the process.

Arising from the previous discussion integrating existing research and the components of the model, several psychological constructs emerged as being potentially significant which have not as yet been investigated with reference to domestically violent men. These include high self-esteem, dismissive attachment style, cognitive

deconstruction and the possibility of emotion-focused versus problem-focused response style.

In addition, further examination is needed of the possibility of there being different pathways to this type of offending. As mentioned earlier, the post-offence phase contains opposing pathways, and it is questionable whether such a delineation could occur in earlier phases of the model. Some application of the identified subtypes of offenders is needed to establish the nature of any interaction between these subtypes and the process of domestic violence.

Related to this, is the consideration that must be given to the cultural relevance of the model. This model is potentially limited by its focus within one culture, hence application of this model to other cultures to establish its workability is essential. In the event of this not being the case, further preliminary models could be developed for distinct cultures, employing culturally sensitive methodologies.

A further area for future research which emerges from consideration of this model is the examination of the differences that occur in situations where the offender does not proceed to the offence phase. In-depth analysis of the offender's thoughts and actions at the point where he moves away from offending may reveal another process in motion, for example, he could be mentally simulating offending. Identification of any such factors may have important ramifications for future design of intervention programmes.

Finally, in considering future research, the development, implementation and evaluation of an intervention package based on this process model would be important because ultimately, while explaining an offence is important, it is what can be done to prevent it happening that is important. Some of the suggestions made for intervention packages earlier could be utilised in the design of a new programme.

4.5 CONCLUSION

To conclude, the descriptive model of the offence process in domestic violence presented in this study can be viewed as a preliminary attempt at a new conceptualisation of this offence. While the limitations of this study are acknowledged, it is important to recognise that this model and future studies investigating, evaluating and refining this model will enhance research in this area in a number of ways. It will provide a

framework for the evaluation of current causal explanations and also the development of new hypotheses to explain why some men batter their female partners. More importantly, in terms of reducing such offending, this model has the potential to alter current conceptualisations of effective intervention packages.

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APPENDIX A: LETTER OF APPROVAL

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13 August 1998

Sarah Drummond
C/o Dr S Hudson/M Barnes
Department of Psychology
UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY

Dear Sarah

The Human Ethics Committee advises that your research proposal **"A Descriptive Model of the Offence Process in Domestic Violence"** has been considered and approved.

Yours sincerely

Isobel Phillips
Secretary

APPENDIX B: INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS

OFFENCE PROCESS STUDY: INFORMATION SHEET

You are invited to participate in a research project looking at the process of offending in domestic violence.

The aim of this project is to describe the process of such offending from the offender's viewpoint. This will involve looking at thoughts, feelings, behaviours and other significant factors at the time of offending.

Information such as age, ethnicity, employment/education history will be required. It is expected that this information can be obtained from your Department of Corrections file. Your participation in this project will involve completing four written questionnaires and an interview. The total time required will be approximately 1 hour. The questionnaires will look at personality, attitudes and behaviours. The interview will involve you answering questions about your past domestic violence offences and will be recorded on audio tape. It is possible that when discussing these past events you may experience some distress.

The results of the study may be published, but you may be assured of the complete confidentiality of data gathered here; your identity will not be made public without written consent.

To make sure that data collected is confidential, each participant will be assigned a code which will be used to identify his tapes, notes taken from interviews and his answers to the questionnaires.

This project is being supervised by Dr. Maureen Barnes and Dr. Steve Hudson who can be contacted through the University of Canterbury. Any concerns you may have about your participation in this study may be directed there.

This project has been reviewed by the University of Canterbury Ethics Committee.

OFFENCE PROCESS STUDY: CONSENT FORM

I .... have read and understood the
description of the above-named project. On this basis I agree to participate as a
subject in this project, and I consent to publication of the results of this project on
the understanding that my anonymity will be preserved.

I understand that I am a volunteer and can withdraw at any time, including withdrawal of
any information I have provided. The information that I provide will be used only for
this study unless I specifically request it to be made available to another person. The
limits of confidentiality have been explained to me.

I give permission for any information that is kept in Department of Corrections or
Psychological Services of Department of Corrections' files to be made available to the
researcher.

Signed: ....   Date:....................

Witness: ....   Date:....................

APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

- **OUTLINE OF STUDY- WHAT INTERVIEW WILL INVOLVE.**
    - Introduce idea that will be talking about incident that is typical of what happens for them, or could be the incident that lead to them being charged. I.e. Index or most typical offence.
    - Most of the discussion will centre around this incident and the relationship, interested in what was going on for him.

- **BACKGROUND INFO – BRIEFLY:**
    - FAMILY BACKGROUND (history of violence?)
    - RELATIONSHIP HISTORY (instability, promiscuity?)- attitudes/standards – why be in one? What's the point? What do you get out of it?
    - DEVELOPMENTAL/PSYCH/EMPLOYMENT

- **OFFENDING – RECURRENT? GENERAL CIRCUMSTANCES**
    - General style for dealing with conflict – what do you usually do? What usually happens when you get angry? Control?
    - Have you always been violent in intimate relationships?
    - Violence with males?
    - What usually leads to violence? What factors make you more likely to be violent?
    - Had you thought about hitting before? What has been different about the times you have been able to stop yourself?
    - Beliefs regarding offending: understanding of victim impact, empathy towards victim
    - Planning – proximal; distal; impulsivity

    MOST TYPICAL OR INDEX OFFENCE

- **DETAILS OF RELATIONSIP UNDER DISCUSSION:**
    - Nature of the relationship? Defacto, marriage, still currently together?
    - How long were/have you been together? (dependency, affection, rules in r/s?)
    - Any children? From past or this relationship?
    - How would you describe your relationship?
        - How often did you fight – verbally/physically?
        - What were arguments about usually? I.e. stressors in relationship. How did you usually handle arguments?
        - What was/is good about the relationship?

- **BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER – LOOKING AT:**
            BELIEFS,

INTERPRETATIONS
ATTITUDES
EXPECTATIONS

AT DIFFERENT POINTS IN THE OFFENCE CYCLE.

- **PRIOR TO INCIDENT – ANTECENDENTS:**
  - What was going on for you around the time? – Work, Partner, Family, Other Stressors?
  - In week prior? In day prior? On day of?

  - What thoughts did you have about your partner? About yourself? Intrusive thoughts – controllable?

  - How were you feeling towards your partner?
  - Feelings towards self? Self-esteem?
  - Feeling within self – stable, in control, on edge?

- **WHAT HAPPENED –OFFENCE- DESCRIPTION OF THE BEHAVIOUR:**
  - Did you plan any of it?
  - What factors made it more likely that you would be violent? (e.g. substances – benefits from use)
  - What started things off?
  - Where were you? Who was around at the time?
  - What happened – try and describe things exactly as you remember them, as accurately as possible.
  - What was your partner doing throughout?
  - How long did it go on for?
  - What made you stop?
  - Did you plan it or was it impulsive?

- **THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS DURING THE INCIDENT:**
  - What were you thinking throughout? (Ask this for different points in the offence chain).
  - Thoughts about your partner? About yourself?
  - Were you able to control your thoughts?
  - How intense were the thoughts? Ruminations?

  - How were you feeling throughout? (Ask this for different points in the offence chain).
  - Feelings towards self? Self-esteem?
  - Feelings towards partner?
  - Feeling within self- stable, in control, on edge?
  - Were you able to control your feelings? Ruminations?
  - How intense were the feelings?

- **CONSEQUENCES/AFTERMATH:**
    - What happened afterwards? What did you do?
    - What did your partner do?

    - What were you thinking afterwards?
    - Thoughts about your partner? About yourself?
    - Were you able to control your thoughts?
    - How intense were the thoughts? Ruminations?

    - How were you feeling? Feelings towards self? Self-esteem?
    - Feelings towards partner?
    - Feeling within self- stable, in control, on edge?

    - Thoughts/feelings/behaviour further down the track? ...a few hours later; the next day; a week later?
    - How did the incident effect your relationship? Your feelings/thoughts? Her reaction to you?
    - Did this incident make it more or less likely that you would do it again? How?

- **LINK TO SUBSEQUENT OFFENCES :**
    - What factors/triggers made you more likely to offend again?
    - What factors made it less likely that you would offend again?
    - Links between offences.

APPENDIX D: RESULTS OF PSYCHOMETRIC ASSESSMENT

	PART.1	PART.2	PART.3	PART.4	PART.5	PART.6	PART.7	PART.8	PART.9	PART.10
MCMI-III 3-POINT PROFILE	Avoidant, Schizoid, Depressive	Antisocial	Self-defeating, Schizoid, Antisocial	Antisocial, Dependent, Self-defeating	Self-defeating, Negativistic, Antisocial	Antisocial, Aggressive, Negativistic	Antisocial, Aggressive, Narcissistic	Antisocial	Antisocial	Antisocial, Aggressive
MCMI-III Other Clinically Significant Results	Schizotypal personality, Anxiety, Post-traumatic Stress	Nil	Borderline personality, Alcohol/Drug dependence, Anxiety, Dysthymia	Drug and alcohol dependence.	Borderline personality, Alcohol dependence, Anxiety, Dysthymia	Borderline personality, Drug/Alcohol dependence, Anxiety.	Drug and alcohol dependence.	Drug Dependence	Drug and alcohol dependence.	Drug and alcohol dependence.
HTW (/30)	7	6	12	8	15	15	21	2	6	3
AIPV (/42)	39	27	35	34	31	26	17	35	26	25
CTS- Self										
Reasoning (/20)	6	15	17	0	11	15	9	10	13	5
Verbal Aggression (/25)	13	17	25	8	20	23	20	15	6	9
Physical Aggression (/25)	3	4	8	2	5	20	16	0	4	3

	PART.1	PART.2	PART.3	PART.4	PART.5	PART.6	PART.7	PART.8	PART.9	PART.10
CTS - Partner										
Reasoning (/20)	5	10	11	2	7	15	17	10	3	7
Verbal Aggression (/25)	16	25	25	10	15	9	16	12	23	11
Physical Aggression (/25)	21	23	18	6	3	25	11	4	14	9
CPQ										
Mutual Constructive Communication (/45)	29	28	31	27	29	20	20	29	19	28
Total Demand-Withdraw Communication (/54)	30	39	30	42	46	40	27	12	30	40
Man demand-woman withdraw (27)	7	17	15	22	19	16	13	6	9	19
Woman demand-man withdraw (27)	23	22	15	20	27	23	14	6	21	21
Role in demand-withdraw Communication (0=equal roles)	16	5	0	-2	8	7	1	0	12	2
Mutual Avoidance and Withholding (/27)	16	18	15	16	13	9	9	10	17	13