UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IMPACT ON CHILDREN DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN IN SOUTH AFRICA

By

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DECLARATION

I Keemera Govender, declare that this thesis:

(a) was composed by myself,

(b) is an original report of my research,

(c) work contained herein is my own except where explicitly stated otherwise in the text,

(d) and that this work has not been submitted for any other previous degree or processional qualification except as specified.

(e) the collaborative contributions have been indicated clearly and acknowledged.

(f) due references have been provided on all supporting literatures and resources.

Signature:

DEDICATION

To my loving parents,

Thank you for your support, patience and love.

To my mother, Mrs Puspagandhie (Pam) Govender

Thank you for seeing me through this adventure!

You have never left my side throughout this, and I am blessed by your unwavering love.

To my dad, the late Mr Sagadhaven Govender

Thank you for understanding me, for your love and care.

Dada, you started this with me. You were the best father anyone could ever ask for, although you are not here anymore to see me finish, your memory and blessing is a comfort for me knowing that you are forever my guiding angel.

My aunt, Nirmala Govender (PhD)

Thank you for your love, encouragement, motivation, and your push for tenacity ring in my ears.

I appreciate all that you do.

To my late grandparents

Mrs Sivapathy Govender, Mr Gengayan Govender, Mrs Muniamma Govender and Mr Perumal Govender, you are my guiding light and from an early age you have inspired me.

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ABSTRACT

This research is relevant to the examination of the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown, which is a public health concern. Domestic violence has been prevalent in South Africa before the COVID-19 lockdown. However, with the onset of COVID-19 and the lockdown measures that were implemented, the rate of domestic violence has increased, drastically. Domestic violence is not a new phenomenon as previous research has been done in this area, however, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic meant that more research questions needed to be unpacked. The Routine Activity Theory and the Situational Action Theory were used to understand the Dynamics of domestic violence on children. The stress of the pandemic impacted everyone as people were confined to their homes, which meant that there were changes in one's routines and situations. Parents had to work from home and children had to learn at home. In essence, this modus operandi led to the victimisation of children as victims and perpetrators shared the same spaces.

The pragmatic paradigm constituted the best fit in answering the key research questions. The convergent mixed-methods approach was used in to explore the cause-and-effect of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown. The data were selected through the collection of secondary data through a systematic review. For the review to be done secondary data was collected, analysed, and then merged to provide results. The qualitative notational approach was incorporated as the qualitative data contributed to the majority of the study, while the quantitative data only contributed minute amounts to the overall study. This research was very complex therefore both qualitative and quantitative data had to be collected because a single approach data collection would limit the understanding of the research problem. The research design was selected based on the paradigm that was used in this study. The concurrent triangulation research design was employed as the collected data were merged to address each research objective. The non-probability, purposive sample technique was implemented to select research material as data needed to be selected based on relevance and 'purpose'.

The overall image that emerged from existing literature has evidence about how domestic violence impact children. From the respective vantage points of the various researchers, there were many inferences made regarding this topic. Particularly, there has been definite research indicating that the lockdown posed the risk of domestic violence on children and that domestic violence does impact children during the COVID-19 lockdown period either mentally,

physically, or biologically. This has led to many challenges in children's lives. No South African legislation specifically protects children from domestic violence, however other legislative acts can be adapted to protect children from abuse. Many services that protect children from domestic violence abuse in South Africa are not prioritised, therefore the services have declined. The result of the COVID-19 lockdown has seen increasing numbers with regards to domestic violence in South Africa. However, the extent of the domestic violence cases has not been reported accurately. Therefore, the data cannot be reliable. The study provides insightful effective strategies that can be used to help South Africa and other countries to advance the research practice, as well as to help end domestic violence even when not in a pandemic situation.

The disruptive impact of domestic violence affects everyone as many countries are fighting through the COVID-19 pandemic. The lockdown caused irreversible effects on a child that became a victim of domestic violence as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. From the data gathered, domestic violence against children generates negative emotions for them. To protect children, there must be a collaborative approach to mitigate the issue of domestic violence against children. Effective strategies are discussed in this study to help victims of domestic violence. The overview of the study focused on understanding the risks associated with the COVID-19 lockdown, as social isolation had been seen to cause and impact children during the lockdown.

Keywords: Domestic Violence, Children, COVID-19, Social isolation, Lockdown

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COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CRASA	Communications Regulatory Association of Southern Africa
CSP	Civilian Secretariat of Police
DEA	Development Ecological Action
ICD	Independent Complaints Directorate
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RAT	Routine Activity Theory
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SAPS	South African Police Services
SAT	Situational Action Theory
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VAC	Violence Against Children
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This thesis is a systematic review mixed methods study. The researcher has identified that current domestic violence research studies tend to focus on gender-based violence, specifically its effect on women and family violence. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (2020a), the COVID-19 lockdown increased cases of domestic violence on women. However, this study focused on the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown. A convergent mixed methods design is used, as both qualitative and quantitative data was collected, analysed separately, and then merged. Chapter one introduced the study and presented the purpose statement, background of the study, research problem, research questions and research objectives. A brief explanation of the theoretical framework, location of the study, research design, sampling method, data collection, data analysis, and validity and reliability were also presented.

1.2 Context of the study

Social isolation induced by the COVID-19 lockdown has caused drastic negative effects on families, with increased domestic violence abuse risk towards children (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021). Domestic violence is prevalent in South Africa and has risen to alarming proportions during the COVID-19 pandemic (Weiner, 2020). The Minister of Police in South Africa, Bheki Cele, noted that in the first week of the implementation of the lockdown, there was a drastic increase of domestic violence complaints, with about 87 000 cases recorded in South Africa (Weiner 2020). This was confirmed by the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa, in his address to the South African Nation during the COVID-19 lockdown on 13 May 2020, who observed that, "there have been very disturbing reports of increased levels of gender-based violence since the lockdown started" (Ramaphosa 2020:4).

In addition, the COVID-19 lockdown has led to the closure of daycare centers and schools, which confined children at home. Therefore, children have been home-schooled and cared for by their parents or guardians (Alon, Doepke, Olmstead-Rumsey and Tertilt 2020:10). During the lockdown, family relationships played a significant role on children's quality of life. Family bonding, reforming of family relationships and togetherness within the family are the positive

results of the COVID-19 pandemic (Singh 2021:2). Living together in confinement means that parents and children get more quality time together as a family (Singh 2021:2).

However, the affirmative results of the COVID-19 pandemic have occurred for some families only. For other families who were unable to cope with living together in confinement, violence in households resulted. The situation became challenging for parents since the lockdown also resulted in job loss and financial strain (Alon et al. 2020:11). Parents also brought work activities home in an effort to try and work remotely, as workplaces were closed (Cluver, Lachman, Sherr, Wessels, Krug, Rakotomalala, Blight, Hillis, Bachmand, Green, and Butchart 2020:1). Working remotely at home while caring for their children and helping them with virtual schooling, was very stressful for many parents (Cluver et al. 2020:1). Parents had many things to worry about, while not knowing how long the situation would last (Cluver et al. 2020:1). The daunting prospect of completing work tasks as well as caring for their children could affect parents negatively, as they must worry about the many aspects of their children's lives, whilst keeping them busy and caring for the family (Cluver et al. 2020:1). This affects the family emotionally and mentally which could lead to domestic violence in the household.

Children therefore become victims of domestic violence by watching and hearing partner violence, or through child abuse (Vetten 2014:3). The lives of children were thus drastically altered due to the impact of COVID-19 lockdown on their parents who had to continue working from home whilst taking care of their children. The United Nations Children's Fund 2020; Haffejee and Levine 2020; Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander & Prijatelj 2020; UNICEF 2006; Boserup, McKenney & Elkbuli 2020; Peterman, Potts, O'Donnell, Thompson, Shah, Oertelt-Prigione and Van Gelder 2020; Piquero, Jennings, Jemison, Kaukinen and Knaul 2021, all acknowledge that the situation of being confined in homes for extended periods of time has led to the victimisation children.

Furthermore, as Khandale (2021:608) explains, the implementation of the COVID-19 lockdown led to the closure of school and work, which means that many children and parents were at home together. Many individuals within the family lost their jobs (Weiner 2020). Parents were emotionally affected due to loss of employment, leading to anxiety, depression, fear and stress (Weiner 2020). The uncertainties of the COVID-19 and their life situation casued a lot of anger, stress and resentment, which transformed the home enviroment into a

volatile place (Weiner 2020). Living together all the time and being unable to have the freedom they had prior to the COVID-19 became a source of disputes between parents and children, and directly led to domestic violence (Khandale 2021:608). The frustrations that parents experienced at home during the lockdown increased a child's risk of being abused (Khandale 2021:608).

Also, domestically abused children were unable to access the interventions of child protection authorities which protect them from the abuse (Khandale 2021:608). According to UNICEF (2006:3), children are the biggest victims of domestic violence. As Weiner (2020) elucidates, the reason for this is that children are unable to get away from their abuser. Researchers point to the downward spiralling of homelife, in which when a parent loses their job, they become anxious and vent their frustration on their partner, and their children who do not have any form of respite from the adults in the family.

Against this background, this systematic review aims to examine the data of domestic violence from previous studies and analyse incidents of domestic violence in family units and their effect on children. In South Africa, domestic violence incidents have increased drastically during the COVID-19 lockdown period. Citizens have been required to stay at home in order to lessen the spread of the virus. However, the COVID-19 lockdowns caused mental anguish, prompting abusive behaviour at home. Children were trapped and became victims of domestic violence or were traumatised by witnessing their family members being victims. Domestic violence threats at home are experienced either indirectly or directly by children. These traumatic experiences of domestic violence could affect the mental, physical, emotional state of children (Herrenkohl, Sousa, Tajima, Herrenkohl and Moylan 2008:89).

The qualitative aspect also in this study explores the ways in which domestic violence impacts on children during the COVID-19 lockdown; to assess if the legislation offers protection for children and to make recommendations which are effective to help children and families. Quantitative data was analyzed to determine if domestic violence cases increased during the lockdown. This was done by through a comparison of domestic violence statistics from the 2019 year compared to the 2022 COVID-19 lockdown. A convergent mixed methods design was used, as both qualitative and quantitative data was collected, analyzed separately and then merged. The theoretical frameworks discussed in this study are the Routine Activity Theory

which was developed by Lawrence, E. Cohen and Marcus Felson in 1979 (Miró 2014), and the Situational Action Theory which was created by Per-Olof Wikström in the late 1990s (Wikström 2019). These frameworks are used to explain prevalence of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown in South Africa.

The study sought to proffer effective strategies that would help children deal with domestic violence within their families during the COVID-19 lockdown. The research also includes the strategies and interventions that other countries have incorporated due to the COVID-19 lockdown. As Weiner (2020) observes, there is a great deal of difficulty in criminal and social responses especially during lockdown. Hence, rights and acts on interventions and protection towards individuals that need help are not enough to help them deal with their situation (Weiner 2020). The researcher notes that more needs to be done in terms of implementing these interventions, acts and strategies that are theorised. The public also needs to be made aware of the issues pertaining to domestic violence and socially driven action supporting abused individuals is vital (Weiner 2020).

Lack of effective strategies to combat domestic violence during a lockdown, especially in poorer countries without resources and money to deal with increased cases of domestic violence, could result in dire consequences (World Health Organization 2020a). Government intervention through acts and other strategies, as well as the invention of non-profit organisations, private sectors, or the civil society are critical (Weiner 2020). It is important to note however that "Domestic violence is not an issue that becomes locked-away during a lockdown" (Weiner 2020).

1.3 Purpose statement

The purpose of this research is to explore the consequences of social isolation on a family setting, with specific reference to children as victims of domestic violence during the COVID-19 lockdown. A conceptual design or a possible strategy as a response by government and other role players in order to ameliorate domestic violence towards children during the COVID-19 lockdown in South Africa is proposed. Furthermore, the study provides an understanding of how the legislation is implemented in South Africa, in order to address domestic violence challenges faced by children, especially during the COVID-19 lockdown.

1.4 Background and research problem

The researcher notes that domestic violence abuse towards children has been rising due to COVID-19 lockdown. Socioeconomic problems have increased stress levels among parents, leading to an increased risk of children becoming victims of domestic violence in their households (Cluver et al 2020:1). There is increased concern on the welfare of children in South Africa, due to increased domestic violence and abuse cases of children as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown (Haffejee and Levine 2020:3). The COVID-19 crisis is an unprecedented event which has put the world off-guard and is a traumatic experience for everyone especially victims of domestic violence. According to the President of South Africa, Cyril Ramaphosa:

> "The scourge of gender-based violence continues to stalk our country, as the men of our country declared war on the women. We have developed an emergency pathway for survivors to ensure that the victims of gender-based violence are assisted (Ramaphosa 2020:4)."

The home is seen as a place of comfort and relaxation away from the worldly negativity (UNICEF 2006:3). However, the lockdown causes even more harm to children that have a history of being abused (United Nations Children's Fund 2020). Such children now become more vulnerable as they are isolated with their abusers in the same household and can be victims of abuse both at home and online (United Nations Children's Fund 2020). Children in the abusive environment become fearful, and this can hinder their development and cause mental disorders later on in life (Khandale 2021:608). For other children that have not been abused before, the COVID-19 lockdown may create unfavourable conditions for them to be victimised and abused for the first time (United Nations Children's Fund 2020).

The COVID-19 lockdown regulations have increased domestic violence. The challenge is whether the government has implemented intervention strategies which can sufficiently address issues of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown. Furthermore, the problem also lies in the practicality of the South African legislation and whether it has been improved to address the unique circumstances in a way that help protect children who are victims of domestic violence during the COVID-19 lockdown. The increase in cases of domestic violence has also placed an additional burden on the cohort of mental health care workers.

1.5 Research questions

1. Does the COVID-19 lockdown pose a risk to children?

2. What is the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown?

3. What legislation is there to protect children during the COVID-19 lockdown?

4. Have cases of domestic violence increased as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown?

5. Which strategies can effectively help children overcome domestic violence abuse?

1.6 The objectives of this study are:

1. To examine if COVID-19 posed a risk to children during lockdown.

2. To assess the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown.

3. To determine the extent to which South African legislation help protect children during the COVID-19 lockdown.

4. To determine of the extent to which domestic violence cases have increased as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown.

5. To submit recommendations on effective strategies that help children overcome domestic violence abuse.

1.7 Review of literature

In December 2019, COVID-19 was identified in China, and while the virus was still at its earliest stages in China, it began to spread around the world due to population migrations (Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander & Prijatelj 2020:182). In order to save the lives of citizens, national borders were locked down, especially in countries where the virus was spreading rapidly. According to the Daily Maverick (2020), the COVID-19 lockdown caused an increase in reported cases of child abuse. The opening of schools brings hope that this rate will decrease (Daily Maverick 2020). According to Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander and Prijatelj (2020:182), children around the world suffer from abuse. The onset of the lockdown increased that figure due to the frustration and anger that some families face with being in each other's personal space.

Children need to feel safe and secure; they need a home that they feel themselves, a home that is violence free with parents that support and show unconditional love (UNICEF 2006:3). Exposure to domestic violence has deprived children of the thought of home as a safe environment (UNICEF 2006:3). The majority of children cannot discuss domestic violence and reveal that they are victims of domestic violence. Therefore, many children keep quiet, take the abuse, and suffer silently (UNICEF 2006:3).

Exposure to domestic violence affects the growth and development of children, either mentally or physically (Herrenkohl, et al. 2008:89). The hindrances of domestic violence to children's growth and development have long term consequences in adulthood (Herrenkohl et al. 2008:89). Children, especially babies, need the guidance of their mothers to provide understanding and structure during their developmental phase (Lundy and Grossman 2005:18). Domestically abused mothers are anxious and depressed, and their children feel their emotions, which would in turn affect them mentally (Lundy and Grossman 2005:18). Thus, domestic violence in homes results in psychological developmental challenges in children. These developmental challenges have a long-lasting impact on children's lives, as they could experience psychosocial problems including health issues, behavioural issues, and mental challenges well into their adulthood.

According to UNICEF (2006:5), an estimated number of 275 million children are victims of domestic violence in households. The number is an estimate due to the inadequateness and limitations of collecting domestic violence data (UNICEF 2006:5). However, the value is estimated to be much higher, as many more children are affected by domestic violence (UNICEF 2006:5). Echoing this statement, the rate of domestic violence is likely to be very high during the COVID-19 lockdown, considering the isolation rules that people had to follow.

The lockdown measures that were implemented at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic were ostensibly put in place to curb the increased the spread of the virus but in such circumstances many children were isolated at home and became vulnerable (UNICEF South Africa 2020). The abused children are usually afraid of the police and therefore do not report the abuse. In some instances, the children are unable to seek assistance from other structures, since they do not live alone and may not have access to a cell phone, public transport, or a doctor (Weiner 2020). In other cases where children are able to reach out for help and seek assistance, there

can be hinderances in those structures which are strained by the overwhelming increase in domestic violence cases during the lockdown (Weiner 2020). The structures can be understaffed or under-resourced.

According to Vetten (2014), there needs to be more research and development undertaken on violence that occurs within families, more especially domestic violence that co-occurs to children as a result of the intimate partner violence towards adults. Weiner (2020) explains that the interventions and Acts that are in place during the lockdown, are operational, but some structures are overwhelmed and strained by the increase in the number of domestic violence cases, the advice that individuals call in for and the number of calls received. In some instances, there is a challenge in reaching out for help because the help is not received by domestically abused children due to lack of resources and the safety concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Weiner 2020). It becomes complicated for children to report an abuser as in most cases they live with their abuser (Weiner 2020). The researcher notes that it is therefore vital that society becomes aware of the issues pertaining to domestic violence abuse against children and understand the physical and mental symptoms associated with it. The children have no safe spaces or escape options, which in turn lead to mental disorders, more abuse, and a range of other ways the child would be impacted negatively.

Responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and the National State of Disaster implemented by the President of South Africa should make sure that children as well are protected from any form of domestic violence or neglect (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:3). Various legislation and other responses to domestic violence during the COVID-19 lockdown are detailed in this study, including responses by the South African government and ChildLine South Africa. In addition, other international best practices dealing with mitigating factors to address domestic violence during the lockdown are explored. Unequivocally, there are many challenges that can arise from the impact of domestic violence on children.

1.8 Principal theories

The theoretical frameworks that were used in this research are:

1. Routine Activity Theory
2. Situational Action Theory

The Routine Activity Theory has been used for this research as domestic violence has become a regular activity in certain households, which have been affected by the COVID-19 lockdown. The relationship between the factors identified in the Routine Activity Theory and households which have suffered domestic violence challenges can be correlated.

Also, people have certain inclinations based on their situations. In this study, the Situational Action Theory provides the basis for the COVID-19 situation, which has resulted in the increase in domestic violence.

1.8.1 Routine Activity Theory

The Routine Activity was created by Lawrence, Cohen and Marcus Felson in 1979 (Miró 2014). The Routine Activity Theory is also known as the Lifestyle Theory (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:3). This theory is used in most research and is the most widely cited and useful theory (Miró 2014). It is used to understand the crime patterns, offenders' criminal patterns, and criminal victimisation (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:3). The Routine Activity Theory is unlike other theories that focus on the criminal's biological aspects, psychological factors, or social factors (Miró 2014). It looks at the crime being committed by criminals in relation to the space and time.

The Routine Activity Theory consists of three components in order for a crime to occur (Cohen and Felson 2009:318). These comprise of:

1. A motivated offender
2. A suitable target
3. Lack or absence of capable guardians

These three elements must be present in order for a crime to occur, and if either one or two of the components mentioned above is not present, then in many cases the crime cannot be completed and would be unsuccessful (Cohen and Felson 2009:318). In the research presented in this thesis, where social isolation causes an increased risk of domestic violence, this is due to all three elements being present in these households. Krishnakumar and Verma (2021:22) explain that due to social isolation whereby people live in the same home space, there is bound

to be a rise in the cases of domestic violence as the three components in the Routine Activity Theory converge.

The study also noted that the lifestyle factors, that occur due to the consequences of the implemented lockdown measures, can lead to unemployment, financial instability, and job security, and in turn leads the motivated abuser to perpetrate domestic violence (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:25). The three elements of the Routine Activity Theory can help understand the different factors that facilitate domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:23).

1.8.2 Situational Action Theory

This theory provides an understanding of an individual's criminal career, how they become involved, and the reason for engagement in these acts of crime (Wikström 2019:189). This theory is used to explain why certain crimes happen based on the situation and is also known as SAT. In order to understand the change in an individual's involvement in crime, an understanding of why crime happens, and the factors that cause people to commit crime, the Situational Action Theory is used. As Wikström (2019:189) elucidate, an individual's involvement in crime would always vary, and in doing so the way they conduct the crime would also vary. According to Wikström (2019:189), "People vary in their crime involvement, and among those involved in repeated offending, they vary in their pathways in crime." This is suggestive of the fact that individuals that have criminal inclinations select the type of crime that they want to participate in, based on the situation.

To understand why individuals, choose to engage in a specific type of crime, there needs to be a clear distinguished difference and understanding concerning causes and predictors of that specific outcome (Wikström 2019:190). There must be a good, credible reason as to why that crime had occurred based on the situation. The researcher explains that in situations of domestic violence, there has to be a plausible cause as to why the perpetrators are inclined towards committing the act of domestic violence to the child or any other individual. In other words, there must be a question asked based on the outcome of the criminal situation (Wikström 2019:190).

Cluver et al. (2020:1) explains that many couples living at home with children may not make enough money during this COVID-19 lockdown, and there are many more challenges associated with the lockdown as the challenges are intensified. This can cause incidences of domestic violence, which children can become victims of or to which they witness. In these instances, the perpetrators commit the act of crime as they fail to practice self-control, and also, they fail to live up to their own ethics, morals, and values (Wikström 2019:193). The theory states that every individual has their own morals and values and can make up their mind and distinguish between right and wrong – value based (Wikström 2019:193).

1.9 Location of the study

This is a systematic desktop review. Therefore, the study is not confined in any geographical area. However, emphasis has been placed on domestic violence cases in South Africa. South Africa has recorded an increased number of domestic violence cases during the COVID-19 lockdown which provides a plethora of information for this research topic. In addition, the researcher is based in South Africa and has access to daily reports of domestic violence through media reports and articles.

1.10 Research design

The study is a systematic review of secondary research or data, and incorporates a convergent mixed methods design, as both qualitative and quantitative secondary data was collected, analysed separately and then merged. This confirms that the principles of the convergent mixed methods design were applied to the collection of secondary data for the review process. Creswell and Clark (2017) advocate the convergent mixed methods design, which is a mixed-method data approach employed in this study by the researcher. The characterisation of the convergent design refers to the collection of qualitative and quantitative data in accordance with the same research question and objectives (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:261). According to Leedy, Ormrod and Johnson (2019), when the 'qualitative' aspect contributes with the most amount of information to the overall research, it is written in capital letters, and vice-versa. The 'quantitative' aspect contributed to a minute amount of data and, therefore, it is written in lowercase, since the quantitative data was embedded within the study.

In this study, the quantitative data consisted of the rates of domestic violence from the year 2019 to the year 2022 and was used to the test the theory of whether the increase in the domestic violence rates is due to the COVID-19 lockdown. The qualitative data, such as information from journal articles, books and the current news explored the current phenomenon of the lockdown, the impact of the lockdown on children, family relationships, the South African legislation and identify recommended effective strategies for addressing domestic violence towards children. The two types of data as mentioned above, are collected, and examined to bring greater insight into the problem (Creswell and Clark 2017:235). Figure 1.1 below is a representation of the convergent mixed methods design. The qualitative and quantitative methodology has been implemented in this research and is explained in chapter 4 in more detail.

Figure 1.1: The convergent mixed methods design QUALITATIVE (quantitative)
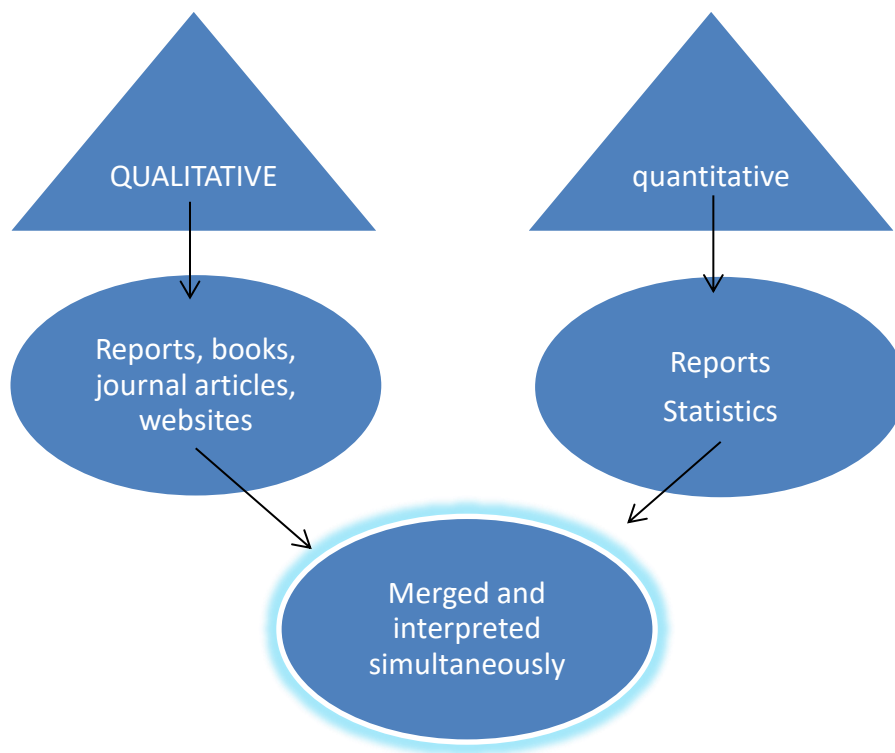
Source: Modified from Creswell and Clark (2017:126)

1.11 Sampling

The researcher utilised a sampling procedure known as Purposive/judgmental sampling. Purposive sampling is when the researcher selects material or literature with a specific purpose in mind and deliberately to the central research or key concepts (Creswell and Clark 2017: 262). The study focused on a systematic review of the impact of domestic violence on children. It incorporates secondary data analysis and, therefore, a purposive sampling technique is used to sample the material and not a specific sample population. The use of purposive sampling is only used for selecting data or material that is relevant to the research conducted.

1.12 Data collection

The information on the significant phenomenon in this study was collected and examined via secondary data (prior research), such as published sources, paper sources, electronic sources, reports, statistics, and so on. The qualitative data and quantitative data were collected and assessed. The qualitative data consisted of prior research and the quantitative data consisted of domestic violence statistics. The databases from which the qualitative data was collected are from research journal articles that have reports on case studies and statistics that relate to the phenomenon being studied in this systematic review.

The systematic review approach was used in this study to synthesise the results from other qualitative and quantitative research in order for it to be reported (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363). Systematic review refers to the way in which research methods for finding, selecting, and analysing reports for a particular research study are rigorous and explicit (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363). The systematic review was employed by the researcher in this study because any other type of methodology which requires face-to-face contact with people was very hazardous during the COVID-19 pandemic. The safety of the researcher and other individuals was taken into consideration for this study and therefore resulted in a systematic review to be undertaken.

1.12.1 Literature search

An exhaustive search for research articles was done using the following keywords: domestic violence, social isolation, children and domestic violence, family violence, violence, lockdown, impact, mental health, caregiving patterns, resilience, cope, increased or decreased, legislation,

effective strategies, and recommendations. These search item words were used in a combination with research questions to arrive with articles in the relevant databases. The data was collected from the articles, websites, data reports, and so on, and examined in order to extrapolate the relevant information needed for this research study.

1.12.2 Electronic databases

All secondary data would be publicly available. The known data-sources for the relevant articles were obtained from several databases, including Google, Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Wiley Online, and Science Direct, which are publicly available online.

1.12.3 Internet searching

The search engine google.com was utilised to find website articles or news articles that resonated with domestic violence and children. The keywords used were the same as stated above for the literature search. The systematic review in which the articles were evaluated are reflected in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Inclusion and Exclusion criteria for articles

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Inclusion Criteria	- Reports, books, journal articles, websites - Published between 2015 – 2022 - English written - Grounded theory - Selecting research that answers the defined questions. - Include Articles on children - Search terms: Domestic+violence+children+lockdown+impact - Literature from all geographical areas - Reviewed articles only	- Reports - Statistics - Published between 2019 – 2022 - All Geographical statistics

Exclusion Criteria	Dissertations • Dissertations • Published before 2015 • Not English	• Illegitimate statistic sources • Data before 2015

Source: Author's own

Figure 1.2: The data collection method
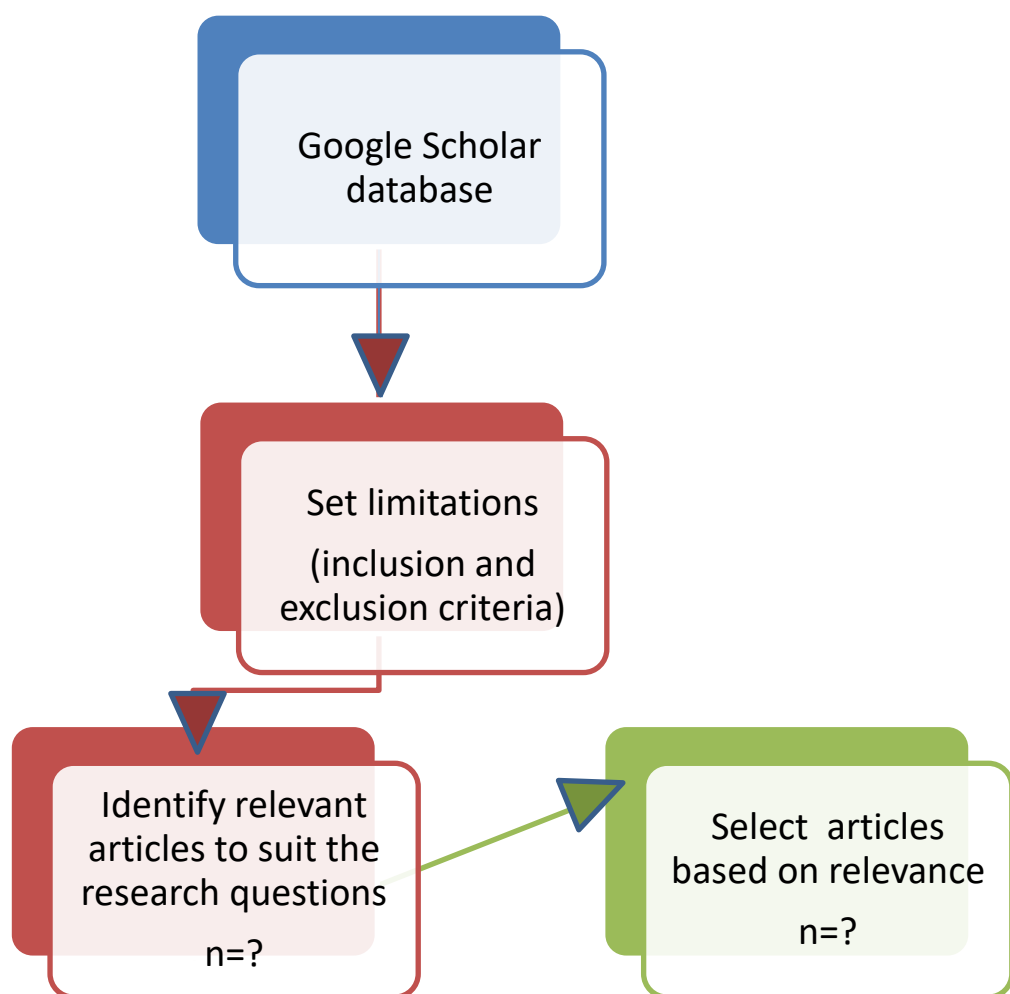
Source: Author's own

1.13 Data analysis

After the collection of data an analysis was done. The meta-analysis was not feasible as the data collection was more inclined to qualitative results. A synthesis of results was used as a method of data analysis to synthesise the findings from journal articles, reports, and so on. Due to the range of different journal articles that was selected, some which included case studies and others that are systematic journal articles, the researcher decided to synthesise the results as it was not feasible to use meta-analysis for this systematic review because the majority of the research was qualitatively inclined. The data analysis includes an examination of case studies, statistical data from other countries, and their relationship to the literature review and the theoretical frameworks to be used in the study. More importantly the data analysis includes the qualitative and quantitative data from the selected reports, and journal articles, and so on.

The analysis of data was done as follows:

- The selected articles were evaluated and analysed to compare with the research questions.

- Thematic analysis was done on all the research studies from the search results which correspond with the researcher's research questions.

- Articles were included and excluded if they included incidences of domestic violence or not and whether the articles were repeated.

- The research was structured into themes, and this was done by selecting the research findings that corresponded with the research questions.

- The data was sorted, collected, reported, and analysed in accordance with the specific research questions in the study.

- Similar research from different journal articles, and reports was merged to fall under one similar selected theme.

- In the interpretation of results section, the relevant articles were used, and the results were summarised, and the findings synthesised.

1.14 Validity, reliability, and rigour

1.14.1 Validity

Validity refers to assurance on the results of the study and the quality of the interpreted results (Creswell and Plano Clark 2017:314). Quantitative validity states that the results from the study are the correct construct being measured (Creswell and Plano Clark 2017:314). There is more emphasis on validity in qualitative research as opposed to reliability (Creswell and Plano Clark 2017:315).

In the research study, the following points of validity are reported:

- Properly defined research questions and objectives. This suggests that in order for literature to be found, the research questions must be defined in accordance with the study title. The research questions must be constructed and directed back at the title in order for the study to be applicable.

- Having transparent inclusion and exclusion criteria. This means that the inclusion and exclusion criteria set out in the research guided the researcher to select literature based on the similarity with the title of study.

- Evaluating titles and abstracts according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria. All research papers must be read, and it should be relevant to the research study being written.

- Recognise the limitations of the study. The researcher must conform to the research limitations in order to maintain validity.

- Reading of valid sources. Literature sources that are dependable, accurate, trustworthy, and valid must be read and included in research study.

1.14.2 Reliability

Quantitative reliability refers to the way in which the results of the study are consistent over an extended period of time (Creswell and Plano Clark 2017:315). The results of the study are consistent and can be transferable over time in other studies (Creswell and Plano Clark 2017:690). Reliability in qualitative studies does not play a significant role in research (Creswell and Plano Clark 2017:316).

The points regarding reliability are addressed as follows:

- Inclusion + Exclusion criteria. The quality of selected articles, study, or research and the articles selected must be reliable and of a trustworthy source.

- Publication bias. The published academic research must be in line and reliable with the results and conclusion of the study.

- Copyright issues to be checked. Studies should not be duplicated or copied.

- Potential plagiarism of sources. Research studies should be checked and made sure that it is of relevant, credible, and reliable literature that is to be in the academic research.

- Application of valid sources. The academic sources are of excellent quality, peer reviewed, are credible and there is evidence to prove the reliability in the study.

Table 1.2: Summary of validity and reliability

Validity	Reliability
Properly defined research questions and objectives	Quality of selected articles, study, or research.
Having transparent inclusion and exclusion criteria.	Publication bias
Evaluating titles and abstracts according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria.	Copyright issues to be checked
Recognize the limitations of the study.	Potential plagiarism of sources
Reading of valid sources	Application of valid sources

Source: Author's own

1.15 Anticipated limitations

The COVID-19 lockdown resulted in limited access to face-to-face interviews, and therefore the study was limited to a desk-top systematic review. Furthermore, the findings may vary which can impact on the research study, as the COVID-19 lockdown period started in March 2020 and is ongoing. For the purposes of this study, the period being analysed was limited to

December 2019 – January 2022. This is based on data which is readily available. The effect of these limitations is that it could impact on the dependability and validity of the research study.

1.16 Outline of chapters

Chapter one introduced the study. Chapter two introduced the literature review and answers the research questions. Chapter three presented the theoretical framework used in the study. Chapter four presented the methodology and the research process. Chapter five presented the interpretation of results, the findings with the review literature and theoretical framework. Chapter six concluded the study with the general discussions and also presented effective strategies by providing recommendations.

1.17 Conclusion

In conclusion, chapter one provided an overview of the thesis, by stating the purpose, background, research questions and objectives. A synopsis of the literature review, principal theories, location of the study, the research design, sampling, data collection, data analysis, validity and reliability, anticipated limitations, and outline of chapters was provided in relation to the research questions and aims, as well as the value and contribution thereof. The overview presented in chapter one envisioned the basis for the thesis in order for the reader to understand how domestic violence has impacted on children during the COVID-19 lockdown. In particular this chapter also included other important aspects so that the reader can get a brief understanding on what to expect in the study presented and its contribution to the rest of the chapters. The next chapters to follow will outline and unfold the important aspects that were mentioned in this chapter. The following chapter provides the detailed literature of the study regarding the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown.

CHAPTER 2: SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In December 2019, COVID-19 was identified in China (Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander & Prijatelj 2020:182). The virus began to spread around the world in its earliest stages due to population migrations, leading the COVID-19 pandemic (Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander & Prijatelj 2020:182). In order to save the lives of citizens, national borders were locked down, especially in countries where the virus was spreading rapidly. Thus, citizens had to socially isolate themselves from the rest of the public (Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander & Prijatelj 2020:182). The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the economy and changed the way people lived as it caused havoc (Piquero et al. 2021:2). Many governments around the world implemented certain orders that the citizens needed to follow, well-intentioned orders which eventually impacted on critical aspects of the economy, and people's lives and their mental well-being (Piquero et al. 2021:2).

Since the first positive case of COVID-19, on March 5, 2020, the whole of South Africa was put into a lockdown (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:2). The president declared a National State of Disaster as per the Disaster management Act 57 of 2002 (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:2). Essentially, this was known to be a lockdown, and that meant that there were restrictions on the movement of people in the country. However, only individuals that provided essential services were allowed to commute to work and help others in need (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:2). The lockdown was implemented to curb the rapid spread of the virus (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:2). Thus, the lockdown meant that schools were closed, and the sale of alcohol was prohibited, whilst only the sale of essential goods was allowed (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:2).

The lockdown that started on March 26th 2020 was initially a 3-week lockdown and was so hard in South Africa that the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) and the South African Police Services (SAPS) were out in full force (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:2). Roadblocks and police patrol implemented to restrict citizens who should not be on the road (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:2). The pandemic called for the implementation of strict restrictive measures within the quarantine, with the aim to protect individuals who do not have the virus from those that do have the virus and those who go out into public without knowing their COVID-19 status (Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander & Prijatelj 2020:182). Thus, many people were protected from contracting the virus.

However, some children experienced increased domestic violence abuse as a result of social isolation at home (Piquero et al. 2021:3). As Krishnakumar and Verma (2021:20) state, domestic violence has increased around the world, and there is preliminary evidence to conclude this. The COVID-19 lockdown impacted negatively on children's lives and exacerbated associated factors related to domestic violence abuse (Piquero et al 2021:3). In this thesis, the researcher conducted a systematic review of all associated factors pertaining to domestic violence abuse towards children during the COVID-19 pandemic, which in turn increased in alarming proportions in South Africa.

In chapter one, an overview of the thesis was provided and, the researcher synopsised the impact of domestic violence of children. This chapter will focus and report more in detail the impact of domestic violence on children as a result of social isolation induced by the COVID-19 lockdown. This is crucial in order to answer the research questions and also the aims and objectives of the thesis.

Related literature pertaining to the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown was reviewed, as well as how male and female children experience domestic violence differently. The chapter also explored how children become violent due to domestic violence abuse and how their mental health is affected by domestic violence. The interpersonal qualities of resilient children were discussed as well. The legislation and protection services were investigated, and reference was made as to whether it was implemented correctly and offered protection services to children experiencing domestic violence. Lastly, the reported cases of domestic violence during the COVID-19 lockdown were analysed.

2.2 Social isolation and the risk of domestic violence

Social isolation measures were effective in preventing the rapid spread of the COVID-19 pandemic (Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander & Prijatelj 2020:183). However, it increased the risk of domestic violence towards children. Many children became more vulnerable to domestic violence as they were isolated with their abusers in the same household (United Nations Children's Fund 2020). Social isolation is tantamount to denying individuals their liberty, and this causes both psychological and physical stress (Peterman et al. 2020:10).

Children who have not been abused before may be victimised and abused of the first time (United Nations Children's Fund 2020). Moreover, many children had more contact time with their perpetrators at home as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown (Haffejee and Levine 2020:3). Children were unable to leave their homes, and other individuals who regularly came into contact with them prior to the lockdown, were now unable to see them and monitor signs of domestic violence abuse (Piquero et al 2021:3).

The deadly COVID-19 pandemic led to the closure of day-care facilities, schools and workplaces throughout the world (Alon et al. 2020:10). For many parents, this was very stressful and imposed a serious challenge for them (Alon et al. 2020:10). The risk of domestic violence towards their children increased as a result of the challenges the parents were facing during the social isolation. The negative effects of social isolation, such as post-traumatic stress, anger, confusion and other psychological effects, resulted in bouts of frustration among adults, leading to domestic violence on children (Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander & Prijatelj 2020:183).

Domestic violence does not only encompass child abuse, but it also comprises of sibling abuse, adult abuse, intimate partner violence and elder abuse (Vetten 2014). Domestic violence in the household is known to be a universal human rights challenge, affecting everyone around the world regardless of gender, ethnicity, or status (UNICEF 2006:3).

Many countries do not speak of domestic violence even if the rate of domestic violence is high (UNICEF 2006:3). According to Holt, Buckley and Whelan (2008:800), indications of domestic abuse in families can cause a risk factor for child abuse. As Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander and Prijatelj (2020:182) state, children around the world suffer from abuse and approximately 1-in-2 to 1-in-5 children suffer from some type of domestic abuse. The onset of the COVID-19 lockdown increased that figure due to the frustration and anger that some families face as they get in each other's personal space. Women and children, who are victims of domestic violence in their households, leave their homes in order to go to a place of safety as they fear for their lives. The women leave the households and take their children with them (Lundy and Grossman 2005:18). However, during the COVID-19 lockdown, the domestic

violence victims were unable to escape abuse due to social isolation rules and regulations set out by the government.

Children need to feel safe and secure; they need a home that they feel themselves, a home that is violence free with parents that support and show unconditional love (UNICEF 2006:3). Home is seen as a place of comfort and relaxation away from the worldly negativity (UNICEF 2006:3). The researcher, however, notes that before the onset of COVID-19, the lockdown procedure had to be implemented to initiate the control and spread of COVID-19. Social isolation was a must for every person in the country, meaning they had to remain at home throughout the day, and the subsequent weeks and months in order to contain the spread of the virus.

Social isolation is effective in controlling the virus, but it has an impact on other aspects in society with serious repercussions (Boserup, McKenney & Elkbuli 2020). The social isolation worsens individual weaknesses in the absence of support structures for domestic violence victims (Boserup, McKenney & Elkbuli 2020). Domestic violence abuse occurs in certain households merely due to the frustration and anger of being isolated. Sharma and Borah (2020:3) echo this, and state that when looking at the family history and if there is no physical or verbal abuse and/or financial distress, the strain that occurs during a pandemic can fuel abuse and violence. This result of the violence is due to the shift in responsibilities, which results in the victims having more time spent with the perpetrators – increased interactions (Sharma and Borah 2020: 3). Domestic violence occurs since social isolation causes abuse by the mere fact that individuals have more contact time in that isolated environment, where the perpetrator holds power over the victim (Boserup, McKenney & Elkbuli 2020). Children would witness domestic violence abuse against their parent or become victims of domestic violence (UNICEF 2006:3).

2.3 Social isolation effects on children

Togetherness within the family, family bonding and reforming of family relationships are indeed positive results of the COVID-19 lockdown (Singh 2021:2). Hence, living together in isolation means that parents and children get more quality time together as a family (Singh 2021:2). However, for other families who are unable to cope with living together in social isolation, the result was increased domestic violence in their households.

Family life in general changed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (Cluver et al. 2020:1). Most family relationships are affected when people live together in confinement, leading to violence that causes peril to family relationships (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:375). Any violence within the family is extremely dangerous in relationships (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:375). Moreover, many families live together with their perpetrators and are trapped by the financial hindrances or social norms (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:375). However, in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, the social isolation measures put in place by the government of South Africa to contain the virus were a major reason why some of the victims were trapped in abusive domestic violence.

Social isolation and quarantine are effective to prevent the rapid spread of the infectious COVID-19 virus (Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander & Prijatelj 2020:183). However, social isolation due to COVID-19 means that around 1,38 million children and toddlers around the world would not attend school or daycare (UNESCO, cited in Cluver et al. 2020:1). Children would be isolated at home with their parents or guardians, with no access to school facilities and activities, play groups, sporting or extracurricular activities (Cluver et al. 2020:1).

The children are unable to attend school in person, but they have to attend school virtually. The impact of virtual classes is that children feel socially isolated because they do not have the one-on-one guidance of their teacher (Minhas and Freeman 2021). Apart from social isolation induced by the COVID-19 lockdown, children feel desolate and alienated from all social activities including soccer, group projects, team sports, and having lunch together (Minhas and Freeman 2021). This affects them negatively leading to mental and emotional problems. Despite having to deal with the hindrances, emotions and being overwhelmed by the new virtual learning systems, some children are also faced with domestic violence, mental health problems and maltreatment from parents and other family members which have been intensified due to the COVID-19 lockdown (Minhas and Freeman 2021).

Moreover, many parents or guardians have to quarantine and socially isolate themselves and their children in their households. The parents bring work activities home in an effort to try and work remotely as the workplaces are also closed (Cluver et al. 2020:1). Working remotely at home, while caring for their children and helping them with their virtual schooling can be very

stressful for many parents. Parents have many things to worry about, while not knowing how long the situation would last (Cluver et al. 2020:1). The daunting prospect of completing work tasks, as well as caring for their children, can affect them negatively, as they have to worry about many aspects of their children's lives while keeping them busy (Cluver et al. 2020:1). The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many family members to lose their jobs and other sources of income (Singh 2021).

The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has drastically affected everyone in all circumstances, as there was a recession in the global economy (Singh 2021). Consequently, more individuals in households would lose their jobs, or get a salary decrease, or fall into poverty (Singh 2021). For many parents who do not earn enough income or are unable to work due to the COVID-19 lockdown, or are living in crowded households, the challenges are intensified (Cluver et al 2020:1). For this reason, social isolation increases the risk of domestic violence in most families, as individuals have more contact time and get in each other's personal space. Many family relationships are affected and broken up. In some cases, there is separation of the perpetrator and the victim, but in most cases the severity of the violence would continue and increase in lethality (Holt, Buckley & Whelan 2008:800). According to the South African UNICEF Representative, Christine Muhigana's exhortations:

> "Parents, families and individuals are understandably facing extreme stress
> due to the COVID-19 impact, but children should not bear the brunt of this
> (UNICEF South Africa 2020)."

UNICEF South Africa (2020) further clarified that COVID-19 has caused harm to the world and has put economic strain on many families. Hence, children have been unfairly exposed to domestic violence due to the negative economic conditions which adults experience.

Despite the effectiveness of social isolation in alleviating the spread of COVID-19, there are many different forms of domestic violence that parents and children experience due to social isolation. Physical abuse and sexual abuse are forms of domestic violence that affect all family members (Vetten 2014). The domestic abuse towards females, adults, teens, or children includes rape and sexual abuse (Boonzaier and De la Rey 2011:367). There is also economic

abuse, which is the result of matters pertaining to economic status in a family relationship. This results from family members being deprived of financial resources which would have depleted due to inferences in family relations (Vetten 2014). Mental, psychological, and emotional abuse is also a form of domestic violence that attracts a pattern relating to abusing the mental capacity and psyche of a person (Vetten 2014:2).

Furthermore, other related consequences of the COVID-19 lockdown include loss of employment, economic deprivation, and inadequate salaries, as well as the altered living environment and declining quality of life (Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander & Prijatelj 2020:183). In certain cases, victims of domestic violence are affected by certain behaviours or acts exhibited by the perpetrator. According to Vetten (2014:2), the act of controlling an individual, be it in their household or outside environment, consists of physical abuse, bullying, aggravation, property damage, and stalking. This is done to the individual without their permission and in many cases in the home of the victim or surrounding areas (Vetten 2014:2). The privacy of the individual is affected, and they feel vulnerable and defenseless (Vetten 2014:2). Humiliation, threats, degrading, jealousy, over protectiveness and selfishness exhibited by the perpetrator are behaviours that victims of domestic violence experience (Vetten 2014:2). These behaviours and actions affect the psychological aspects of domestic violence victims in the family.

Many children would likely find emotional support from peers and other family members outside of their home (Herrenkohl et al. 2008:94). The researcher notes, however, that in the instances of the COVID-19 lockdown, many individuals are not allowed to leave their homes to avoid the infectious virus, making it difficult for victims to find support from peers or other family members in times of need. This affects the family relationship as the child exhibits negative behaviours. The isolation results in loneliness, and this loneliness results in mental health problems (Loades, Chatburn, Higson-Sweeney, Reynolds, Shafran, Brigden, Linney, McManus, Borwick and Crawley 2020:1234). The future life of these children would be affected since loneliness due to social isolation is associated with mental health issues that can occur later in life (Loades, et al. 2020:1234). Post-traumatic stress disorder and mental health issues can occur in children due to such effects social isolation (Loades, et al. 2020: 1234).

2.4 The impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown

The term domestic violence will be used to refer to violence against children and inter-parental violence that children witness. According to Holt, Buckley and Whelan (2008:799), existing data shows that large numbers of children are exposed to domestic violence on an everyday basis. The data findings refer to children being exposed to domestic violence prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 lockdown imposed a greater risk on children, as the effects of social isolation increased the risk of domestic violence abuse in the household. The severity of the effects of domestic violence ranges according to the extent of the traumatic experience of the domestic abuse for the child, either as a victim or an observer of the domestic abuse towards a family member (McDonald, Jouriles, Norwood, Shinn Ware and Ezell 2000).

Scholars of children who are domestically abused or are victims of domestic violence perceive it as trauma, which can be rated from severe traumatisation to resilience (Bogat, DeJonghe, Levendosky, Davidson and Von Eye 2006:110). In addition, if a child has had other stressors this would then hinder the child development process and also add to the severity of the trauma experienced (Bogat et al. 2006:110). In a study conducted by Bogat et al. (2006), it was identified that children show symptoms of trauma as a result of domestic violence. Consequently, children exhibiting different emotional responses due to domestic violence or as witnesses of severe domestic violence, display more symptoms of severe child trauma (Bogat et al. 2006:114).

The prospect of a child becoming a victim of domestic violence in scenarios where they are a bystander has a probability of being high. In these cases, the child would also become a victim of domestic abuse. Therefore, it is confirmed that children are affected by domestic violence by either witnessing the violence or being a victim (Levendosky and Graham-Berman 2001:187). The effects that children experience can occur even by watching the perpetrator abuse their mother or any abuse from any parent (Levendosky and Graham-Berman 2001:187). The COVID-19 lockdown has exposed some children to domestic violence at home. The exposure of domestic violence has deprived children of their home as being known to them as a safe environment (UNICEF 2006:3). The majority of children cannot speak for themselves, and they are unable to talk about the domestic violence that occurs in their family, even if they are the victims of domestic violence. Therefore, many children keep quiet, and experience the abuse and suffer silently (UNICEF 2006:3). These children are unable to seek help and comfort

from their parents whom they cannot trust, since they are the perpetrators of the domestic violence abuse (UNICEF 2006:3).

Consequently, the abuse inflicted on children and the exposure to domestic abuse in their childhood days, affect their economic empowerment in future (Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander & Prijatelj 2020:181). Their adulthood is negatively affected because of their past domestic violence abuse. In the future, not only would there be downfall in their economic advancement, but many other different facets of their lives would also be affected. Therefore, children need to be protected in order to stop the domestic violence abuse towards them (UNICEF 2006:3).

According to the United Nations Children Fund (2020), the COVID-19 pandemic could also result in the loss of parent(s) due to illness or contracting COVID-19 (United Nations Children's Fund 2020). If at any time during the lockdown, something has to happen to any one parent, the child would be at an increased risk of separation, abuse, exploitation or abandonment (United Nations Children's Fund 2020). Due to the added stress of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the economic downfall that comes with it in certain families, there would be more stress placed on the family (United Nations Children's Fund 2020). This means that there would be much tension and arguing in the home environment (United Nations Children's Fund 2020).

Recent research examined the effects of school closures (Singh 2021:2). Hence, closure of schools means that children must remain at home, and this makes them become victims of domestic violence. However, with the closure of schools, being a victim to domestic violence can affect learning mechanisms in their future. Consequently, the closure of the schools could result in certain children performing poorly in school, and there could be behavioural and attitudinal changes, with the chances of children dropping out of school being very high (Singh 2021:2). Many abused children have problems in school, including difficulties with learning and concentration, as well as exhibiting antisocial behaviour leading them to disobey all school rules (Lundy and Grossman 2005:27). Pandemics are known to cause irreversible changes to an individual's life (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:17). The marginalised segments in society such as women and children become affected and are abused and neglected due to the implementation of the COVID-19 lockdown and the social isolation (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar,

K 2021: 17). The significant increase of violence against children is seen to be a challenging threat in society.

Children witnessing acts of domestic violence in their early developmental age are likely to become substance abusers and in turn demonstrating aggressive behaviours. The COVID-19 lockdown measures have a huge impact on children as it affects their mental wellbeing because many of them now live together with their perpetrators in a confined space, in which they are unable to leave when they feel threatened by the abuser (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:17). This is because many abusers live with their victims, and these offenders of domestic violence abuse are known people that have some family relations (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:19). Piquero et al. (2021:15) concurs that children's mental health will decline due to the negative circumstances that many of them face.

The lockdown has led to long term detrimental effects that have a negative impact on certain children. The combined impact of lack of child-care due to school closures, reduced access to healthcare and delays in visits and declines in food security, led to the most substantial declines in a family's mental and behavioural health (Piquero et al. 2021:15). It is clear that these negative economic circumstances and declining mental health among parents and children, combined with the trauma of violence exposure, are likely to have long-term substantial detrimental impact on children. Violence against children has a lifelong impact on children, as it can result in homicide, assault, impairment of brain development, negative coping mechanisms, unwanted pregnancies, diseases and lack of interest of the future ahead (World Health Organization 2020b).

Peterman, Pereira and Palermo (2020) identified the following five factors, which individuals can learn from children that have experienced domestic violence.

    a. Children did not disclose the domestic violence that they had tolerated

    b. Most social services are inaccessible or inadequate

    c. Children's interpersonal qualities that correlate with help-seeking and reporting abuse

    d. Not wanting to seek help for certain reasons

    e. More data is needed for a more accurate understanding on why children do not report abuse due to their environment

Overall, the study by Peterman, Pereira and Palermo (2020) reported that the abuse and violence experienced by children is not reported all the time as children have their own issues and describe the inaccessibility with services. Therefore, even though the phenomenon of domestic violence occurs, the statistics presented may not be 100% correct as there is the issue of underreporting due to certain factors.

2.5 Female and male children experiencing domestic violence differently according to differential caregiving patterns

Bogat et al. (2006:120) concluded that mothers of girl children who were victims or witnesses of domestic violence were more expected to report the domestic violence case as compared to the mothers of boy children. The finding from the study explicates the differential caregiving patterns, which shows that the rate of female children being victims or witnesses of domestic violence is higher than that of the male children (Bogat et al. 2006:120). In addition, the study found that female children would be closer to their mothers when domestic violence abuse occurs as opposed to males, as mothers are more alert of the whereabouts of their female children (Bogat et al. 2006:120). Effectively, Bogat et al.'s (2006) study reveals that the gender of a child is a predictor of how he or she would experience domestic violence and whether he or she would become a victim of domestic violence.

Boys and girls experience domestic abuse in different ways (Herrenkohl et al. 2008:91). The mischievous behaviours by boys are seen to be ordinary and expected of them, as opposed to girls who are known to be submissive and self-conscious (Boonzaier and De la Rey 2011:364). As Boonzaier and De la Rey (2011:364) notes, gender roles, which are known as 'doing gender', are taught to children as the stories about dolls and action heroes which are portrayed to children based on their gender. The researcher also concurs with Herrenkohl et al. (2008) and synopsises that the treatment towards the different sex from the time of birth, results in differential patterns of experiencing domestic violence, and that the results of gender stereotypes and an increase in violence against females are also an indication of why mothers are more inclined to protect and report incidences of domestic violence against girls as opposed to boys.

Nolen-Hoeksema (2014:418) states that substance abuse also plays a huge factor in the differential caregiving patterns in males and females experiencing domestic violence. According to Boonzaier and De la Rey (2011:367), domestic violence abuse is committed generally by males in the society. This is because children, specifically male children, learn the substance related behaviours from their parents (Nolen-Hoeksema 2014:418). The alcohol abuse problem is more prominent among males than females, and therefore, children would learn the behaviour from the gender which is more similar to them (Nolen-Hoeksema 2014:418).

2.6 Children become violent due to domestic violence abuse

Children need the care of parents, as they cannot live on their own (World Health Organization 2004). Even if the child does not have a parent, there is always a guardian, or adoptive parents and family to look after the child (World Health Organization 2004). The child would always be cared for by someone. The needs and wants of the child would be met in most circumstances, and in that aspect the child would grow and develop physically, mentally and psychologically based on the care the child rests in the capacity of the adult (World Health Organization 2004). The adult in this circumstance has to help the child grow, show them the right from wrong, teach them, assist, support, comprehend and observe the child at times in need (World Health Organization 2004).

The World Health Organization (2004) elucidates that for a healthy psychological, physical and mental development of a child, there has to be parental guidance or care-giving characteristics that is responsive, supportive and sensitive. These characteristics are needs that are compulsory for good, positive behaviour, mental and physical health exhibited later on in a child's life (World Health Organization 2004). Therefore, to guarantee good child development in health and growth, the parents or guardians need to be able to respond and understand the needs of the child (World Health Organization 2004). The parental instinct should come into play, and they should be able to judge when the child is sick, hungry, and tired (World Health Organization 2004). Looking after the child continuously would help them make decisions easily by observing the expressions of the child, the child's feeling and movements, and the whereabouts of the child (World Health Organization 2004).

Consequently, when there is negligent and inadequate care for a child, then the physical, mental and psychological development, as well as the behaviour and health of the child are disordered (World Health Organization 2004:2). Inadequate care and parental guidance can have adverse effects on child development, behaviour and health (World Health Organization 2004: 2). If parents do not take care of their children, these children can develop mental and physical illnesses; they develop stress and become victims of substance and domestic abuse (World Health Organization 2004:2). Domestic violence abuse to children, or children witnessing domestic abuse, causes children to develop aggression towards family members, specifically child-to-mother violence (Jackson 2003:321).

The maternal and child relationship is very significant in any family. Therefore, if the mother is a victim or exposed to domestic violence the chances of the child being exposed to domestic violence is high (Bogat et al. 2006:119). Domestic Violence towards females also co-occurs often with child abuse (Vetten 2014:3). Resonating with this is an explanation as to why certain children in domestic violence households would experience the same symptoms that their mothers experience due to being domestically abused (Bogat et al. 2006:119). The experience of witnessing the domestic abuse towards their mother is a cause of stress to the child as well (Bogat et al. 2006:119). According to Jackson (2003:323), children that perpetrated the violence towards family members were struggling with issues of substance abuse. Many of these children became substance abusers due to being victims of domestic violence or by witnessing acts of domestic violence between their parents (Jackson 2003:23).

Another study states that the reason as to why children, specifically male children, become substance abusers is due to learning the behaviour modelled by their parents (Nolen-Hoeksema 2014:418). More often than not, male children have problems related to substance abuse, because there is a commonality among males using substances as opposed to females (Nolen-Hoeksema 2014:418). The substance abuse has caused fear in many of the mothers as it can lead to physical abuse from their children (Jackson 2003:321). The mothers in the study noted that there was lack of parental control as there was no support from their spouse; they confirmed that implementing good discipline and parental control was very difficult (Jackson 2003:324). From a study conducted, one mother explains that her child was always in trouble at school and most of the time did not want to go to school (Jackson 2003:324). As a result of fear, mothers found it difficult to punish their children as they were rebelling (Jackson 2003:324).

According to Jackson (2003:325), the parent refusing to give in to the children can cause incidences of physical violence. The mothers acknowledge that they understand that their children do not intend to react physically towards them; they are just unable to control their mental capacity, which is impaired due to the substance abuse (Jackson 2003:325). In essence, the physical violence perpetrated by the children's substance abuse is linked to the child being a witness of domestic violence between their parents. In Jackson's (2003:325) study, one participant disclosed the violence that she experienced from her spouse. Her children grew up in the household listening and witnessing the domestic violence that she has endured from her partner. As a result of this, her child also became violent and abusive towards her and many other family members (Jackson 2003:325). She described times where her child would push her, hit her, tear her clothes on her and use violent words towards her. She fears him and indicates that he was a witness to domestic violence towards her and he abuses drugs and other substances; he cannot be calmed and gets out of control (Jackson 2003:325).

Lundy and Grossman's (2005) study looked at the social characteristics noted in children who are victims of domestic violence. The scholars noted that many of the children in all three category age groups: 1-2, 3-5 and 6-12 years, were very protective of family members and resisted guidance and discipline. Lundy and Grossman (2005:22) noted that about 50 % of the children in the study where difficult to control as they resisted guidance from their parents. This is due their children not listening to them due to the parents lacking parental control and being unable to implement good discipline. Subsequently, aggression was frequently noted in this study as 41% was aggressive (Lundy and Grossman 2005:22). Thus, the effects of exposure to domestic violence in early childhood can create child developmental problems with a chain of severe issues (Holt, Buckley & Whelan 2008:802). Developmental problems in children can be altered at a very early age (UNICEF 2006:7). The brain's 'hard-wiring' development process would be hindered, and the physical and emotional functioning would be altered due to exposure to domestic violence (UNICEF 2006:7).

Parents need to realise the importance of good guidance and care-giving interaction (World Health Organization 2004:48). If they do not realise the importance of the good guidance and care-giving interactions, then their child's development process can be hindered and cause problems in later stages in their lives (World Health Organization 2004:48). Children engage

in negative behaviours and this violent behaviour is modelled by how the child's parent treats another significant figure in the household, and particularly relates to how the male gender in the home treats the child's mother (Meyer, Reeves & Fitz-Gibbon 2021:477).

There is a strong link between children's experience of early abuse and their display of behaviours relating to abuse later on in life, although not all children who are violent experienced abuse in their childhood (Meyer, Reeves & Fitz-Gibbon 2021:477). However, in certain cases, due to the implementation of the COVID-19 lockdown, children became bored, restless and sometimes violent (Kumar and Nayar 2021). The disconnection or breakage of the child from family ties affects the child emotionally, in which he or she would become anxious, depressed, and display mental disorders (Herrenkohl et al. 2008:94).

2.7 The impact of domestic violence on children's mental health

Domestic violence, or any type of violence for that matter, has negative effects on children and adults, and many of these victims face an aspect of traumatic stress (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:377). The COVID-19 pandemic potentially causes children to struggle with mental health issues resulting specifically from domestic violence abuse, social isolation, the closures of schools, and emotional damage caused by parents or guardians (Hamoda, Chiumento, Alonge, Hamdani, Saeed, Wissow and Rahman 2021:729). General exposure to domestic violence does affect childhood developments and predict youth delinquency and behavioural issues, as children start behaving differently and respond with anger, anxiety, depression, agitation, and clinginess (Kumar and Nayar 2021). The impact of the isolation leads to domestic violence abuse, and children with developmental issues but are now unable to go to school would fall behind in school (Hamoda et al. 2021:729).

The factors that affect a child's mental health due to social isolation would negatively affect them for a very long time even after the pandemic has passed and the restrictions are lifted (Hamoda et al. 2021). Herrenkohl et al. (2008:89) concurs that the hindrances of domestic violence in development during childhood would have long term consequences in adulthood. Children, more specifically babies, need the guidance of their mothers to provide understanding and structure during their developmental phase (Lundy and Grossman 2005:18). The love of their parents or mothers' love is needed by children during the unprecedented and worrying time of the COVID-19 pandemic, and therefore attention, care and time should be given to

these children to comfort them (Kumar and Nayar 2021). This means that parents need to spend extra time with their children, and separation from their children should be avoided at all costs (Kumar and Nayar 2021).

Domestically abused mothers are anxious and depressed, and evidently their children would feel their emotions and affected mentally (Lundy and Grossman 2005:18). Every developmental stage of the child's life would be affected as they begin to internalise the emotions and feelings exhibited by their mother or parents. The failed child-parent relationship affects the child's mental health, causes a risk for violent behaviour (externalising behaviours), self-esteem issues and depressive episodes, as psychosocial issues of the child (Herrenkohl et al. 2008:93).

According to Lundy and Grossman's (2005:21) study on children aged 1-2 years, 3-5 years and 6-12 years in domestic violent homes, there were varied factors that affected children in these age groups. The study looked at the emotional, social, physical, and educational problems that children face. For the purpose of analysis on the mental health of children, the emotional problems were examined. The study noted that an average of 52 % of children from all three age groups faced emotional problems. The emotional problems where categorised by following: the percentage of children who struggle to leave their parents, children who have mood swings, children who cry, are scared and afraid, do not question certain things, have bad dreams at night, social anxiety and do not interact, self-harm themselves and are suicidal (Lundy and Grossman 2005:21). The data outcome of the emotional problems suggests that children in the age group of 6–12-year-olds face the greatest number of emotional problems. Similarly, children in the age group of 3–5-year-old had nearly the same average proportions. The age group of 1-2 are least likely to face any emotional problems (Lundy and Grossman 2005:21).

This concurs with Herrenkohl et al.'s (2008:94) view that there is strong direct evidence that domestic violence exposure or the direct domestic violence abuse towards a child would result in a range of psychosocial and mental problems later on in the child's young adult years. The resultant psychosocial effects are caused by the fear, anxiety, helplessness, overwhelming moments and almost facing death due to the abuse experienced (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:376). The psychosocial effects cause traumatic stress which is innate and invisible to

other individuals as this forms part of the psychological aspects in the individual (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:377). It is only through behavioural changes in the individual that others can understand the effects of traumatic stress caused by domestic violence (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:377).

For many children the impact of domestic violence can have lasting psychological and mental disturbances. It is noted that the feelings of traumatic stress due to the violence would last around six weeks, and after six weeks the feelings become milder and dissipate (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:378). Children and adults do however have mechanisms to cope with the psychosocial effects of domestic violence abuse. Nevertheless, for many individuals the traumatic stress does not dissipate and therefore experience long lasting psychological hindrances and disturbances in their lives (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:378).

For some children, however, who do overcome the psychological effects of domestic violence, may re-experience symptoms for which they would be unable to cope with it and thus requiring psychological interventions (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:378). Re-experiencing symptoms means that the child might have flash backs from the domestic violence which would trigger the associated feelings and biological effects that were felt in the first occurrence of domestic violence abuse (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:378). In the avoidance symptoms, as the name suggests, the child will try to avoid the feelings from the traumatic event, such as the domestic violence abuse (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:378). In doing so the individual would avoid places or people that cause memories which bring up feelings related to the domestic abuse. Lastly, the arousal symptoms are related to the state of being constantly aware of everything, which resonates with survival mechanisms (Higson-Smith and Suffla 2011:378).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, children must now learn the in-and-out of online schooling, which can directly affect their abilities to concentrate and learn correctly (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:18). These children have to learn this particular way because many educational facilities are closed indefinitely, and the implementation of online lessons means that these children can be saved from any form of loss of education even though e-learning can be challenging at times (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:20). If children are unable to access the school services and resources, they can experience huge amounts of mental disparities which can cause panic, anxiety, and stress (Haffejee and Levine 2020:10). The emotional distress of

children such as anger, stress, sadness and crying outbursts would show because of the mental disparities that they face due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:19).

The vulnerability that the children face during these times of the COVID-19 lockdown, the isolation, lack of resources, support structures and services, all increase the risk of children becoming victims of domestic violence and being psychologically distressed (Haffejee and Levine 2020:11). The children are in isolation in a particular environment and are unable to go about their daily routines because of the lack of freedom that comes with being in isolation, and so their mental development, affective-social life and growth development would be damaged (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:19). The children would now lack support structures which they once used as coping mechanisms for themselves (Haffejee and Levine 2020:11), and this is because the current condition of living is very different to their lives prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K (2021:19) concur that due to the lack of support structures, the children must learn to live and cope with the lifestyle changes related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In contrast to this, children have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic as their normal development has been hindered which in turn affects their psychological and mental wellbeing (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:18). Low-self-esteem, heart diseases, stress, social problems, mental and physical problems, and obesity are known to affect children that have been abused (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:18).

2.8 Interpersonal and individual qualities that allow certain children to cope with domestic violence and with being in social isolation

This section deals with resilience and the protective factors (interpersonal and individual qualities) that certain children have to help cope with domestic violence. Resilience is when a child is able to avoid negative circumstances by attaining positive outcomes, or the child has defeated the risk exposure (Herrenkohl et al. 2008:92). The protective factors refer to the child's interpersonal and individual qualities that help them overcome the negative circumstances and therefore attain the positive outcome through resilience (Herrenkohl et al. 2008:92).

According to the World Health Organization (2020b), children should be able to cope with domestic violence abuse and it can be prevented if the factors that can protect children are addressed. However, Yule, Houston and Grych, (2019:1) elucidate that to understand the difference between children who are resilient and those children who are not can be used to explore and improve the effectiveness of intervention efforts. A traumatic event which would hinder a child's psychological health means that the child is not resilient, but if the traumatic event leads to a better than average functioning and no decline in psychopathology health, then this is seen to be considered as resilience (Yule, Houston & Grych, 2019:2). Certain children respond differently to domestic violence without developing any interpersonal and behavioural problems (Martinez-Torteya, Anne Bogat, Von Eye and Levendosky 2009:562). Their behavioural and emotional functioning develops adequately despite being a victim to or witnessing domestic violence (Martinez-Torteya et al, 2009:562).

According to Martinez-Torteya et al's (2009:573) study, regularity in exposure to domestic violence that a child experiences does not predict whether that child would be resilient to domestic violence or not. This means that if a child adapts positively to domestic violence abuse and understands the reason and how to react to domestic violence, it is not due to being exposed to domestic violence or being in unpleasant and difficult situations (Martinez-Torteya et al. 2009:573). Martinez-Torteya et al.'s (2009:573) study explored the routes that could possibly be predictors of resilience and the conclusion was that exposure to domestic violence can cause internal, behavioural problems with certain children. However, there is no specific type of configuration related to exposure of domestic violence that can affect resilience.

Certain children who experience traumatic situations more frequently have different internalising and externalising factors that contribute to helping them cope as opposed to children who are exposed to traumatic domestic violence situations occasionally (Martinez-Torteya et al. 2009:573). The occasional exposure to domestic violence would be beneficial to a child's internal and external functions due to the fact that there are periods of less traumatic experiences as opposed to being in those situations continuously (Martinez-Torteya et al. 2009:573). However, what should be noted is that a stressful situation is different as compared to domestic violence exposure and, therefore, there is no difference in resilience with a stressful situation as compared to children who are exposed to domestic violence (Martinez-Torteya et al. 2009:574).

The study by Martinez-Torteya et al. (2009:574) noted that income in the family, positive parenting styles, the child's mental function, race and stressful life events did not contribute to whether a child would adapt to a traumatic situation such as domestic violence. Children who are resilient to domestic violence have factors that are protective in nature and their risk levels are low (Martinez-Torteya et al. 2009:573). Children who are not exposed to domestic violence differed from children who experience domestic violence as they lead a traumatic life with higher levels of stress (Martinez-Torteya et al. 2009:573). These children are known to be resilient to the damaging effects of domestic violence abuse (Herrenkohl et al. 2008:94).

In conclusion children are impacted by domestic violence as there are many factors and disruptions that cause anxiety and stress. The disruptions that cause domestic violence have an impact on children, for example, there are economic and social interferences that occur due to the COVID_19 pandemic. In many ways, the children's development phase is hindered because they do not feel safe where they are and therefore their safe environment for them to develop and grow to their full potential has been damaged (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:20). However, if there is constant support, be it from parents or caregivers, then children that are exposed to domestic violence can return to their typical functioning without any mental or emotional illness associated with the domestic violence (Bartlett, Griffin & Thomson 2020:2). Children's mental wellbeing is important for the proper development of a child's mental capacity and, therefore, children need to be kept away from danger during the COVID-19 pandemic in order for their emotional health to be cared for (Bartlett, Griffin & Thomson 2020:2). The environment plays a vital role in order for a child to show resilience towards certain adversities (Bartlett, Griffin & Thomson 2020:2). Keeping children physically and emotionally safe during the COVID-19 pandemic is of utmost importance (Bartlett, Griffin & Thomson 2020:2).

2.9 The relevance of legislation in offering protection and mitigation strategies for children experiencing domestic violence during the COVID-19 lockdown

As Fouché, Fouché, and Theron (2020:2) noted, many countries have implemented legislations that concern domestic violence against children. This section mentions two countries and the legislative measures that they have put in place, together with their effectiveness.

2.9.1 South Africa

The COVID-19 pandemic and the National State of Disaster implemented by the president should make sure that all children are protected from any form of domestic violence or neglect (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:3). To understand the South Africa legislation a summary on the history of the Domestic Violence Act is provided below.

The Domestic Violence Act is the Act that is considered in all cases of domestic violence. The Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 explains that domestic violence abuse needs to be recognised as an evil act that is taking place in South Africa (Republic of South Africa 1998). There are many victims that do not report crimes of domestic violence and these individuals are known to be the most vulnerable (Republic of South Africa 1998:2). The objective of this Act is to help victims of domestic violence and to show them that they are heard and that they have protection from the law (Republic of South Africa 1998). The victims need to be made aware that the law has objectives, goals and procedures that can be provided to them to ensure that the necessary law procedures and provisions are implemented which would eradicate the increase of domestic violence (Republic of South Africa 1998). The Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 resonates with the Constitution of South Africa, specifically the right to freedom and security to any victim of domestic violence. Particularly it also echoes the eradication of domestic violence concerning women and children with that of the international obligations and laws, and there are also regards to the elimination of discrimination towards Women and children in the United Nations Conventions (Republic of South Africa 1998).

The South African Domestic Violence Act is known to be the most advanced and detailed legislation act worldwide (Vetten 2014). The Domestic Violence Act describes the types of domestic violence, the extent, and the ways in which the police should go about dealing with cases of domestic violence (Vetten 2014). The duties set out by the Domestic Violence Act include that all members of the South African Police Service (SAPS) must assist any person that is a victim of domestic violence. The SAPS need to help the domestic violence victim with medical treatment and a safety shelter (Republic of South Africa 1998:6). Any vital information must also be read to the victim (Republic of South Africa 1998:6), as victims may not understand English or may still be disassociated and disorientated due to the shock of the domestic abuse. The police would also arrest any perpetrator of domestic violence without a warrant if there were reasonable suspicion of the offence being committed by them (Republic

of South Africa 1998:6). The SAPS would help the domestic violence victim apply for an application for a protection order to the court against the perpetrator and if the victim has no legal representation, then the victim needs to be informed of the aid available as per the Domestic Violence Act (Republic of South Africa 1998:8).

The interim protection order would be issued as per the conditions and if there is enough evidence (Republic of South Africa 1998:8). Thereafter the protection order would be issued, this is issued as per the evidence that was submitted and that the act of domestic abuse was committed by the perpetrator (Republic of South Africa 1998:10). As per the severity of the domestic violence act committed, the court would make the decision of what the perpetrator may be prohibited from (Republic of South Africa 1998:10). A warrant of arrest can also be made based on the conditions of the protection order as per the court's decision (Republic of South Africa 1998:12). The SAPS would need to seize any legal or illegal weapons that the perpetrator has; the SAPS must keep the weapons which the court can use for evidence later on (Republic of South Africa 1998:12).

Vetten (2014:4) states that South African police officers do not arbitrate in any acts of domestic violence in the country. For this reason, the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 had set out duties that police officers need to oblige relating to domestic violence abuse in South Africa (Vetten 2014:4). There have been many instances and many complaints where the police have not done their duty and obligation as set out by the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998. For this reason, it is said that the interventions and strategies to combat domestic violence is proved to be ineffective (Republic of South Africa 1998:2). The Independent Complaints Directorate (ICD) is used to monitor the South African police officer's response to domestic violence, but the Civilian Secretariat of Police (CSP) took over the responsibility in 2012 (Vetten 2014:4). The report from the ICD, the parliament and the Auditor general have all concluded that the police have not followed the rules and obligations set out by the Domestic Violence Act (Vetten 2014:4). The report also makes notice of the fact the there are many SAP stations that do not meet the criterion set out by the Domestic Violence Act (Vetten 2014:4). The South African Police Services have set out mediocre results and proven themselves ineffective to help with instances of domestic violence in South Africa (Vetten 2014:5).

Many victims of domestic violence come from poorer areas, meaning their only way to get help is through the police and courts. Victims are seen to be very dependent on the courts more so than the police (Vetten 2014:5). The victims of domestic violence have noted that they have to go to the courts many times, and that these courts have also become very unhelpful with the obtaining of a protection order against the perpetrator (Vetten 2014:6). For this reason, these victims do not go back to the court to finalise the protection order (Vetten 2014:6). Ultimately this can result in the domestic violence victim not getting the help that they need but, also, there can be reoccurrence of abuse towards them since the protection orders are unable to get finalised against the perpetrators.

The Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 is very ineffective in helping individuals that are affected by domestic violence. It is known to have ended a minuscule amount of domestic violence cases (Vetten 2014:6). Besides, it can also cause a reaction to aggravated violence (Vetten 2014:6). For this reason, many individuals feel disempowered, as the legal system and legislation has failed them. The legislation must include ways in which children can be protected and interventions to help child victims of domestic violence. The legislation also needs to address the issue of the impact of domestic violence on children in the household (UNICEF 2006:11). The harmful effects of domestic violence must be reestablished and reinforced to make people aware that the perpetrators of domestic violence would be disciplined (UNICEF, 2006:11). The legislation also needs to hold perpetrators of domestic violence accountable, and the policy should reprimand them effectively (UNICEF 2006:11). If individuals are criminalised, then perpetrators would realise that domestic violence is a crime that can result in dangerous consequences and which it is unacceptable to commit (UNICEF 2006:11). These perpetrators need also to be made aware that the law would not tread lightly into issues of abuse regarding children.

2.9.1.1 Amendments to the Republic of South Africa Numbering Regulations Act 2016

In the light of the increase in domestic violence abuse to children, the Government Gazette, Republic of South Africa has made amendments to the Numbering Plan Regulations, 2016 (Notice No. 370 of 2016) (Republic of South Africa 2020:3). The amendment confirmed that the number '116' has been added to ChildLine South Africa and is the official number that can be used by children to report any type of violence or abuse (ChildLine South Africa 2020). The development of the number '116' had been implemented in July 2020 (ChildLine South Africa

2020). The inclusion of the number '116' was issued in the Republic of South Africa, Government Gazette Amendment to the Numbering Plan Regulations 17 (Notice No. 370 of 2016), now No. 43230 dated 15 April 2020 (ChildLine South Africa 2020).

The amendment of the regulation is as follows:

1. Regulation 17 of the Regulations is hereby amended by the addition to sub-regulation (4) of the following paragraph:

   "(j) the service code "116" is mandated for Child Helpline service. The Child Helpline service accessed, either by call or short messaging services, through the service code "116" shall incur no charges to the caller or sender."

2. Regulation 17 of the Regulations is hereby amended by the insertion of sub-regulation (6) of the following paragraph:

   "(6) nine (9) months after the publication of these Regulations, the code "116" will be the exclusive number for Child Helpline services (Republic of South Africa 2020:4).

The reasons document shows the following:

"On 01 March 2019, the Independent Communications Authority of South Africa ("the Authority") published a notice in Government Gazette No. 42272 notifying its intention to amend the regulation 17 of the Numbering Plan Regulations, 2016 ("the Regulations") to give effect to the implementation of the short code "116" for the provision of Child Helpline services; following a Communications Regulatory Association of Southern Africa's ("CRASA") Resolution. Stakeholders were given a period of thirty (30) working days, from the date of publication, to make submission to the Authority on the proposed amendment".

By the deadline the Authority received written submissions which contributed to the proposed amendment to the Numbering Plan Regulations as follows:

1. Telkom SA Ltd "Telkom".

2. Cell C Limited "Cell C"; and

3. Vodacom Pty Ltd "Vodacom (Republic of South Africa 2020: 5)."

The inclusion of the number '116' to the ChildLine South Africa is said to be an exciting amendment with regards to South Africa moving forward to protect children (ChildLine South Africa 2020). The short number, which is easy to remember, would increase its reach to children all over South Africa (ChildLine South Africa 2020). The number would help children to report cases of abuse and can be used in any network (ChildLine South Africa 2020).

The inclusion of the '116' number means that the old number would be phased out by December 2020 (ChildLine South Africa 2020). Another reason for phasing out the old 08000 55 55 5 number is due to the fact that it is a long number, and in times of distress not many children can remember the digits (ChildLine South Africa 2020). The phasing in of the '116' number means that it not only works in South Africa, but it also works anywhere in Africa (ChildLine South Africa 2020). Therefore, had any child be in another African country and find themselves being abused then by simply phoning the number they would be able to get assistance via the ChildLine Helpline (ChildLine South Africa 2020). There are 23 countries in Africa that have introduced the '116' number (ChildLine South Africa 2020). It is to be noted that the number '116' is free to use on any mobile network (ChildLine South Africa 2020).

2.9.2 China

In the Republic of China, it is said that the onset of the COVID-19 disordered all social order (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:6). According to Zhao, Zhu and Hämäläinen (2021:6), the onset of the pandemic caused a lot of chaos and, therefore, the government was only focused on protecting its people from the virus and finding a solution to mitigate the virus. For this reason, any other issues were not brought into perspective other than solving the issue of the COVID-19 (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:6).

The rise of child protection affairs came into place when the country faced the death of a child with special needs (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:6). The government had noticed that there was more to solving the issue of the COVID-19 pandemic as children were also at risk (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:6). Due to the death of the child with special needs (cerebral palsy),

the government therefore became aware that there needs to be policies formulated to protect children. There were many policies created by governments that address many issues that children face, and these policies were executed promptly by governments and local governments (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:6). These policies protected children via the creation of a safety net in the form of policies created, ordered and issued by the government (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:6).

The documents included the protection of children in many areas during the COVID-19 pandemic. After the creation of the policy documents, they included other ministries too to create interactions between them and the ministries to help with children in need (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:6). The documents addressed two issues, one which regards protecting children and the other was the assistance and collaboration between social organisations and government (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:6).

Zhao, Zhu and Hämäläinen (2021:8, 9) noted the following example in the city of Shanghai:

> "Local governments quickly carried out the policies. Shanghai serves as an example. On February 5, the Civil Affairs Bureau of Shanghai formulated the "Work Specifications to Prevent and Control the Epidemic for Child Welfare-Related Sectors in Shanghai," requiring district governments to include children in difficulty, especially those lacking guardianship due to COVID-19, in the community epidemic prevention and control system. The government of Shanghai adapted the social service hotline into a rescue and protection hotline for children in difficulty during the pandemic. This enables any unit or individual to immediately call to report unsupervised and unattended children in difficulty in the community. After the report is accepted, it must be handled in accordance with the "Shanghai Municipality Working Regulations for the Safety Protection of Children in Difficulty" to ensure the safety of children. At the same time, a management system of one file per person, one question per day, and one report per day for children in difficulty is adopted to actively care for the daily lives and learning of children in difficulty and offer help when necessary."

The researcher notes that the Chinese government established the importance of looking after children and made the efforts to create different policies for the different issues that children face. In the face of adversity, they have risen to the forefront and made sure the children of their country are protected and looked after.

China has even made a policy to protect their special needs children. For special needs children living with individuals that are drug addicts, the government had decided to liaise with social organisations that address the 'rifeness' of drugs in the community (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:9). For example, in one community in Shanghai, there are 11332 children that live with drug addicts (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:9). They filter out these children in different categories to make implementation of policies to them, they have created three categories that these children can be sorted into:

1. Children that are not in custody with any parent (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:9).
2. Parents or guardians who are unable to care for the child due to poverty, diseases or any disabilities (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:9).
3. Children that are suffering from any diseases or disabilities (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:9).

For the reasons stated above, the categories were created because the children can be abused by the drug addicts in their families. Due to this, the government created a policy title "Implementation Plan for the Care of Minor Children of Drug Addicts in Shanghai (2020–2022) (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:9)." This plan would help and protect children who come from abusive families (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:9).

Moreover, China has never had a children's hotline number were children that were being abused or in trouble could phone at any time for assistance (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). Following this China had decided to use the hotline for women's rights protection services (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). This hotline is now used for children to report abuse, absence of guardianship or if they require assistance (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). The hotline worked in such a way that it linked civil affairs departments all together and at all levels (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10).

There has also been the child welfare in China with 620 000 directors and 48 000 supervisors which are spread across the country (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). The Child Welfare Director Model policy was written in 2016 and the social work teams were put together in 2017 to protect the children of China (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). In the year 2019, the Child welfare teams were spread across the country (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the document was signed and assigned authority to the directors and supervisors of the Child Welfare (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10).

The child welfare director model has set objectives for the protection of children in China during this unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic period (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). Notably the model addresses the issue of children having inadequate access to facilities and resources in the government (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). Zhao, Zhu and Hämäläinen (2021:10) explain that in addition, the model also includes three aims which are:

> "The three layers refer to the establishment of institutions for the rescue and protection of minors in the civil affairs departments of districts and counties, the designation of child welfare supervisors in sub-districts, and the designation of one child welfare director in each natural village, thereby establishing a three-layer network of counties (cities, districts, and banners), townships (sub-districts), and villages (neighbourhoods) to provide children's services to the "last mile"".

In the times of the COVID-19 pandemic, the child welfare model has done much for children, as it has reached many villages where children live in a disadvantaged and poorer state, and where many supervisors and directors have not just accepted the abuse to children but has now been led to a stage of active detection (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). In these instances, in the villages, there has been a lot of data collected on children. This has been collected through screening, offline and online work – the information had then been collected, examined, sorted into different categories and filed (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). The services are thereafter rendered, and children are targeted based on the reports concluded from the plethora of data previously collected (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). From the information collected the supervisors and directors of the child welfare would address any issues that have come to their attention by prescribing referrals and introducing resources,

ensuring that no child is left behind during the devastating times of the COVID-19 pandemic (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10).

In reality the whole world and every country has been tested with resilience and the greatness of their governmental systems (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). However, China had stepped up and introduced ways to protect the children during this insidious COVID-19 pandemic, as revealed by the city of Guangzhou in China, which has a lot of community members, 2725 villages and 174 towns (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). The implementation of the child welfare model has equipped this city to rescue and protect children (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). There were centres set up for child protection and rescue all around the city and in every district (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). Another instance, in Shanghai, there was a team of child welfare workers, which protected children like a protective net (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10), with the figures showing that there were 6174 supervisors and 255 directors for the child welfare specifically in the city of Shanghai only (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). The researcher undoubtedly concluded that China's response to protecting the children in this COVID-19 pandemic was a very fast response. From the literature collected, all cities were equipped with child welfare centres which included a team of directors and supervisors which first protected the wellbeing of the children who are in distress and need.

China also has a lot of other laws which have been revised, and that protect children, for example, China's Anti-Domestic Violence Law and "Law on the Protection of Minors (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:12). This shows moreover that they are making efforts to protect their children from any sort of abuse (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:12). However, China's legislation is not perfect, although they do show that they are certainly making an effort and provisions to protect the children of their country (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:10). China's government created numerous policies to protect children during this COVID-19 pandemic (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:9). Many of these policies have been included in their emergency health care system (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:9). Likewise, there have also been the implementations of preventative measures for children who can incur abuse and neglect during the COVID-19 pandemic (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:9). In China, the onset of the pandemic yielded positive results in the policy development sector for children's

protection (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:9). In overall, there has been implementation of policies to protect the children (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:14).

2.10 Protection services linked to violence against children in the face of COVID-19

The main aim of this problem is to understand if the protection services that are structured to protect children are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the United Nations Children's Fund (2020:4), there were other studies done in the past that have explored this issue by gathering information from pandemics of the past. The studies show the devastating impact that the pandemic has had on the service delivery towards children who were being abused (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:4).

Consequently, the COVID-19 pandemic has also had devastating and disruptive effects in the world as a whole (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:4). These disruptions are even seen in high income, developed countries (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:4). Since there were no home visits allowed and authorities not being allowed to conduct assessments, there was a lot of purported abuse and ill-treatment experienced by children in their homes (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:4).

The study presented below from the United Nations Children Fund (2020) illustrates and describes the challenge that was faced regarding the services linked to violence against children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:4).

Table 2.1: UNICEF's Socioeconomic impact survey of COVID-19 response collected from 157 country offices

	Number of countries that reported on VAC-related services	Number of countries that received the survey	Response Rate (%)	Population coverage (proportion of children covered by data out of the total number of children living in the UNICEF programme countries, %	Population coverage (proportion of children covered by data out of the total number of children living in all countries, %)
Latin America and the Caribbean	35	36	97	95	95
East Asia and Pacific	24	27	89	95	89
Eastern Europe and Central Asia	21	21	100	100	70
West and Central Africa	21	24	88	93	93
Eastern and Southern Africa	15	23	65	66	66
Middle East and North Africa	13	18	72	77	75
South Asia	7	8	88	100	100
Total	136	157	87	91	82

Source: Adapted from United Nations Children's Fund (2020: 5).

Table 2.1 illustrates the data that was collected between 1 May and 14 August 2020, from a survey titled, *'UNICEFs Socioeconomic Impact Survey of COVID-19 Response* (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:5). The information collected from the survey is from 157 countries around the world, and 138 of those countries were low-middle income countries and 19 high-income countries whilst 157 of those countries are of children that make up 90% of the population in the world (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:5). These countries needed

to report back on the five services that address violence against children (VAC) and if they were disrupted due to the impact of the COVID-19 (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:5). From Table 2.1, 136 out of the 157 countries had done the report based on the outcome of the surveys (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:5).

With regards to the Eastern and Southern Africa section, Table 2.1 shows that from the 23 surveys that were given to the countries, only 15 were used to report on the Violence against Children related services (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:5). This construes that it is a 65% response rate and only 66 % out of the total number of children living in the country was covered (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:5).

Graph 2.1: Percentage distributions of countries that have reported or not reported on surveys
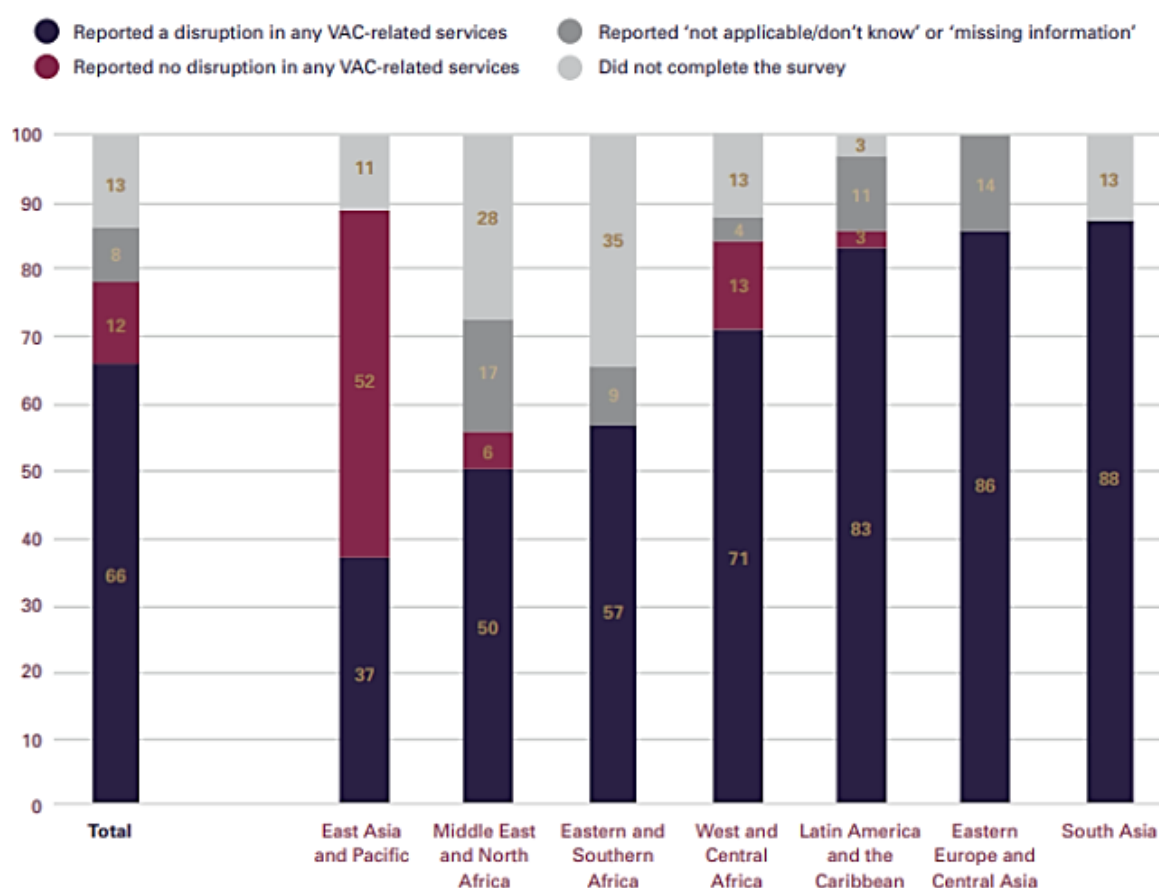
Source: United Nations Children's Fund (2020:9).

Upon first glance from the percentage distributions, Graph 2.1 shows that there is a clear distinction between South Asia and the rest of the countries regarding the disruption of violence against children services (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:9). South Asia reported the highest number of disruptions with regards to Violence against Children Services (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:9). This is followed by the Eastern European and Central Asian countries and thereafter the Latin American and the Caribbean (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:9). The bar related to Eastern and Southern Africa shows that 35% of countries did not complete the survey and, for this reason, the percentage related to reported disruptions in any violence against children services is at 57% (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:9). East Asia and Pacific countries had the highest percentages with regards to no disruptions in the services related to violence against children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:9).

Graph 2.2: The type of service and the total percentages of all countries that have reported disruptions related to violence against children
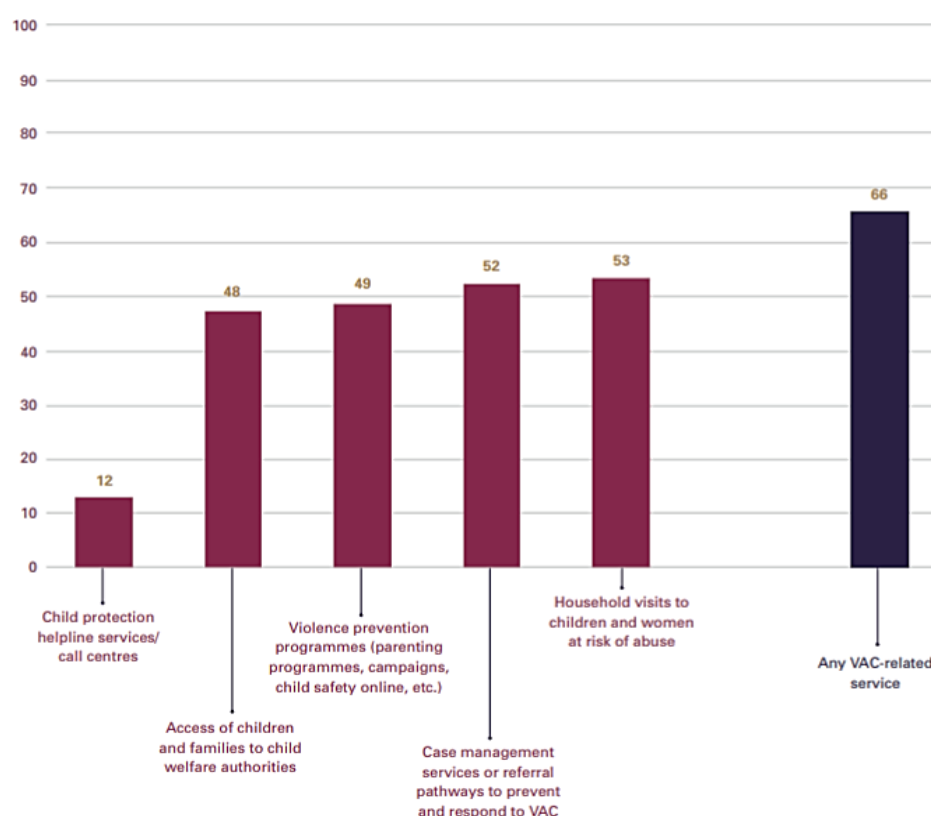
Source: United Nations Children's Fund (2020:10).

Graph 2.2 shows the percentages of the most disrupted service of all countries together. The least disrupted service around the world is the child protection helpline services/call centres (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:10). The reason for this is that this service does not require any physical contact that can put individuals at risk of contracting COVID-19. The household visits to children and women at risk of abuse are the most disrupted service, followed by case management services or referral pathways to prevent and respond to violence against children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:10). Furthermore, the reason for this is that individuals delivering the service to households through visits do not want to endanger others and themselves in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Many countries have been disrupted by attending to these services. However, should any countries have any disruptions, then these countries must report these disruptions to make sure that there can be other measures put in place.

Graph 2.3: Percentages of countries that have reported disruptions and put mitigation measures in place
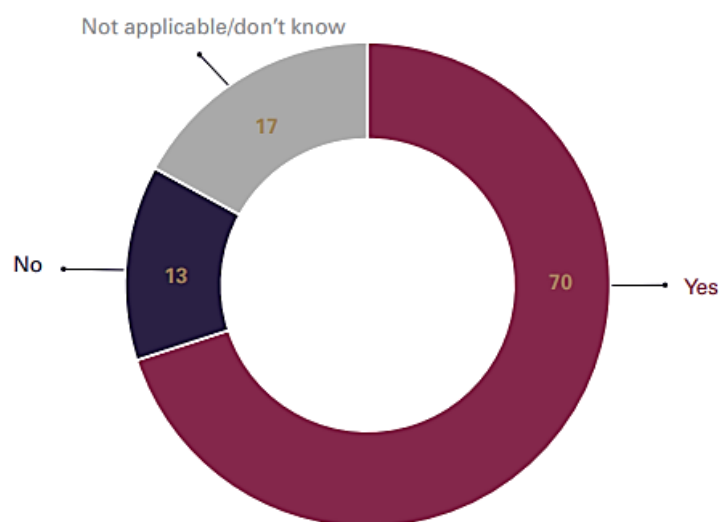
Source: United Nations Children's Fund (2020:11)

Graph 2.3 shows the percentages of countries that have reported disruption and those that have also put mitigation measures in place (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:11). There were only 13% of countries that have not reported disruptions and therefore did not need to put any

mitigation measures in place (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:11). However, 70% of countries noted disruptions due to COVID-19 and had to put mitigation measures into place (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:11).

The increased levels of domestic violence abuse towards children are alarming. As Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K (2021:18) avers, violence against children results in the damage of future generations to come. The government's response to cases of domestic violence needs to be inclusive with elements such as social equity, care and empathy (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:669). Certain countries need to take into consideration that they need to have a plan for domestic violence instances in crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Planning is essential as it prepares the country when unexpected implications arise as a result of the crisis (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:669). Legislation and rights should not be the only form of protection, but also emergency plans need to be ready and be put in place by community organisations in the time of a pandemic crisis (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:669). There should be collaborative work between community organisations, non-profit organisations, and the government to address the increase in cases of domestic violence, as well as the needs and safety of the victims (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:669).

The police force needs to work tentatively and respond to cases of domestic violence with great apt, but also meet the needs to those that are victims of domestic violence abuse by recovering the victims and protecting them from the abuse (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:669). There needs to be social equity with practices that show empathy, compassion and care to the victims of domestic violence abuse, specifically known as an ethic of care (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:672). The government in a country must be imperative when it comes to assisting victims of domestic violence abuse and therefore needs to be more humane and relational to the circumstances of those victims that are abused (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:672). Ultimately, when there is empathy shown by public servants in a country, the public and the victims of domestic violence begin to develop trust, and thus enhancing the essential relationship with the citizens especially in times of need such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:672).

2.11 Increase in reported domestic violence cases due to the COVID-19 lockdown

There are generalised reports that state that the rate of child abuse is on the rise as a result of children staying at home due to the COVID-19 lockdown (Cluver et al. 2020:1). There is a lot of worry, fear, and media hype around COVID-19, thus making this a challenging time for many parents (Cluver et al. 2020:1). Parents are in a lot of stress and must make long term decisions for the betterment of their family. The socioeconomic impact increased stress levels within parents causing an increased risk of children becoming domestic violence victims in their households (Cluver et al. 2020:1).

UNICEF (2006:5) noted that there are challenges with the collection of reliable data. Worldwide, there are data collection issues due to the inadequateness of collected data with regards to domestic violence (UNICEF 2006:5). There are many limitations with regards to reporting cases of domestic violence as some countries are affected by underreporting by the child or the parent (UNICEF 2006:5).

In certain cases, it is noted that when girls are victims of domestic violence, then the mother is most expected to report the abuse than when the boys are victims of domestic violence (Bogat et al. 2006:120). The police statistics do not encompass rates of domestic violence and, therefore, a comprehensive statistics guide needs to be created for all forms of domestic violence (Vetten 2014:2). This is due to the fact that domestic violence includes many different forms of violence (Vetten 2014:2), and therefore a special statistics record should be created to include all crime pertaining to forms of domestic violence. There are various categories of violence and criminal offences, some of which include, pointing a firearm, rape, murder, assault (Vetten 2014:2). The phenomenon of domestic violence exists but the statistics does not justify the correct figures for a variety of reasons.

The rates of domestic violence figures may be incorrect, and the reported cases of domestic violence and abuse paint an imperfect picture in most instances due to the fact that:

- Many countries have noted that the calls to domestic violence hotlines have been decreasing (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). The reason for the decrease is

because victims are in close proximity to their abuser and are unable to seek a safe space to contact the helpline (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

- In many shelters for violence and abuse, the numbers of victims that go to the shelters have decreased (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). The reason for the decrease is due to the fears the victims have of contracting the COVID-19 (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

- Some countries have a routine detection system (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). A routine detection system is known to be the teacher at school or a social worker that checks up on children. However due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these known systems are closed (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). For this reason, in the United States, there has been a reduction in the number of child abuse cases due to decrease in discovery of cases as opposed to incidence (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

- It has also been noted that due to the increased use of social media, computers, laptops and mobile phones, the abuser has a new avenue to perpetrate victims (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). This form of violence is related to abuse, but it is very rarely reported.

The research done by UNICEF (2006:5) elucidates that there is a probable value of 275 million children that are victims of domestic violence in households. The value is an estimate due to the inadequateness and limitations of collecting domestic violence data rates (UNICEF 2006:5). However, the value is much higher, and many more children are affected by domestic violence (UNICEF 2006:5). Hence, the rate of domestic violence is likely to be very high during the COVID-19 lockdown, considering the isolation rules that people had to follow. Similarly, according to the Daily Maverick (2020), the COVID-19 lockdown has caused an increase in the reported cases of child abuse. The opening of schools brings hope that this rate would decrease and mitigate the increasing domestic violence risk in homes (Daily Maverick 2020).

2.11.1 The South African perspective on reported cases of domestic violence

Counsellors are unable to find the solutions for the callers (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). In those instances, the ChildLine Gauteng rely on the South African Police Services to act on the situation (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). Although, the counsellors do try their level best to follow up with all cases as in they are short staffed, they ensure that the children are doing well and have found a solution to their problem and are not at risk anymore (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4).

The success stories mentioned subsequently show some of the hardship that children face as a daily battle. However, they also show the resilience that these children have to go through the abuse (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:7). Hence:

- A 16-year-old boy was given Rattex (rat poison) by his older sister who had also abused him during the COVID-19 lockdown. He was admitted into the hospital due to Rattex poisoning. After receiving treatment and being discharged, his sister began to physically abuse him again. The Police were called in and they contacted his family. The boy currently resides with a community member, but when the lockdown eases, he will be moved to his family in Limpopo (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:6).

- A 16-year-old boy was being physically abused by his aunt. A member of his community took him in to care for him as his mother is a drug addict and his aunt threatened him. The kind member of the community is waiting for the police to step in and assess the situation. Upon assessment the police had removed him and placed him into Nkosi Haven (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:7).

- An 11-year-old boy who lives with his father reported that his father beats him. The father and mother do not live together as the mother is an illegal immigrant. The mother is a domestic worker and did not have shelter to live with her children, so she lost custody of them. The father on the other hand was previously reported for neglect. The case is now at the ChildLine in Free State (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:7).

According to UNICEF South Africa (2020), the result of the COVID-19 lockdown has impacted on children tremendously. The lockdown has caused an increase in domestic

violence and abuse. This statistic was shown in the ChildLine South Africa official report regarding violence and abuse against children, and the report showed an increase of 36.8% in 2020 as compared to the year 2019 (UNICEF South Africa 2020). The data presented is justified as workers in health care facilities have also reported that there is an increase in the number of children that come for treatment with child abuse referrals (UNICEF South Africa 2020). The South African Representative from UNICEF South Africa stated that:

> "Violence against children is unacceptable at any time. It's extremely concerning that at a time of national and global crisis, children are facing violence and abuse at such horrific levels" (UNICEF South Africa 2020)."

The lockdown measures that were implemented at onset of the COVID-19 pandemic were put in place to curb the increase of the virus and slow the spread. However, in these instances, many children that are isolated at home have become vulnerable (UNICEF South Africa 2020).

2.11.2 The international perspective on reported cases of domestic violence

The whole world experienced lockdown and different countries have implemented different lockdown levels. The lockdown implemented around the world help prevent the spread of the COVID-19 (The Guardian 2020). Many countries are experiencing an increase in the rates of domestic violence, and these rates of domestic violence are given as follows:

1. In China, Brazil, Italy and Germany, many children have no escape from the perpetrators of domestic violence during the COVID-19 lockdown (The Guardian 2020). The activists in these countries say that the rate of domestic violence abuse is on the rise during this COVID-19 lockdown period (The Guardian 2020). In China, Hubei, the province reported that the rate of domestic violence is increasing rapidly, and it has tripled in numbers during this COVID-19 lockdown period (The Guardian 2020).

2. According to Wan Fei, a retired police officer, who gave a statement to The Guardian (2020), "The epidemic has had a huge impact on domestic violence. According to our statistics, 90% of the causes of violence [in this period] are related to the COVID-19 epidemic."

3. A Rio de Janeiro judge Adriana Mella who specialises in domestic violence has also commented on the rise of the rates of domestic violence and stated that, "We think there has been a rise of 40% or 50%, and there was already really big demand. We need to stay calm in order to tackle this difficulty we are now facing" (The Guardian 2020). Due to the surge in cases, there is also a state-run drop-in centre that is full due to the impact of the COVID-19 social isolation rules set out by the government, and this was explained by Globo who is known to be a broadcaster in Brazil (The Guardian 2020).

4. Domestic violence cases have risen uncontrollably as even seen in the capital Nicosia, an island on the Mediterranean Sea (The Guardian 2020). According to Annita Draka who is a part of an association for the prevention of domestic violence has stated that, "It's been a dramatic rise and it has only gone up. It's a 24-hour helpline and the calls come in all the time."

5. In the country of Spain in the province of Valencia, the rates of domestic violence abuse have also risen. The country heard of its first appalling case of domestic violence abuse. The 19th of March, a devastating attack on a woman, took place after her husband had murdered her, while her children were the witnesses to the murder and watched their mother get killed (The Guardian 2020).

The data presented in this review suggests that domestic violence has been on the increase during this pandemic. Experts in the United Kingdom have reported that domestic violence abuse was rising during the peak of COVID-19 (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:19). Rauhaus, Sibila and Johnson (2020:669) echoed this finding and state that there is an increase in domestic violence cases that are reported by many international organisations, and therefore governments in each country need to reconsider the legislation and protection rights towards victims of domestic violence abuse. Mittal and Singh (2020:2) state that in the face of any pandemic, there is found to be an increase in violence. Significantly, there is research evidence that shows that the increased levels of violence are more specifically towards children (Iftikhar, M and Iftikhar, K 2021:18). In these pandemic situations, the violent situations become worse, children and woman get abused and harassed (Mittal and Singh 2020:2). A report that was produced by CARE and International Rescue had researched gender-based violence during the

COVID-19 pandemic, concluded that gender-based violence would increase during quarantines or a pandemic, and therefore services in government need to work on existing services to help these victims of violence (Mittal and Singh 2020:2).

However, even though the cases of domestic violence abuse have been on the rise during the pandemic, in many instances these reports do not exhibit the correct data because in some instances cases of domestic violence are underreported (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:670). The non-reporting is due to certain issues that the victim faces such as, methodological issues, not being able to report the case and the police policy, and the police behaviour and attitude towards being a victim of domestic abuse (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:670). The police in some instances are unable to help with the issues pertaining to gender-based violence and, therefore, this results in cases of domestic violence worsening and increasing (Mittal and Singh 2020:3). These victims face the intimidation from the abuser, as well as retaliation, shame, and denial, allied with religious, spiritual or cultural cohesion that militates against reporting the domestic violence (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:670). Communities are plagued with the increase in domestic violence cases and the continual implications of the COVID-19 pandemic, which lead to the underreporting of domestic violence cases (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:672).

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter concluded by reporting on the key research finding in relation to the research questions and objectives, as well as the value and contribution thereof. The study aimed to investigate the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results from the literature revealed that children either become victims of domestic violence or are traumatised by witnessing domestic violence abuse in the household. Related literature indicate that the implementation of the well-intentioned COVID-19 lockdown was effective in reducing the rapid spread of the infectious virus but had the negative impact of increasing the risk of domestic violence abuse towards children and women. Further findings show that pandemics are known to cause irreversible changes to an individual's life. The marginalised segments in society such as women and children become affected and are abused and neglected due to the implementation of the COVID-19 lockdown and the social isolation. The significant increase of violence against females and children is seen to be a challenging threat in society. This increase should be an indicator that governments in each country need to reconsider the

legislation and protection rights towards victims of domestic violence abuse (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:669). Drawing from the findings and context in this chapter, the next chapter introduces the theoretical framework that was selected for this study to understand the factors contributing to domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

Theoretical frameworks have a very critical role in research as it facilitates many aspects of the research process. This study utilised the routine activity theory and situational action theory as the theoretical framework in order to understand the complexities regarding the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are many theories of violence which are used to explain why people commit crimes and how they are different from other individuals. The theories selected and explained below are adequate to explain why certain individuals engage in domestic violence acts or any criminal acts during a pandemic, when there are lockdown measures that have been implemented. Therefore, the theoretical frameworks are used to explore the reasons as to why there is an increase in domestic violence cases during the COVID-19 pandemic in South African and in certain other countries.

In the previous chapter, the key research questions were reported on and the main issue regarding the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 pandemic was investigated. The previous chapter, the researcher noted domestic violence as being a challenging threat in society howbeit the lockdown was effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19, however the risk of domestic violence abuse towards children and woman increased.

In this chapter, the theoretical frameworks, namely Routine Activity Theory and Situational Action Theory will be discussed as this is crucial in order to understand the complexities regarding the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 pandemic and the factors contributing the domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Routine Activity Theory will be explained first and will also include the lifestyle factors that can be used to understand victimisation. Thereafter, the Situational Action Theory will be explained, followed by the DEA (Developmental Ecological Action) model and the causes of crime.in the Situational Action Theory.

3.2 Routine Activity Theory

The Routine Activity Theory (RAT) was created by Lawrence, E. Cohen and Marcus Felson in the year 1979 (Miró 2014). The Routine Activity Theory is also known as the Lifestyle Theory (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:3). This theory is used in most research and it is the most widely cited and useful theory (Miró 2014). It is used to understand the crime patterns, an offender's criminal patterns and criminal victimisation (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:3). The Routine Activity Theory is unlike other theories that focus on the criminal's biological aspects, psychological factors, or social factors, it looks at crime being committed by criminals in relation to space and time (Miró 2014).

The Routine Activity Theory focuses on the daily routine of an individual and argues that the paradoxical increase in crime is due to the everyday activities of people which possess the same routine (Cohen and Felson 2009:318). Specifically due to this, the analysis of criminal acts would be easier to analyse, as the researcher puts forward. The similar routine and structure of this theory is an indicator of why crime has increased. Hence, the perpetrator sees the same routine being done every day as an opportunity to participate in criminal activities towards the individual (Cohen and Felson 2009:318). The type of crime that the Routine Activity Theory refers to is known as predatory violations (Cohen and Felson 2009:318). The predatory violation contains the victim and perpetrator and comprises of direct physical contact between them resulting in injury towards the victim (Cohen and Felson 2009:318).

The Routine Activity Theory consists of three components in order for a crime to occur (Cohen and Felson 2009:318). These comprise of:

1. A motivated offender
2. A suitable target
3. Lack or absence of capable guardians (Cohen and Felson 2009:318).

These three elements have to be present in order for a crime to occur, and if either one or two of the components mentioned above is not present, then in many cases the crime would be known to be unsuccessful (Cohen and Felson 2009:318). Krishnakumar and Verma (2021:22) clarify that the three elements mentioned above influence the daily activity of the lives of people, simulating that the daily activity of people is also known as the 'Routine Activity' of people.

The motivated offender has the capacity to commit a crime and has to put in very little effort to look for a suitable target, since being in lockdown with a victim, the mere fact is that without a suitable target, the presence of a motivated offender would not suffice (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:22). The victim or suitable target is known to be an individual that more or less the perpetrator targets to be the victim. The victim is said to be an individual who feel threatened by the offender (Miró 2014:2). If there is no value added that would come from the suitable target, then the target would not be desirable (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:22). The last element is known to be the lack of capable guardian. Any individual that is patrolling in and around the area as to where the crime would likely occur and would prevent the crime from occurring is known to be the guardian (Miró 2014:3).

On the onset, the inclusivity of the components can affect the rate of crime in the country (Cohen and Felson 2009:318). Krishnakumar and Verma (2021:22) explain that due to the social isolation whereby people live in the same home space, there is bound to be a rise in the cases of domestic violence as the three components that comprise in the Routine Activity Theory converge. Due to the lockdown, the component known as the 'motivated offender' has their target in sight and can put very little effort in looking for a target (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:22). Tewksbury and Mustaine (2014:5) explain that the routine activity theory also looks at the lifestyles of certain individuals and how their similar routines play a role in whether they become victims or not; and the victim's lifestyle patterns are analysed by the perpetrators. As a result, the Routine Activity Theory looks at more than just the where, when how and who become victims. For this reason, this is how the theory had got its name (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:5). The Routine Activity Theory has become so widely popular among researchers as its central aim is to recognise the similar behaviours and characteristics that individuals possess that is likely to increase or decrease the victimisation towards individuals and affect the crime rate (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:5).

Borrowing the idea from Krishnakumar and Verma (2021:22), all three components in the Routine Activity Theory converge in the households, and therefore this explains the incidence of domestic violence towards children in households due to the COVID-19 lockdown. There is similarity with this theory and the three elements mentioned. The researcher notes that all three components are present in a domestic violence household. Taking this further to explain the domestic abuse in the household, in these households there is a motivated offender, who is

the domestic violence abuser; there is a suitable target, who is the victim of the domestic violence abuse; and there is an absence of a guardian present, in this case, there is no one to stop the incidence of domestic violence from taking place. This theory explains that since individuals are meant to stay indoors during the COVID-19 lockdown at certain times of the day, their routine will never change. During this time certain individuals become most vulnerable, and perpetrators might observe the times and homes that they want to pursue the crime and therefore commit the domestic abuse to the children or individuals at home.

The Routine Activity Theory targets individuals that are within the similar area of the same location, due to the accessibility of the targets, desirability, and management (Eck and Weisburd 2015:8-9). When analysing this theory, it suggests that the crime would not occur if there were no opportunities for criminals to commit the crime (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:5).

In addition, the characteristics of a person together with their behaviour have to be observed, as well as the locations and routine of the individuals must be studied to understand how criminals interact and to develop crime prevention programmes (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:6). Studying the problems above would help with the following:

- "to develop concrete strategies to enhance the number and quality of capable guardians in particular types of settings;

- to reduce the suitability of targets that are present;

- to educate people about actions and places that are more dangerous for them and why, so that they may make smarter decisions about their routine activities (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:6)."

The Routine Activity Theory also can help with ways in which to reduce or stop criminal activities (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:6). The theory can also suggest how the government law enforcement can help to provide better support and protection through crime prevention (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:6). In many domestic violence cases, there is lack of capable guardian component, and in these cases the perpetrator has control over the victim with their access to any technological devices that can be used for communicating (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:29). The perpetrators intensify coercion, and therefore if there was a capable

guardian present, they can prevent any crime from occurring (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:29). During the lockdown, in many cases there was no capable guardian present, and therefore this meant that there was no one to prevent the act of domestic violence from occurring and hence the motivated offender could not be deterred (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:29).

The following lifestyle factors are used to describe and understand victimisation as explained in the Routine Activity Theory (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:6). These are used to explain how the crimes occur based on subsequent factors:

3.2.1 Demographics

Demographics is known to be the risk factor, that is the easiest and the most reputable type used in order to distinguish criminal victimisation as per their demographics (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:7). Using the demographics show that the groups that are victimised the most are adolescents, young adults, individuals that have not been married and those that live on the busy central business districts or the city (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:7). To understand how demographics are used in circumstances where victimisation occurs, it is used as interpretive indicators for a person's lifestyle and how they carry out their daily routines (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:7). For example, most single people live alone and live very lavish lifestyles (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:7). In essence, understanding one's lifestyles and routines can be used as crime prevention method to stop the crimes from occurring (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:) and it can be used to understand time and space of children that are affected by domestic violence during the COVID-19 lockdown.

3.2.2 Social activities

The social activities of an individual can also be used as a measure of social victimisation (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:7). Since social activities are defined by what individuals do, the activities they participate in, the time of participation, with who they participate with and where they participate, it is known to be the greatest, noticeable predictor of victimisation towards the individuals (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:7). Understanding the social activities in the Routine Activity Theory means analysing one's social life, specifically for example: going to the gym, going to the malls, eating at specific restaurants all the time, going out to

parties, going to certain organisations on specific days – these would all lead to victimisation (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:8).

The activities that any individual engages in can be a peril for being a victim of crime as their actions and lifestyles lead to being criminally victimised (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:8). In the area related to domestic violence and its impact on children, the social activities of children can be analysed. Children participated in certain social activities to help them cope with the violence.

3.2.3 Alcohol and Drug use

The alcohol and drug use are a big factor for analysis and measure of being criminally victimised (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:8). This lifestyle factor plays a big role, and it needs special attention as drugs and alcohol can impact on children and young adults tremendously. Participation in drugs and alcohol can cause one to become violent, mentally unstable and lead to criminal offending, and on the other hand it also makes individuals become very volatile and therefore in turn causing them to become criminally victimised (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:8). There is a strong relation to violence associated with alcohol (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:8).

Similarly, children becoming violent due to domestic violence abuse sustain this statement made above as children in their development phase are introduced to alcohol, which can lead to violent tendencies later on. The onset of alcohol from a young age leads to violence and criminality (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:8). From the perspective of the Routine Activity Theory, alcohol and drug use can be used to explain how domestic violence impacts on children during the COVID-19. First, in some instances during the lockdown the sale of alcohol was not sold, however during other times alcohol sales continued. This variable can cause incidences of domestic violence, especially in times when individuals need to socially isolate when lockdown phases change to more stringent levels.

In South Africa, the ban on alcohol was implemented with the onset of the COVID-19. The implementation of the alcohol ban in South Africa was due to high prevalence of domestic violence abuse (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:28). The South African government

implemented rules that prohibited the sale of alcohol (BBC 2020). This meant that hospitals would not be as busy during the COVID-19 pandemic (BBC 2020). Therefore, more beds would be freed for patients that have COVID-19 (BBC 2020). After the ban of alcohol was lifted on August 15, the patients in the emergency unit doubled (BBC 2020). According to the researcher Bongiwe Ndondo, who explores violence against women, consumption of alcohol fuels assaults (BBC 2020). The lifting of the alcohol ban has shown that 85 % of cases admitted to the emergency unit were related to the consumption of alcohol (BBC 2020). These include abuse, accidents, assaults, stabs, shooting and motorbike accidents (BBC 2020).

According to Scott Mahoney who was interviewed by BBC (2020), "So much alcohol dependence leads to violence and accidental harm in a country that's already struggling with healthcare provision." Mahoney (BBC 2020) says that domestic violence has been on the rise due to alcohol dependence. Krishnakumar and Verma (2021:25) resonate with these similar sentiments as they propose that when there is withdrawal of alcohol or consumption of alcohol, these can contribute to domestic violence abuse within households. The argument made is that alcohol does not merely cause individuals to become domestic violence abusers, but the alcohol withdrawal syndrome can affect the mental capacity of a person and lead to individuals becoming violent and this contributes to domestic violence (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:28).

Tewksbury and Mustaine (2014:8) explain that the use of alcohol is associated with criminal inclinations. In circumstances where individuals consume alcohol in the households, many children or other individuals are trapped. They are unable to protect themselves and become targets to violence and domestic abuse. Further research noted that if parents or other individuals consume alcohol around children, these children are likely to also consume alcohol and can become perpetrators and victims of crime depending on the situation (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:8).

3.2.4 Economic status

Crime is inexplicably found in societies that have lower economic status (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:9). Although, crime affects everyone regardless of age, race, religion, the Routine Activity Theory explains that in lower socio-economic communities, there is a lack of security or guardians (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:9). Most of the houses are not equipped

with the instruments such as locks, alarms, and gates to protect the individuals that can become victims of crime, and for this reason the individuals become defenceless and are made to be easy targets for perpetrators (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:9). In the majority of cases, the perpetrators normally associate from lower income class societies, thus making individuals living in the same areas as easy targets (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:9).

Krishnakumar and Verma (2021:25) explain that unemployment causes a lot of economic stress, and it is known to be a factor which a perpetrator is fuelled by to commit crimes. The whole world was affected by the onset of COVID-19 affecting all businesses and jobs, and many individuals were faced with disasters related to unemployment due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:28). Many businesses were affected around the world due to COVID-19 affecting the employment rates (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:28). Due to the increase and decrease in the rates of unemployment that many countries had faced, this uncertainty in an individual's status inevitably can contribute to domestic violence (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:28).

In the study by Krishnakumar and Verma (2021:26), one case noted that the victim's job during the COVID-19 pandemic had saved her from the constant domestic violence abuse from her husband – and him having a job saved her from encountering him as well. The researcher notes that in certain instances, having a job can protect certain victims from being abused regularly. Ultimately, the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic and its relation to an increase in unemployment rates and economic status could contribute to a surge in domestic violence abuse cases (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:28).

3.2.5 Community structural variables

The Routine Activity Theory states that any occurrence that risks lifestyle factors may risk one to become a victim of crime (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:10). Therefore, the various community structural variables must assist in protecting these individuals from becoming victims of crime (Tewksbury and Mustaine 2014:10).

The factors mentioned above initiate the lifestyle factors and are used to explain why crime occurs. A secondary factor that has a relation to all the variables mentioned above and

contributes to the motivation of committing a crime is anxiety and frustration (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:25). If different factors are coupled together, then this can cause frustration and anxiety. For example, Krishnakumar and Verma (2021:25) noted a specific case which explained that an alcoholic husband of a domestic violence victim had a job, but once he lost his job, the balance in the family relationship was lost and anxiety and frustration settled in.

Furthermore, Krishnakumar and Verma (2021:22), explain that the component of a motivated offender is not merely enough for the occurrence of a crime, but there must be a target which is suitable for the offender. The four components, access, inertia, value and visibility are what makes individuals more susceptible to becoming suitable targets to domestic violence abuse (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:22). However, value and inertia played a pivotal role in an individual becoming a victim of domestic violence (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:25). A victim who is seen every day by the perpetrator is a contributing factor to that individual becoming a victim of domestic violence (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:26). Accessibility and visibility of a victim is what made them more suitable targets of domestic violence and, in some instances, many women who were victims of domestic violence abuse could not go to women shelters as they could not accommodate any more women due to the rapid spread of the virus (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:28). This means that the victims were in constant contact with the domestic violence abuse (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:28).

Krishnakumar and Verma (2021:27) explain that the onset of the COVID-19 has caused a lot of uncertainties. The uncertainties, unemployment, job losses and alcohol consumption lead to people becoming frustrated and this in turn leads to them becoming motivated offenders to commit domestic violence abuse (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:27). This is evident in the Krishnakumar and Verma study (2021), as the findings revealed specifically that alcohol and unemployment are not merely a motivation for perpetrators to commit domestic violence. However, alcohol, economic status, unemployment, anxiety, and frustration which are coupled and intersected can cause incidences of domestic violence. The factors mentioned above from the study by Tewksbury and Mustaine (2014), also makes mention of certain of these factor that cause domestic violence to occur.

With the absence of a capable guardian, domestic violence would be facilitated even with the factors mentioned above. In most cases, the police are known to be the capable guardian

(Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:26). However, with the implementation of the lockdown, and the strict laws set out by the government, there were many frontline police officers that assisted in the lockdown restriction enforcing (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:26). The other 'capable guardians' such as support services, family and neighbours were also not able to intervene in domestic violence cases. Support services very rarely received any complaints and due to the restrictions, many family members could not intervene in the cases of the domestic violence which involved their children or someone close to them (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:26). In this case the family members could not act as the 'capable guardian', as they were limited to travel due to the lockdown restrictions (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:27).

In certain instances, the neighbours could not get involved as they could have been scared to intervene due to COVID-19, which they could have encountered while trying to help the victim (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:29). Also, in other cases, certain domestic violence victims did not choose to get help from the neighbours as they feared stigmatisation (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:29). For domestic violence to be prevented or stopped, the capable guardian plays a very important role, since if there is no capable guardian to protect individuals within their homes, then they become victims of abuse (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:29).

Everyone around the world had to change their usual day-to-day routines due to the COVID-19 pandemic affecting their lifestyle (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:30). Many people now stay at home and engage in their daily activities from the comfort of their own homes, therefore meaning that the routines have to be completely changed, thus resulting in a likely offender victimising or inflicting violence towards a suitable target (Krishnakumar and Verma 2021:30).

3.3 Situational Action Theory

This theory is used to explain why certain crimes happen based on the situation; it is also known as SAT. The Development Ecological Action (DEA) model is used to outline the Situational Action Theory. In order to understand the change in an individual's involvement in crime, an understanding of why crime happens and the factors that cause people to commit crime (Wikström 2019:188) are discussed. In this theory, an individual's criminal career, how they become involved in crime and the reason for engagement in these acts of crime are explained (Wikström 2019:189). As Wikström (2019:189) elucidates, an individual's involvement in crime would always vary, and in doing so the way they conduct the crime would also vary.

The development and life-course criminology, also known as DLC criminology is used as a concept to understand why individuals commit different types of crimes. The DLC includes information about criminal careers and characteristics of criminal offenders (Wikström 2019:189). According to Wikström (2019:189), "People vary in their crime involvement, and among those involved in repeated offending, they vary in their pathways in crime." This is suggestive of the fact that individuals that have criminal inclinations select the type of crime that they want to participate in based on the situation. To understand why an individual chose to engage in a specific type of crime, there needs to be a clear distinguished difference and understanding concerning causes and predictors of that specific outcome (Wikström 2019:190). There has to be a good, credible reason as to why that crime had occurred based on the situation. The researcher explains that in situations of domestic violence, there has to a plausible cause as to why the perpetrators have an inclination towards committing the act of domestic violence to the child or any other individual. In other words, there has to be a question asked based on the outcome of the criminal situation (Wikström 2019:190).

The Situational Action Theory is a theory that advances beyond the causes of crime and focuses on the triggers of the crime that advances an individual's path in a certain crime and their criminal career (Wikström 2019:191). This theory is also relevant as it also explains why individuals commit certain crimes, the environmental factors and the interaction between individuals that lead to the crime being committed, and clarification of the process that includes personal and environmental factors that criminals use to drive the crime (Wikström 2019:191).

3.3.1 The Developmental Ecological Action Model (DEA) of Situational Action Theory (SAT)

This model explains the reason behind an individual's criminal career (Wikström 2019:192). It also examines their characteristics and choice of a certain crime for criminals based on the following principles:

- The basis for explaining people's criminal careers is the understanding of what moves people to engage in acts of crime (action theory).
- Acts of crime are an outcome of the interaction of people's crime propensity (dependent on their personal morals and ability to exercise self-control) and

criminogenic exposure (dependent on the moral context of the opportunities and frictions they encounter in the setting in which they take part) (ecological perspective).

- Stability and change in people's crime involvement (and differential pathways in crime) is a consequence of (patterns of) stability and change in people's crime propensity and/or criminogenic exposure (development and change).

- The main drivers of stability and change in people's crime propensity are the psychosocial processes of moral education and cognitive nurturing, and the main drivers of stability and change in people's criminogenic exposure are the socioecological processes of social and self-selection (drivers).

- The content and efficacy of the psychosocial and socioecological explanatory processes involved are context dependent, that is, dependent on relevant cultural (rule-based) and structural (resource distribution-based) features of the society and its constituent parts in which these processes occur (context) (Wikström 2019:192).

The question the Situational Action Theory proposes is, "what moves people to commit crime and why crime happens?" Justifiably, the theory addresses what moves people towards conducting a certain action that breaks the law (Wikström 2019:192). Situational Action Theory advises that individuals do not worry about the circumstances and consequences, but they commit the act since they see the criminal act as feasible and practical (Wikström 2019:193). The researcher explains that in cases of domestic violence in households during the COVID-19 pandemic, the perpetrator commits the acts of domestic violence to their partner, spouse or children as they see it feasible to do so due in the lockdown and lack of outside interaction.

As Cluver et al. (2020:1) observe, many couples living at home with children may not make enough money during this COVID-19 lockdown, and there are many more challenges associated with the lockdown, as the challenges are intensified. This can cause incidences of domestic violence which children can become victims off or witnesses to. In these instances, the perpetrators commit the act of crime as they fail to practice self-

control, and fail to live up to their own ethics, morals and values (Wikström 2019:193). This is normally caused by external pressures (Wikström 2019:193), or as in the case of this study, by the stresses of the COVID-19 lockdown regulations. In other cases, it can be caused by living in lockdown with a domestic violence abuser. Following this, the crime committed by the individual is known to be a process-initiated choice due to a specific motivator based on the criminal's tendencies and the inducements from the environment (Wikström 2019:193). Figure 3.1 shows the Situational Action Theory model describing the causes of crime as per the Situational Action Theory.

Figure 3. 1: Model on the Situational Action Theory and the causes of crime
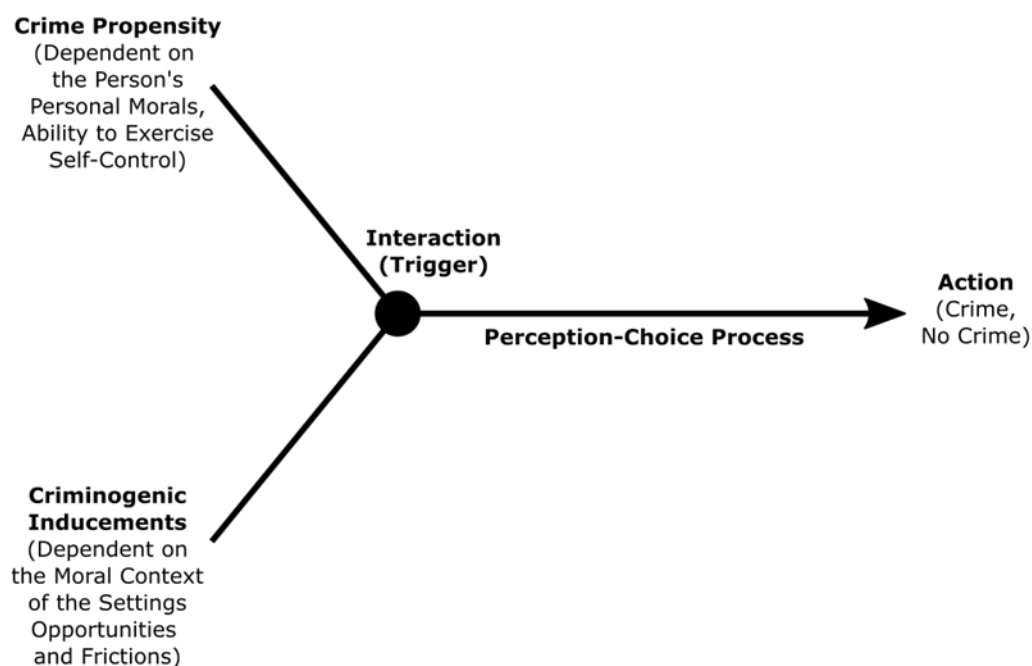
Fig.1 The causes of crime according to SAT

Source: Wikström (2019:194)

An analysis of the model above describes the elements based on the propensities and inducements, the trigger and the outcome. This model explains that every individual's 'crime propensity' and 'criminogenic inducements' are different (Wikström 2019:193). Propensities

refer to people being different and everyone having their own thought processes, morals and values (Wikström 2019:193). Criminogenic inducements refer to the different environments that can encourage crime (Wikström 2019:193). Hence, the incidence of a crime taking place is based on the person, the environment, and the people within the same environment (Wikström 2019:193).

The inclusion of the crime propensity and the similar criminogenic inducements work together and are activated. Overall, the 'interaction' is the main aim, and the trigger (interaction) is what results in the crime being committed (Wikström 2019:193). The crime propensity is varied, and individual choose specific crimes to commit (Wikström 2019:194). For example, some criminals may choose shoplifting as being feasible and practical for them (Wikström 2019:194). The issue of domestic violence shows that due to the circumstances that the COVID-19 lockdown has created, the feasible and practical criminal act to commit within the household is domestic violence abuse. The 'Perception-Choice Process' shown in Figure 3.1 relates to the notion of the individual who has a specific goal in mind. It also relates to an alternative criminal act based on the motive and lastly it is the self-control that the individual must introduce based on the choice of committing such crime (Wikström 2019:193).

In addition, the Situational Action Theory also focuses on the individual's morals and values. This theory states that every individual has their own morals and values and can make up their mind and distinguish between right and wrong – value based (Wikström 2019:193). For example, when thinking about committing an act of crime, the person has the capability to exercise restraint due to their morals and values which are innate, and if they are pressured into doing it then their will and self-control should also help them make moral decisions (Wikström 2019:193). It is important to realise that the environment can either encourage or discourage an individual's progression towards committing a particular crime. Whether the individual will continue with the crime or not is dependent on the opportunities that follow and the outcome (Wikström 2019:193).

In the final analysis, an individual's morality is meant to guide them in any situation (Barton-Crosby 2020). Hence;

> "Rather than defining crime by the various types of behaviour that can be categorized as acts of crime, SAT focuses on what all acts of crime have in common: they are all acts of (moral) rule-breaking(Barton-Crosby 2020:3)."

Corporal punishment in certain countries is prohibited (Barton-Crosby 2020:4). For instance, if a parent uses corporal punishment against their child when knowing it is illegal and against the law to do so, the Situational Action Theory will elucidate why the individual would still use corporal punishment even after knowing the regulations against it (Barton-Crosby 2020:4). Hence, the theory focuses on the morals behind the criminal act and why individuals break the laws and rules (Barton-Crosby 2020:4). Situational Action Theory follows the role of morality and being guided by human nature (Barton-Crosby 2020:11). The key to understanding this theory is to understand the morality of the individual, to justify why they break the law (Barton-Crosby 2020:12). The theory focuses on important components that relate to an individual's behaviour based on the situation and that the crime will result due to the chosen decision that the individual makes.

3.4 Conclusion

The Routine Activity Theory and the Situational Action Theory were applied to the explanation of domestic violence as it aimed to provide an analysis on the reasons why crime is committed during the COVID-19 pandemic and reflected on why the 'Routine Activity' and 'Situational Action' of an individual results in an individual becoming a victim of abuse. The analysis of the Routine Activity Theory concluded that an individual's lifestyle can be used to understand victimisation and how the crimes occur based on subsequent factors. Further findings show that the results from the Routine Activity Theory indicated that in a household where domestic violence exists during the COVID-19 lockdown, the three elements are present. The results of the Situational Action Theory indicate that an environment can either encourage or discourage an individual's progression towards committing a particular crime. The Situational Action Theory and the DEA model explain the individual's involvement in crime and why people commit crime. The SAT also explains that due to the intensified challenges

associated with COVID-19 people commit crimes. Evidently the significant changes in an individual's routine and a change in the individual's situation because of the social isolation will lead to domestic violence abuse.

Understanding these two theories is important in order to grasp the phenomenon of domestic violence abuse that occurs due to the lockdown down measures implemented by governments because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, the Routine Activity Theory and the Situational Action Theory play a critical role in this thesis as these two frameworks helped to facilitate all aspects of the methodology (next chapter to follow) used in this thesis. Cogitating the context and the implementation of the theoretical frameworks in this chapter, the next chapter introduces the research methodology. The two selected theories strengthened the research as the focus and content was set out to provide a link between the literature, the methodology and the results of the thesis.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

The researcher described the research methodology that was followed in conducting this study. A systematic review was used in this study to synthesise the results from other qualitative and quantitative research in order for it to be reported (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363). A systematic review does not include individual entities, but it includes research reports of different research that have been conducted (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363). The purpose of this study is to identify the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown through a systematic review. This chapter describes the research design and the methodological approach that was chosen for this study. The chapter presented an understanding of systematic reviews, research paradigm, research approach, research design, data collection, sampling, inclusion and exclusion criteria, data analysis, search outcome, validity and reliability, ethical considerations, and limitations.

4.1.1 A Systematic review

Systematic review refers to the research methods being rigorous and explicit for finding, selecting, and analysing reports for a particular research study (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363). The following points below explain the process as to how a systematic review is synthesised to find the best research report for the study. This process was also used for this study by the researcher.

- An extensive search is done which is specified for each research question. This is reviewed by using certain search databases with the inclusion of specified keywords; and the limitation of relevant research reports based on the qualitative-quantitative inclusion and exclusion criteria as set out by your study (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363). For example, research reports in the inclusion criteria can include conference papers, dissertations, and articles in the sample (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363).

- The research reports were selected as per the criteria and now each report is evaluated based on the quality (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363). In this step the reports are

analysed based on the data collection methodology and researcher bias, and so on (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363).

- The research reports are read and explored for possible themes, theories, investigative knowledge, ideas, models, and concepts (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363).

- The finalised selected research reports are meta-analysed for statistical purposes and thereafter a systematic review is written based on the findings from the studies (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363).

Concurrently there is no definite way in which a systematic review can be conducted aside from the points mentioned above, but the researcher's step would vary based on the research questions and the methodologies used in each study (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:363). Resonating with this statement, the researcher noted that the reason for the systematic review being employed in this study was due to the fact that any other type of methodology which involves coming into contact with people was going to be hazardous during the COVID-19 pandemic. The safety of the researcher and other individuals had to be taken into consideration, hence the reason why this study had to be in the form of a desktop systematic review.

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 Research paradigm

Wahyuni (2012:69) explains that a philosohical dimension has a direct reference to a research paradigm. This paradigm that the researcher selected for this study is pragmatism. The Pragmatic paradigm as a movement was started by Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914) during the 19th century (Maxcy 2003:52). Thereafter, John Dewey (1859-1931) revolutionised and elaborated on the paradigm to a notion that stated, "what is real is occurring now" (Maxcy 2003:53). Put simply, this paradigm is best used to interrogate ideas and can be best used to generate value from research. This is a mixed methods study and, therefore, the pragmatism research paradigm was the best paradigm to be selected as this assumes both qualitative and quantitative research (Antwi and Hamza 2015:224). The researchers choice in the selection of this pardigm is guided by the focus towards answering the research questions. This is guided by the research questions that are set out in this study. This concurs with Antwi and Hamza

(2015:224) who explain that as a mixed methods research approach, this paradigm focuses on the importance of data based on answering the research questions. The research question would be used to determine the framework to be selected and there is more inclination towards qualitative and quantitative data in order to understand the social reality much better (Wahyuni 2012:71). Furhermore, the researcher notes that with the understading of the research questions in the study, the data analysis chapter proved the attribution of selecting the pragmatic paradigm.

4.2.2 Research approach

4.2.2.1 Mixed methods approach

The mixed methods approach was used in this study to answer the research questions, get a greater understanding of the topic, and find the cause-and-effect via the collection of secondary data. The mixed method approach is the culmination of both qualitative and quantitative data (Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark 2016:312). This approach builds on quantitative data and qualitative literature in order to contextualise interpretations (Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark 2016:312). The research in this study focused on the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown. In doing so, the application of one approach did not suffice as the study was very complex. One form of data collection limits the understanding of the research problem. The quantitative data consists of numeric information which can be in any form, and the qualitative data consists of text information (Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark 2016:313).

The mixed methods approach is appropriate for explaining the relationship between different variables (Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark 2016:313). This approach was adopted in this study as it was used to create an in-depth analysis and provide solutions to practical problems (Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark 2016:313). Both forms of data were necessary to understand the research problem. The rationale for using the mixed methods approach was that the qualitative data supplemented the minute collection of quantitative data and was used to identify the drastic increases in domestic violence cases in South Africa and around the world. The use of one research approach in this study was not enough to address the complexity of the situation, and therefore the mixed methods approach was employed for sufficient data to be collected, analysed, and examined.

4.2.2.2 Convergent mixed methods

The concurrent triangulation design is the most common and well-known approach in mixed methodology (Creswell, 2006). This study utilised a variant of the concurrent triangulation design called the convergent mixed methods approach, or 'QUALITATIVE (quantitative)' approach. This procedure in the study entails the collection, analysis and mixing of data. The study comprised of a systematic review of secondary research and data and incorporated a convergent mixed methods approach, as both qualitative and quantitative secondary data was collected, analysed separately and then merged. The researcher selected the convergent approach 'QUALITATIVE (quantitative)' based on the purpose of the study, and the characterisation of the convergent design which refers to the collection of qualitative and quantitative data in accordance with the same research question and objectives (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:261).

The notational convention written after the method name as 'QUALITATIVE /QUANTITATIVE or (qualitative/quantitative)' is used to describe which aspect of the study contributes a huge amount of data to its overall design (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:261). If the notation is to be written as 'QUALITATIVE + QUANTITATIVE' therefore that means that there is an equal contribution of qualitative data and quantitative data (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:261). The 'QUALITATIVE + quantitative' notation expresses that the research has predominant qualitative aspects with the quantitative aspect playing a minor role (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019: 261).

The convergent mixed methods approach in this research study used the form cited as 'QUALITATIVE (quantitative)', which denotes a minute quantitative aspect embedded within the larger data of the qualitative research (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:261). In this case, since 'QUALITATIVE' is written in uppercase, this suggests that the qualitative data has a major contribution to the study (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:261). The 'quantitative' suggests that the quantitative data has a minor contribution to the study (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:261). The reason for the researcher choosing the convergent mixed methods design 'QUALITATIVE (quantitative)' was to compare the qualitative data with the quantitative reports. Both sets of data (qualitative and quantitative) were collected, analysed and merged together in-order to be reported on and interpreted. Figure 4.1 is a visual representation of the convergent design approach that was used in this study.

Figure 4.1:The convergent design approach
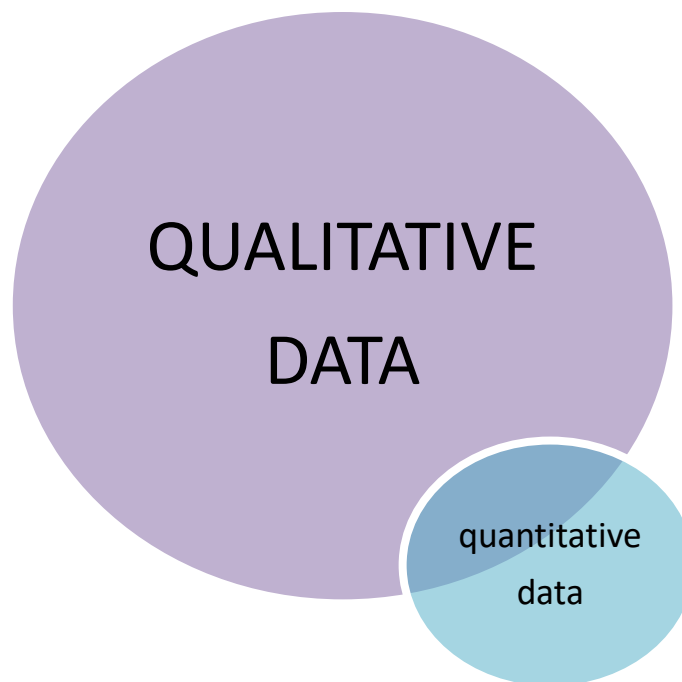
Source: Author

The rationale for choosing the convergent mixed methods approach 'QUALITATIVE (quantitative)' included the following:

- The convergent approach is a very popular mixed methods design.

- Both the qualitative and quantitative data were collected and merged simultaneously in one stage to develop a more complete understanding of the research problem.

- The qualitative data was used for the majority of the study, while the quantitative data was used in a minute amount to supplement the research (Ivankova, Creswell & Plano Clark 2016:313).

The purpose of this convergent mixed methods study was to identify the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 lockdown using a systematic review. The goal of the quantitative phase of the study was to determine if the cases of domestic violence increased as a result of a lockdown via the collection of reports that examine domestic violence data. The goal of the qualitative phase looked at the effects of social isolation, the impact of domestic violence, the legislation towards domestic violence and the recommendations of effective

strategies. The quantitative component of the study looked at the rates of domestic violence before and during the COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa and across the world. The qualitative aspect of the study examined the rest of the research questions. Figure 4.2 is a representation of the convergent mixed methods design. The 'QUALITATIVE' + quantitative' methodology has been implemented in this research.

Figure 4.2: The convergent mixed methods approach QUALITATIVE (quantitative) procedure that the researcher implemented in this study
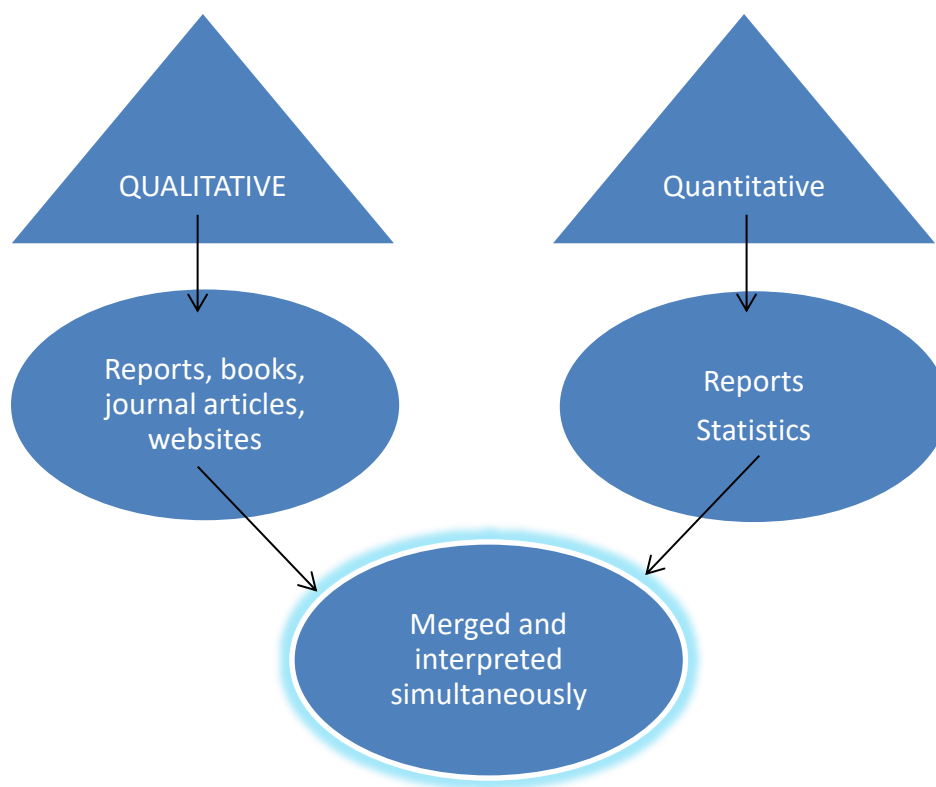
Source: Modified from Creswell and Clark (2017:126)

4.2.3 Research design

The research design is described as systematic process that is guided by a theory or research questions (Kumatongo and Muzata 2021:20). Ultimately it is an outline or framework that has an association with a paradigm (Kumatongo and Muzata 2021:20). The research design selected for this study was 'triangulation', this was chosen based in the inferences made on the research paradigm and the mixed methods approach. Triangulation embraces the collected data so that it can be used to support the conclusion of the study (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:93). With triangulation the research can be made to be more convincing due to the addition of quantitative and qualitative data that lead to the same conclusion (Leedy, Ormrod

& Johnson 2019:261). This research design is very common in the mixed methods study as it is used to address the specific research question (Leedy, Ormrod & Johnson 2019:94). The research design is often guided by a paradigm. Figure 4.3 is a representation of the research design selected based on the pragmatic paradigm used in this study.

Figure 4.3: Pragmatic research paradigm

PRAGMATISM
[mixed methods]

RESEARCH DESIGNS
▪ Sequential Explanatory
▪ Sequential Exploatory
▪ Sequential Transformative

CONCURRENT DESIGNS
▪ Concurrent triangulation
▪ Concurrent nested
▪ Concurrent transformative
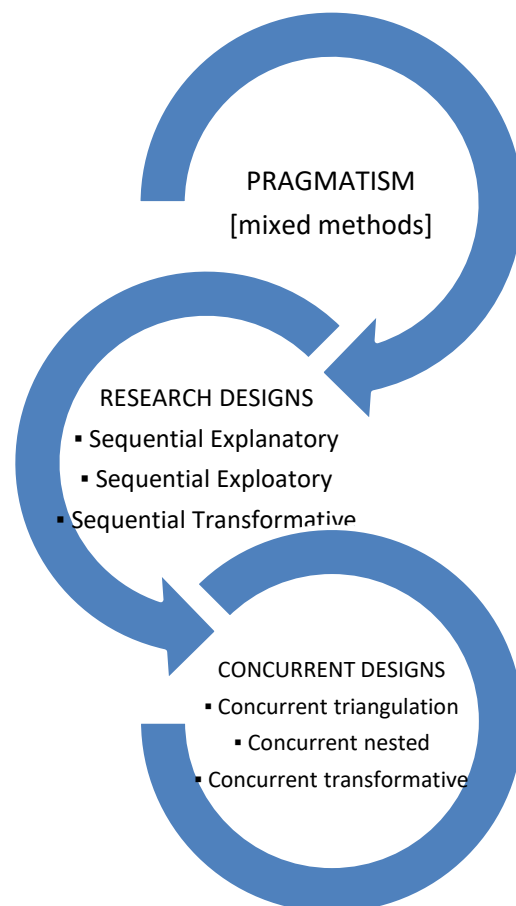
Source: Adapted from Kumatongo and Muzata (2021:30)

Figure 4.3 shows the connection between the research designs and paradigm that can be selected. Given the pragmatic paradigm adopted in this study and the importance placed on research questions, it would be more appropriate to employ the concurrent triangulation methodology as it provides the basis for data convergence on multiple data sources in order to emerge findings. Triangulation of literature and reports was used to identify themes and create an analysis of the data in this study.

4.3 Data collection

4.3.1 Sampling

There are two types of sampling classifications known as probability sampling methods and non-probability sampling methods (Maree and Pietersen 2016:192). This study would make use of the non-probability sampling method. The non-probability sampling methods consist of, convenience sampling, quota sampling, snowball sampling and purposive sampling (Maree and Pietersen 2016:197). There is no accurate sampling in non-probability as there is with probability sampling (Maree and Pietersen 2016:192). Therefore, there is no randomness and no principle related to probability and accurate selection of sample (Maree and Pietersen 2016:197).

In research, it is not advised to use the non-probability sampling technique, but there are certain situations in which it is considered (Maree and Pietersen 2016:197). The list of situations is mentioned below:

- The results of the research study are needed immediately.
- The instrument used for measuring first needs to be tested.
- Before the implementation of the survey, there has to be preliminary studies executed.
- Lack of financial funding, tools or resources.
- Contact to the population in the study is difficult to access (Maree and Pietersen 2016:197).

Echoing with this list of situations, the researcher implemented non-probability sampling, specifically purposive sampling. As this research was a systematic review, and there being no actual sampling population, the researcher made use of the purposive sampling method to select the research resources. Purposive sampling refers to sampling that is conducted based on a specified issue in mind (Maree and Pietersen 2016:198). Purposive sampling selects material or literature with a specific purpose in mind and deliberately to the central research or key concepts (Creswell and Clark 2017:262). The study focused on a systematic review of the impact of domestic violence on children. It incorporates secondary data analysis and, therefore, a purposive sampling technique was used to sample the material and not a specific sample

population. Purposive sampling was also used for selecting data or material that was relevant to the research.

4.3.1.1 Systematic search strategy for identification of relevant studies in the review

In order to identify the relevant research articles, purposive sampling was used; for the reason of selecting material which is relevant to answering the research questions. The data that was collected included the following characteristics: characteristics that were internationally comparable, violence that was experienced in a casual pathway, risk factors of violence that is positively associated, factors negatively associate with violence (Cerna-Turoff, Fang, Meierkord, Wu, Yanguela, Bangirana and Meinck 2021), and violence experienced as a result of the lockdown.

Literature search: An exhaustive search for research articles were searched using the following keywords, "COVID-19", "domestic violence", "social isolation", "children and domestic violence", "family violence", "violence", "lockdown", "impact", "mental health", "caregiving patterns", "resilience", "cope", "increased or decreased", "legislation", "effective strategies", and "recommendations". These search item words were used in a combination with research questions to arrive with articles in the relevant databases. The data was collected from the articles, websites, data reports, and so on, and examined in order to extrapolate the relevant information needed for this research study.

Electronic databases: All secondary data would be publicly available. The known data-sources for the relevant articles where from several databases, including Google, Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Wiley Online, and Science Direct, which are publicly available online.

Internet searching: The search engine google.com was made use of to find website articles or news articles that resonated with domestic violence and children during the COVID-19. The keywords used were the same as stated for the literature search.

4.3.2 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The studies that were included were inclusive of reports, books, journal articles and websites. The search was only restricted to English studies and included data and literature from all

geographical areas. Articles were selected based on the research questions and included case studies as well as literature reviews. The articles were selected from the year 2015 to 2022. Secondary data, dissertations, illegitimate statistic sources and articles that were not in the English language were excluded.

Table 4.1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Inclusion	- Reports, books, journal articles, websites - Published between 2015 – 2022 - English written - Grounded theory - Selecting research that answers the defined questions. - Include Articles on children - Search terms: Domestic+violence+children+lockdown+impact - Literature from all geographical areas - Reviewed articles only	- Reports - Statistics - Published between 2019 – 2022 - All Geographical statistics
Exclusion	- Dissertations - Published before 2015 - Not English	- Illegitimate statistic sources - Data before 2015

Source: Author

4.4 Data analysis

After the collection of data an analysis was done. The meta-analysis was not feasible as the data collection was more inclined to qualitative results. A synthesis of data was proposed and was used as a method of data analysis to synthesise the findings from journal articles, reports, and so on. Due to the range of different journal articles that were selected, some which included case studies and others that are systematic journal articles, the researcher selected them to synthesise the data as it is not feasible to use meta-analysis for this systematic review. The analysis of data included an examination of case studies, statistical data from other countries, and their relationship to the literature review and the theoretical frameworks used in the study. The synthesis included both the qualitative and quantitative data from the selected reports, journal articles, and so on.

The analysis of data was done as per follows:

- The selected articles were evaluated and analysed and compared with the research questions.

- Thematic analysis was done on all the research studies from the search results which correspond with the researcher's research questions.

- Articles were included and excluded based on whether incidences of domestic violence were included or not and whether the articles were repeated.

- The research was structured into themes; this is done by selecting the research findings that corresponds with the research questions.

- The data was sorted, collected, reported, and analysed in accordance with the specific research questions in the study.

- Similar research from different journal articles, and reports was merged to fall under one similar selected theme.

- In the interpretation of results section, the relevant articles were used, and the results were summarised, and the findings synthesised.

4.4.1 Search outcome

The results from the data analysis were extracted in the way presented in Figure 4.4. The eligibility of studies for the literature review was selected based on the diagram presented in

Table 4.1. The literature search to select relevant articles pertaining to the domestic violence towards children and including the COVID-19 pandemic was done from 2015 to 2022. The database initially yielded 114 100 results. A total of 71 eligible studies formed the basis of the analysis. Figure 4.4 shows the process of the search outcomes for retrieval of relevant and eligible articles and research.

Figure 4.4: Flow diagram showing search outcomes for research articles
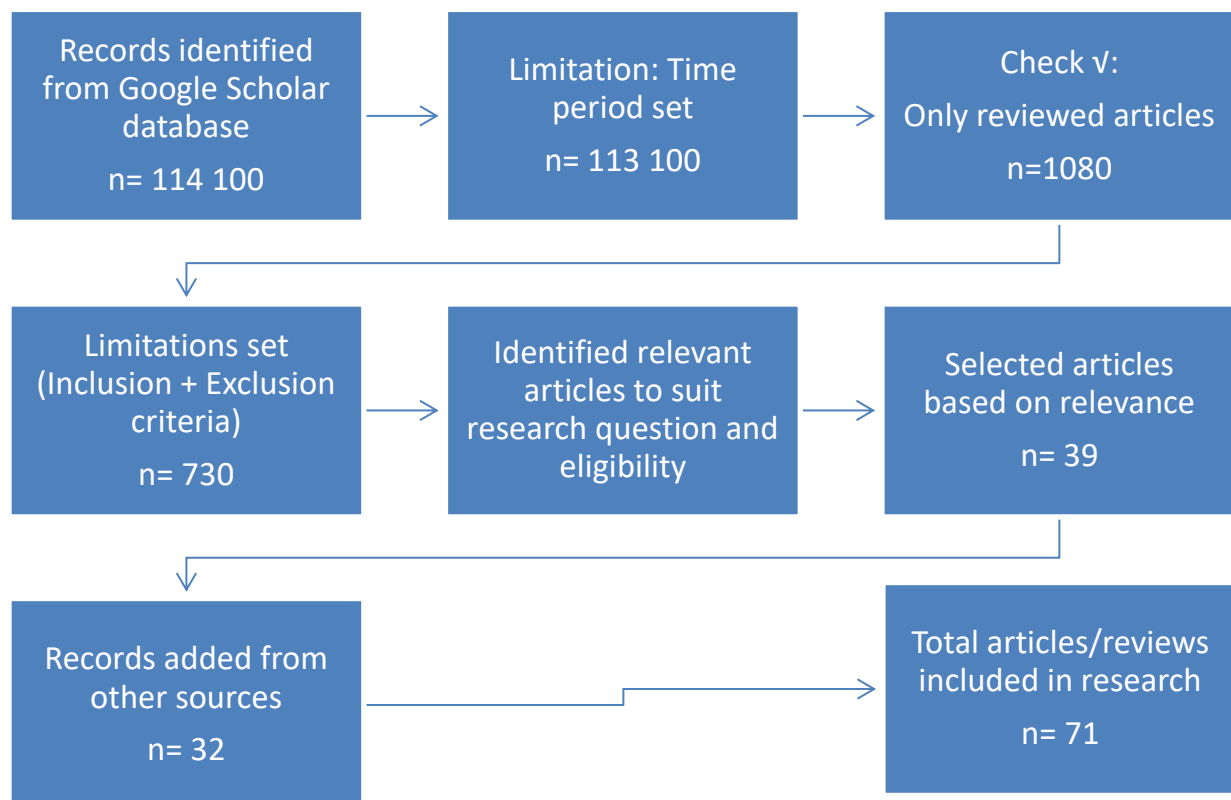
Source: Author's own

4.5 Validity, reliability, and Rigour

4.5.1 Validity

In the research study, the following points of validity are reported:

- Properly defined research questions and objectives: This suggests that in order for literature to be found, the research questions must be defined in accordance with the study title. The research questions must be constructed and directed back at the title in order for the study to be applicable.

- Having transparent inclusion and exclusion criteria: This means that the inclusion and exclusion criteria set out in the research guided the researcher to select literature based on the similarity with the title of study and on the criteria of importance.

- Evaluating titles and abstracts according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria: all research papers must be read, and it should be relevant to the research study being written.

- Recognise the limitations of the study: the researcher must conform to the research limitations in order for there to be validity.

- Reading of valid sources: literature sources that are dependable, accurate, trustworthy, and valid must be read and included in research study.

4.5.2 Reliability

The points regarding reliability are addressed below:

- Inclusion + Exclusion criteria: quality of selected articles, study, or research: the articles selected must be reliable and of a trustworthy source.

- Publication bias: the published academic research must be in line and reliable with the results and conclusion of the study

- Copyright issues to be checked: studies not to be duplicated or copied.

- Potential plagiarism of sources: research studies to be checked and made sure that it is of relevant, credible, and reliable literature that is to be in the academic research.

- Application of valid sources: the academic sources are of superior quality, peer reviewed, are credible and there is evidence to prove the reliability in the study.

Table 4.2: Summary of validity and reliability

Validity	Reliability
Properly defined research questions and objectives	Quality of selected articles, study, or research.
Having transparent inclusion and exclusion criteria.	Publication bias
Evaluating titles and abstracts according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria.	Copyright issues to be checked
Recognize the limitations of the study.	Potential plagiarism of sources
Reading of valid sources	Application of valid sources

Source: Author's own

4.6 Ethical considerations

This study is a desktop systematic review, and secondary data was researched and reported on. Therefore, there were no appropriate ethical considerations that were taken as it is not discussed in systematic reviews. Typically, there is no collection on personal, confidential or sensitive data in a systematic review (Suri 2020:41). A systematic review focuses on secondary data and report on data or evidence that is easily accessible (Suri 2020:41). However, in the view of forgoing discussions on systematic reviews, and the involvement of it becoming more methodologically inclusive (Suri 2020:41), it is critical to understand the ethical considerations. With the obligation to understand what ethical considerations are, the researcher noted that the ethical guidelines were adhered to by all the case studies that were used in this thesis. For the purpose of understanding ethical considerations within systematic reviews, an article by Suri (2020) which describes all guiding principles for quality research would be mentioned in this research. These guiding principles are similar to ethical considerations, but they are guiding principles to support the research.

The guiding principles show understanding and make other researchers cautious and aware of the issues that can be presented with the selection of data in systematic research (Suri 2020:43). Ultimately, these guiding principles were adhered when the researcher selected the articles for the study:

1. Appropriate epistemological orientation

2. Appropriate purpose

3. Searching for relevant literature

4. Evaluating, interpreting and distilling evidence from selected reports

5. Constructing connected understandings

6. Communicating with an audience (Suri 2020:42).

4.7 Limitations

The COVID-19 lockdown resulted in limited access to face-to-face interviews, and therefore the study was limited to a desk-top systematic review. Furthermore, the findings may vary which can impact on the research study, as the COVID-19 lockdown period started in March 2020 and is ongoing, but for the purposes of this study the period being analysed for the COVID-19 statistics and literature related to COVID-19 is limited to 2019–2022. This is based on data which is readily available. These limitations could have an impact on the dependability and validity of the research study.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the method that was used in this study. The focus of this section was designed towards understanding a systematic review, the methodology, data collection, data analysis, validity and reliability, ethical considerations and limitations being detailed in this section. The sampling, search criteria and inclusion and exclusion criteria as well as search outcome was discussed. This section provided a very detailed approach to the key design choices selected for the purpose of this research. The research paradigm, research approach, and research design were presented and showed cohesiveness between them in the study. The next chapter details the data analysis and describes the interpretation of the results.

CHAPTER 5: INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presented and interpreted the results of findings from various articles and case studies that were included in the literature review. The objectives are reiterated in this chapter through a synthesis of evidence so that the interpretation of the results of the study is applied to each objective as set out at the beginning of the study. The analysis of data is intended to illustrate and provide insight into the results pertaining to the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19. The synthesis of data is also intended to present a basis for the research questions, which provided a broader perspective through the collection of qualitative data rather than undertaking a meta-analysis.

For the research study thirty-nine [39] research articles were selected and analysed. The documents were selected and evaluated specifically in the literature review and included for information based on the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 pandemic. After reviewing the data, the analysis and interpretation is immediately presented.

5.2 Data analysis

Various authors have indicated that a lockdown scenario poses a risk to domestic violence. This was confirmed by UNICEF in its studies. The Routine Activity Theory supports this finding as it indicates that when the circumstances and factors are in place, the risk of an event taking place is high. The circumstance in the case of the lockdown is that there is an event which resulted in a lockdown, with both a perpetrator and a victim in place with the lack of a suitable guardian. The Situational Action Theory also supports this as it indicates that the environment and situation that an individual is in causes him or her to become a victim of violence.

5.2.1 The risk of domestic violence on children posed by the lockdown

From the data analysis of this specific theme, the results of the analysis of various articles suggests that lockdown does pose a risk to domestic violence on children. Seven articles reviewed indicate that the risk of domestic violence has increased due to the Covid-19 lockdown. The first article by the United Nations Children's Fund (2020) explains that everyone's life has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Children across the world have

experienced violence, even prior to the COVID-19 virus but there is increasing concern, as the violence has increased drastically (United Nations Children's Fund 2020). The second article by Fouché, Fouché, and Theron (2020) also concurred that the implementation of the lockdown exposed children to abuse and neglect. The lockdown caused even more harm to children that have a history of being abused (United Nations Children's Fund 2020). The next article indicated that the social isolation and quarantine rules as set out by government due to the pandemic exacerbated violence against children (Peterman et al. 2020:3). There was increased risk of violence against children as children were exposed to the potential perpetrator (Peterman et al. 2020:10).

Due to the increasing level of domestic violence and abuse cases of children in South Africa, during these unprecedented times of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been increased concern about children and their safety since, in some instances, these children were in proximity with their potential abusers (Haffejee and Levine 2020:3). Piquero et al. (2021:3) echoed the exact same sentiments as they stated that the lockdown helped citizens from a health vantage perspective, but the adverse negative outcome was that it was associated with domestic violence abuse towards children.

Another article by Roje Đapić, Buljan Flander and Prijatelj (2020:184) confirmed that there was a greater risk for sexual abuse towards children in the COVID-19 social isolation crisis, which could occur with a perpetrator in the household or through technological devices, which is as a result of the disorientated emotions that adults face. Boserup, McKenney and Elkbuli (2020) consolidated this theme by indicating that these stay-at-home orders may in fact worsen cases of domestic violence.

These research articles did collectively reference domestic violence abuse towards children as increasing. The articles indicated that domestic violence abuse towards children was known globally, but the lockdown and the effect of social isolation increased the risk of domestic violence abuse towards children. These authors also indicated that for some children their homes were places of danger as they no longer felt safe anymore after experiencing domestic violence abuse. The stress that was experienced between family members increased the risk of domestic violence abuse towards children. Apart from the stress, the alcohol abuse in a socially isolated environment also caused more problems within the family dynamics as alcohol is

known to fuel violence. Certain children became significantly affected by domestic violence, and certain children became ill-disciplined.

Most articles mention that children were affected by the domestic violence and this in turn had an impact on their mental and physical development. The review of the articles indicated that children had really suffered during this COVID-19 pandemic. The articles also indicated that for many children around the world, the effects that the COVID-19 had on them would have an impact in their future.

Certain articles reviewed also indicated that the implementation of the well-intentioned COVID-19 lockdown was effective in reducing the rapid spread of the infectious virus but had the negative impact of increasing the risk of domestic violence abuse towards children and women. Domestic violence abuse towards children was known globally, but the lockdown and the effect of social isolation induced by COVID-19 increased the risk of domestic violence abuse on children. Some children became victims of domestic violence abuse during the lockdown, or they became witnesses of domestic violence to other members in the family which traumatised them. Domestic violence abuse increased drastically during the lockdown since is the lockdown was a major risk factor in domestic violence abuse. The research suggests that the main reason for the increase in domestic violence abuse during the lockdown was social isolation which caused stress as were living in the same household. Children were neglected and abused, as they lived in the same household as their abuser.

Schools and day-care facilities were closed due to the strict lockdown measures that were put in place to prevent children from contracting the COVID-19. This meant that majority of the children had to stay indoors at home. For children, ideal homes are spaces where they are supposed to feel safe, but research findings revealed that they were no longer safe anymore since they were infested with domestic violence abuse. The lockdown has negatively affected the relationships between parents and children, as parents become stressed, angry and emotionally drained. The parents were stressed by financial difficulties, job loss and so on. The research showed that since the parents had to work from home, and teach children, they became even more stressed. Certain parents abused their children due to the stress they experience during the COVID-19 lockdown. The children also lived with the perpetrators of domestic violence abuse throughout the lockdown which exposed them to violence and abuse.

The children are affected by the domestic violence and this in turn affected their mental and physical development. For many children across the world, the COVID-19 pandemic had long-term effects on them. The virus alone did not affect them but the distress that the children faced after the abuse without support and resources would affect them mentally and physically. For this reason, governments need to place more emphasis on the importance of domestic violence abuse on children and the effects it has on children because during the lockdown the children that are isolated are the most vulnerable.

5.2.2 The impact of domestic violence on children during COVID-19

An important theme that emerged from the articles is that domestic violence had an impact on children during the COVID-19 pandemic and the violence were a result of stress, alcoholism, financial issues and loss of employment due to the COVID-19 lockdown. Parents became affected psychologically by these issues, and in turn many children became the victims of violence and abuse.

Two case studies were identified revealed the impact of to domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first case is the Haffejee and Levine's (2020) study and the second case is the Cerna-Turoff et al.'s (2021) study.

Haffejee and Levine's (2020) study was on the impact and the experiences of the social isolation on children during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study participants included a sample of 32 children that live in Gauteng and were from the Child Youth and Care Centre (CYCC). According to the study, the 32 children chose to participate in the study voluntarily. The methods of collecting information for the research purpose of the study by Haffejee and Levine (2020) were through draw-and-write procedures which were qualitative, participatory approaches. The research revealed that children who did not have homes to live in during the lockdown were dependent on multiple differential systems for their safety. These children were highly defenceless during this time. In addition, there was pressure on facilities that look after children due to the lockdown.

After collection of data from children's experiences on the lockdown during the COVID-19, the research revealed that many, if not all, children experienced a range of emotions (Haffejee and Levine 2020:6). The children experienced feelings of anxiety, sadness, fear, hopelessness, worry, discomfort, frustration, and anger (Haffejee and Levine 2020:6). These feelings were related to the unknown COVID-19 virus and not being able to meet their family and friends due to the lockdown (Haffejee and Levine 2020:6). The Images 5.1 and 5.2 shown below were drawn by the child participants of this study and reveal their feelings and the emotions which experienced during the COVID-19 lockdown.

Image 5.1: Child's feelings relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown
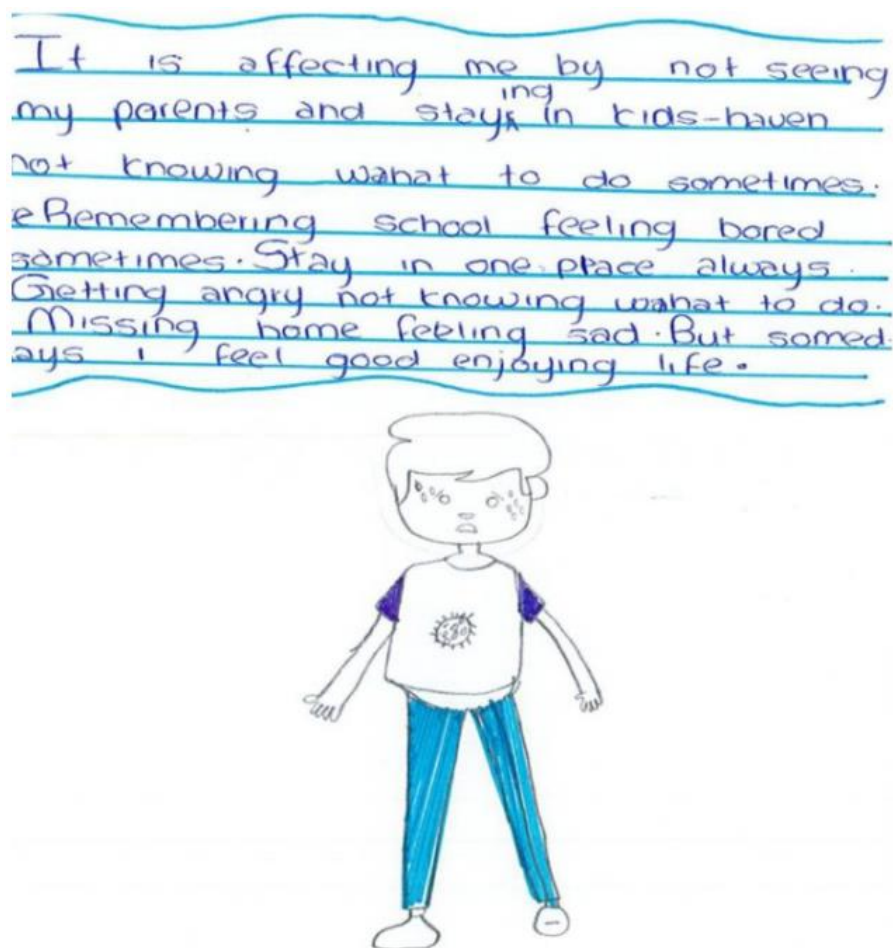
Source: Adapted from Haffejee and Levine (2020:7)

Further investigation of Image 5.1 shows that the child drew tears in the picture, which was a reflection of himself. The list of emotions as illustrated by the child in the picture was as follows: sad, upset, angry, disappointed, and despair. This image also portrayed that they were trying so hard to put a smile on my face and they felt sad when they remember that they cannot attend school (Haffejee and Levine 2020:7). The researcher notes that the passage written by the child conveys their despair towards the COVID-19 lockdown. Similarly, Bartlett, Griffin & Thomson (2020) explain that when a child's life becomes disrupted, they become emotionally affected. These children do not have a daily routine and, therefore, there was unpredictability and no structure for them, adjustments which affected them mentally and emotionally (Bartlett, Griffin & Thomson 2020). Children, likewise, begin to question everything and stress about their future during the unprecedented times, and they react with their feelings (Bartlett, Griffin & Thomson 2020), as Image 5.1 shows.

Image 5.2 shows what another child had experienced following the implementation of the lockdown.

Image 5. 2: Child's feelings relating to the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown

Source: Adapted from Haffejee and Levine (2020:8).

Further investigation of Image 5.2 shows sadness and frustration that the child experienced as a result of being in the lockdown. This is because the child was not able to be close to their family and friends during the lockdown (Haffejee and Levine 2020:7). They had feelings of anger and boredom since they were not allowed to attend school as well (Haffejee and Levine 2020:7). Both Image 5.1 and 5.2, show the sadness and despair that these children experienced with the implementation of the COVID-19 lockdown. Consistent with this, Bartlett, Griffin & Thomson (2020:2) explained that the feelings that children experienced as a result of the lockdown was because they worried about the safety of their family and themselves. The children worried about the uncertainties that the COVID-19 pandemic brought, for example, its relation to the basic needs being met (Bartlett, Griffin & Thomson 2020:2).

The other participants similarly experienced the same sentiments (Haffejee and Levine 2020:6). Other children noted feelings such as hopelessness, sadness, and depression (Haffejee and Levine 2020:7). In the researcher's opinion this shows that children's worry can be attributed to the abuse known to them that can take place at home due to social isolation. Some of the participants were cognisant of the increase in domestic violence during the COVID-19 lockdown (Haffejee and Levine 2020:7). From this study, and analysing the sentiments and statements made by the children, the researcher established that all of these statements showed their concern as they were worried about their siblings.

The Haffejee and Levine's (2020) case study identified that children understood that the lockdown could cause domestic violence episodes in their households. They understood that domestic violence can have an impact on children either mentally, physically, or emotionally. For this reason, they were really concerned about the impact that the lockdown would have on their family and siblings with regards to the issues relating to food and abuse in the household.

The second case study looks at the summary of critical findings from the following Table 5.1 and reflects the summary of critical findings as part of a study undertaken by Cerna-Turoff et al. (2021: 227).

Table 5. 1: Summary Table of Critical Findings

National-level data on violence against children are unevenly distributed across countries, factors, and violence types
Sexual violence was the least studied form of violence in this review
No single factor or group of factors are significantly associated with physical violence within the general population of children in low- and middle-income countries
Lower household socioeconomic status, being a girl, and primary education of mothers and adults in the household are significant and covarying factors associated with emotional violence at the national level in low- and middle-income countries
Being a girl is associated with large increases in sexual violence at the national level in low- and middle-income countries

Source: Adapted from Cerna-Turoff et al (2021:9)

For the purpose of this systematic review, Table 5.1 identifies the critical findings from the case study. The study identified that girl children were highly affected by emotional violence and sexual violence. In terms of economic status, the poorest, second poorest and middle-income families were associated with emotional instability. The third factor that the study identified related to the educational status of the adult or mother of the child affected by emotional violence. Where the mother or an adult had no education or primary education, this was associated with the levels of increased risk of emotional risk towards children. Being a girl, in low-middle income countries and, in a low economic status household was associated with a high risk of becoming a victim of abuse. This clarifies that being a girl increases the risk of being sexually abused in these household (Cerna-Turoff et al. 2021:9).

Domestic violence effected children mentally or physically. The adverse effects of the domestic violence abuse also affected children from the age of one year upwards. A child would have good developmental years only if they were living in good environments with their parents or family members. The safe environment would potentially lead to a resilient child, and one that can work through all adversity. The resilient children would find the positivity in each aspect or their life. However, the children who do not feel safe due to domestic abuse in their homes

and are not resilient develop mental health issues. Their mental health is neglected and would affect them throughout their life if not treated.

Certain articles pointed out that every person experiences the pandemic differently. Not all children emotionalise the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic. Certain children would experience a lot of emotions as they are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many children are impacted by witnessing other family members being abused. Some children would externalise what they see - in this case male children are more likely to externalise the bad behaviour perpetrated by the abuser. This is known as learnt behaviour, whereby children experience or witness the abuse and learn to become violent. It is as a result of many not worrying and caring for their children, so therefore they learn the abusive behaviours. One case study noted this as it found that mothers had a lot of fear towards their male children as they were more likely to be victimised if they were aggressive to the individual. This only occurs as a result of mimicking the behaviours that they witness in their homes.

Among the themes that were identified in the articles, was the mental health of children who were impacted during the COVID-19 lockdown as a result of domestic abuse. Their mental and psycho-social health is affected and can result in problems presently in their lives or even later on as they get older. Some of the studies identified that, apart from their mental and psycho-social health being affected, domestically abused children also had disruptions in their schooling career, as in the lockdown when the schools were closed. This evidently led to many challenges in the children's lives. These vulnerable children, some of whom were in the shelter, felt mentally drained as they dreaded thinking the circumstances at their abusive home. However, not all children responded the same to the domestic abuse, and certain children can cope with domestic violence abuse as they become resilient and have different coping mechanisms, or factors that help them cope with the abuse. However, there is a direct relationship between domestic violence abuse and psychosocial problems in majority of children.

5.2.3 Legislation offers protection

The South African government mentioned that the children of South Africa need to be protected. The legislation in South Africa does not protect children from domestic violence abuse. The Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 is supposed to protect children and people that

are being abused, but the justice system has failed many victims and the police do not do their duty to protect the victims as well. However, for many being a victim of domestic violence is very traumatising and emotional, especially when there are no legislative protection orders, resources or interventions that can protect these children and address issues of domestic violence. Certain studies have indicated that the lack of measures for the protection of children could lead to devastating, long lasting effects on children.

Children do not receive adequate protection in South Africa as the police do not do their jobs properly to intervene and protect children that are domestically abused. South Africa needs to protect its children and address the issues surrounding domestic violence against children. However, the legislation in South Africa can help abused children if the legislation is tailored to protect children. A study conducted by Fouché, Fouché, and Theron (2020), reviewed a list of South African regulations and legislations. The researchers searched databases on the SA government and LexisNexus Platform. Initially they found 140 documents, however upon further identification only 17 documents were selected to use as potentials (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020). The documents were selected from the following departments and have potential to protect South African children from domestic abuse and neglect (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:13):

> "Seven of the included regulations and directives were issued by the Department of Co-operation and Governance, one by the Department of Home Affairs, three by the Department of Social Development, two by the Department of Justice and Correctional Services, two by the Department of Labour, one by the Department of Trade and Industry, and one by the Department of Water and Sanitation. The absence of regulations by the Department of Education during strict lockdown is glaring, not least because school-based feeding schemes were suspended as a consequence of school closure."

The researchers focused on 17 COVID-19 regulations that possibly had the prospective to protect children from abuse (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020: 13). To facilitate the potential COVID-19 legislation, they had created tables that included themes and sub themes to select the possible legislation for child protection and abuse as shown in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5. 1: The themes and sub themes that facilitated child protection

Limiting the Spread of C-19 and Championing Physical Health	Continued Legal and Statutory Protection of Children at Risk for Abuse and Neglect	Extraordinary Social Support Measures
Restricting free movement, also of children.	Prioritisation of family law matters and cases involving children.	Protected and temporary housing.
Allowing essential services and goods, without jeopardising health.	Services by the Master of the High Court.	Food security via food delivery.
No in-person court appearances for children in conflict with the law.	Enabling statutory and support services rendered by social workers.	Grant extensions and increments, and other forms of financial relief.
Educating the public.		

Source: Fouché, Fouché, and Theron (2020:8).

The three themes included the following headings: limiting the spread of COVID-19 and championing physical health, continued legal and statutory protection of children at risk for abuse and neglect and extraordinary social support measures (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:13). These themes were used for the content analysis to select the 17 documents mentioned above. The three themes discussed below are from the COVID-19 legislation and reflects how it enabled protection from abuse for children during the lockdown.

1. **Limiting the spread of COVID-19 and the championing of physical health**

   The regulations under this theme put importance on the physical health (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:13). In order to prioritise the physical health of children, these four mechanisms where included: restricting movements of children, admission to essential services without endangering health, children to not be allowed in court appearances, and educating the public (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:13). The mechanisms mentioned above protected the children from any physical harm due to the impact of the COVID-19 interferences (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:13). The championing of physical health of the children meant that children would be

safeguarded due to being limited on their movement from many places (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:13).

2. **Continued legal and statutory protection of children at risk for abuse and neglect**

   The regulations pertaining to this theme recognised that rights of children to be protected from mental abuse, physical abuse or sexual abuse (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:13). The mechanisms included: enabling support services for children, children to be protect or put in temporary housing if they do not have shelter, and basic needs of food to be given to children (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:11).

3. **Extraordinary social support measures**

   The regulations under the extraordinary social support measures looked at the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic. The mechanisms included: grant increments for children (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:3).

The legislative material that was selected included the protection of children in the following way: via limiting directives that spreads the COVID-19 virus and where children can become physical ill, through the rights of children that are at risk for abuse and neglect and the social support of children from poorer backgrounds (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:13). The themes mentioned protect the needs of the children in South Africa. These legislations protect children from abuse, psychological harm, sexual harm, physical harm, and neglect (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:13). The legislation discussed above is specific to the COVID-19 virus and has the potential to protect children from domestic violence abuse and neglect during the COVID-19 lockdown (Fouché, Fouché, & Theron 2020:15).

Other countries that do not have legislation to protect children should also do the same, as some governments were not prepared for the implications and the rise of rates of domestic violence abuse towards children to increase. According to a study conducted in China by Zhao, Zhu and Hämäläinen in 2021, the dangers of child abuse was noticed so therefore they raised awareness to protect the children and developed a good system, adjusted their laws and created different policies for different issues that children face in order to protect their children from abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic. In creating these new laws and policies, the Chinese

government has also thought about the protection of special needs children. In South Africa, there are potential legislative Acts that can be used to protect children from abuse and harm, however the there is no importance placed on those legislative acts to be used to protect children.

Herrenkohl et al. (2008:90) suggest that there is need for programmes that cater for children and tailored specifically as per the form of domestic violence to which they are exposed. According to the study conducted by Lundy and Grossman (2005:25), many of the children that struggle with violent families have emotional, social, educational problems, and their physical health is affected. Hence, some parents may not know how to protect their children from domestic violence, and therefore there is need for a legislative act which would help children who are domestically abused and in certain instances their parents as well.

Overall, organisations and governments need to work together to help overcome the issues of domestic violence abuse towards children. However, it should be noted that there is progress, for example the change of the ChildLine South Africa number to '116', as this calling number works throughout Africa. The change of the number made it easier for children to remember as the previous number was very long (ChildLine South Africa 2020).

5.2.4 Increase in domestic violence cases due to lockdown

During the lockdown in South Africa, there are certain services that children can access, but many of these services have declined. However, Governments have since not prioritised to get these services in order for the rest of the children that need the help and protection from domestic violence abuse. It is important to note that services that address violence against children need to be addressed and improved so that children would be protected from the abuse. The children also need to be made aware so that they know of places which are available and can protect them from abuse.

According to the ChildLine Gauteng (2020:2) for the lockdown period of 27th March to 30th April 2020, they have had 21 827 incoming calls which were all answered by qualified counsellors. They have noted that this large volume of calls is a 67% increase from the year 2019 during the same months (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2). The ChildLine Gauteng (2020:2)

has also stated of that there were 3831 cases and counselling sessions with children that occurred over the phone, that have experienced challenges during the COVID-19 lockdown. This is suggestive of a 40% increase as compared to the 2019 period ChildLine Gauteng (2020:2).

These calls for 2020 have been categorised as follows:

Graph 5.1: ChildLine Gauteng call type totals
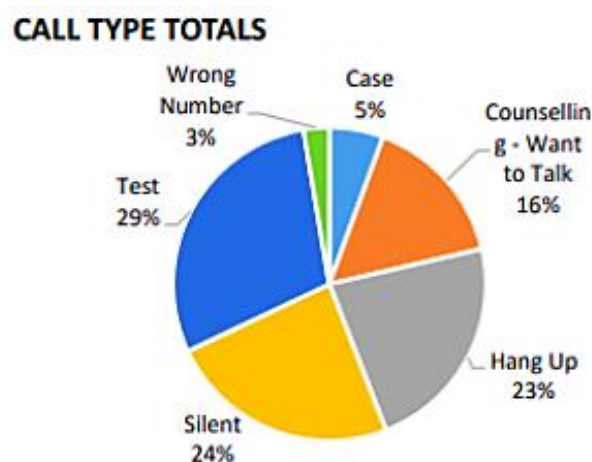
Source: ChildLine Gauteng (2020:3)

Graph 5.1 above shows the percentages of ChildLine Gauteng Call type totals for the 27[th of] March 2020 to 30th April 2020. With reference to the graph above, it indicates that from the 21 827 calls that they had received 5% related to actual cases (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:3). The term cases in this instance refer to any issue of domestic violence, family problems, substance abuse, abandonment, neglect, psychological and behavioural complications (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2).

The graph also illustrates that there was a 23% hang up rate, 24 % silent rate and 29% test rate of callers (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:3). The total amount of these callers is 76%, which includes hang up, silent and test calls (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2). These three types of calls mentioned are children that do not have the courage to talk to a professional counsellor, so therefore they begin to test the responses of the professional counsellors (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2). The

ChildLine Gauteng (2020) does not mind receiving these calls as they know that some children are scared and nervous. In fact, the children calling up will help them invite a positive relationship with the child and show them that they are protected by the ChildLine and can trust them (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2). The steps to forming the relationship on the telephone begin with speaking in pleasant tone that is inviting (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2). There is more listening, and non-judgemental advice given to the children as they speak about what they are currently facing or dealing with (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2). Basically, they are allowed to speak their minds and heart to the counsellor to feel a sense of being heard and safe (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2). As the counsellors listen and acknowledge their issues, the children feel a sense a trust and that they are able to speak up about their difficulties (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2).

Many children that do phone the ChildLine have never had any sense of trust or felt safe before by anyone listening to their problems (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2). As a matter of fact, these children have never had any professional person listen to their issues that they are facing. To them it is described as a novel experience (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2). Through telephone calls, these children are able to get advice whether they are silent during the call, they test the call line or they hang up only to phone again. The information relates to the current COVID-19 pandemic and how to keep safe during the pandemic period (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2). Any type of call mentioned above is a good opportunity to form a bond with the children calling in and to show them that the counsellor can be trusted with confidential information (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2).

According to Graph 5.1, 3% of those calls are also known to be wrong numbers (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:3). This could either be individuals making mistakes and phoning the wrong number. For this reason, the amendment regulation was changed to the number '116' for easy remembrance of the ChildLine number (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:2).

Graph 5.2: Showing the cases per category

CASES & WTT PER CATEGORY

Abuse: 552
Alternative Care: 24
Behaviour...: 67
Commercial...: 8
Disability: 6
Discrimination: 6
Family Related...: 267
HIV/AIDS: 16
Homelessness: 18
Legal Issues: 145
Neglect: 168
Peer Relationships: 31
COVID-19 /...: 1,316
Poverty: 166
Psychological...: 60
Refugee Child: 2
School Problems: 49
Services: 1,109
Sexual: 11
Substance Abuse: 87
Undefined / Other: 583
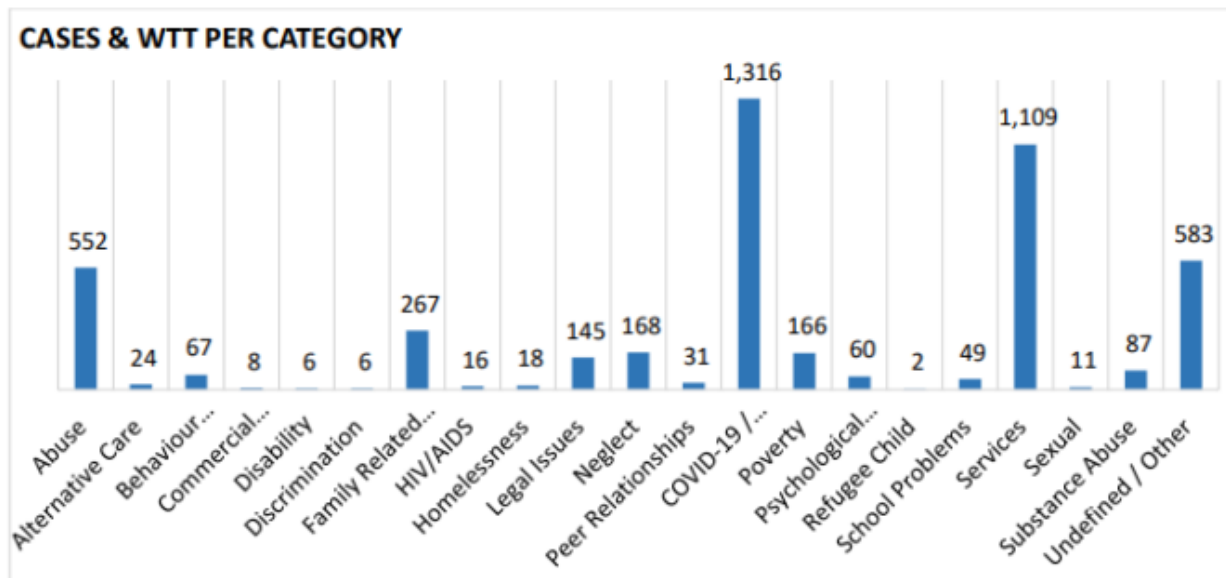
Source: ChildLine Gauteng (2020:3)

Graph 5.2 illustrates the cases per category. The bar with the highest value relates to COVID-19. The reason this number sits at the highest as compared to the rest is because for many children that do phone in, their fear, anxiety and panic has not settled regarding the COVID-19 questions that they have (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:3). The 1316 cases under the COVID-19 category produced a 99 % increase as compared to the year 2019 (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:3). Similar related cases are the category of 'services' and this has association with the 'COVID-19' category (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:3). These two categories are connected due to the fact that many of the 1316 calls are linked to the 1109 requests for the services related to COVID-19 issues (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:3) at the same time the category 'Undefined/Other' (583) is also linked to the COVID-19 category (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:3).

As the researcher observes, this explains that a high volume of individuals is phoning in to their fears and the answers that they want relating to the COVID-19 pandemic the whole world is facing. This suggests that a few months after the onset of the pandemic, there was much uncertainty and panic and the callers needed assurance. With regards to the three categories mentioned above, 'COVID-19', 'Services' and 'Undefined/Other', the callers have the opportunities to speak to professional counsellors to get valuable information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:3). The information that can be addressed in the call can include information about symptoms, prevention measures, how to keep safe,

hospital services, social distancing measures, travel restrictions and testing clinics (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:3). Callers can also phone in to report illegal parties that do not make them feel safe in their area (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:3).

From Graph 5.2, 'Abuse' is however the second highest category due to the fact that the 'COVID-19', 'Services' and 'Undefined/Other' categories are linked together, and all relate to the facts and information surrounding COVID-19. The case of abuse calls last year was 212 as compared to the year 2020 which is 552 (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). This shows that it is a 61.6 % increase from the year 2019 (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). The category of abuse includes, domestic violence, emotional, abandoned children, sexual, physical, abduction and others (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). Within the sector of abuse calls, many times the South African Police Services must be contacted after the risk assessment is concluded and there is a calamitous need for the child to be helped because of pertinent abuse (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). During the period of 27th March 2020 to 30th April 2020, there were approximately 19 cases that required the child be removed from the unsafe household where he/she was being abused (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). In these cases, there were places of safety and other placements found for these children (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4).

Furthermore, Graph 5.2 illustrates that the statistics for 'Family Related' shows that there were 267 cases (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). This is a 77.5 % increase from the 2019 year (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). The 'Legal Issues' illustrate 145 cases, which is an 85% increase from the 2019 period during the same time (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). The 'Family Related' and 'Legal Issues' category include concerns such as custody issues, corporal punishment, parenting plans, bullying, single mother issues, rivalry between siblings (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). It can also consist of problems relating to stepmother/father issues, abusive treatment from stepparents, separation from parents, fires in the shacks (small houses), feeling vulnerable after giving birth (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). This issue with these callers experiencing these issues is that it can lead to a lot of psychological complications.

The graph shows that 60 psychological cases (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). From the year 2019, the cases that relate to psychological problems have increase by 85 % (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). Psychological problems can include fear, anxiety, depression, disassociation, desensitisation, panic attacks, suicidal thoughts, post-traumatic stress, remembering their

traumatic childhood (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). All the psychological issues mentioned above can lead to children going into alternative care (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). The graph shows that 'Alternative Care' includes 24 cases; this is indicative of an increase of 87.5% from the year 2019 (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). If many of the parents are going through the psychological issues then, the child will have to be removed from the household and put into foster care, place of safety or the children's homes (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). Alternatively, if the child is facing psychological issues, then in those cases, they also have to be put in foster care to deal with the abusive treatment that they experienced in their homes and their feelings of abandonment due to psychological abuse (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4).

The category of 'Behaviour issues' shows that there are 67 cases related to behavioural problems (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). Such issues comprise violent children, children refusing to complete schoolwork, children that run away, and disrespecting children (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). The 'behavioural issue' category increased by 63% from the year 2019 (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). All such problems are related to substance abuse. The category of substance abuse shows the incurrence of 87 cases (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). Substance abuse is encompassing children drinking, not obeying the lockdown regulations, children doing hard-core drugs, smoking dagga, whoonga and taking illegal substances (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). A few of the callers that do phone in for help are struggling with stopping of partaking in illegal substance do not have the finances to buy more substances, so therefore they face the dreaded withdrawal symptoms (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4).

Finally, analysing the category of 'School Problems' shows that there were 49 cases, but that was a decrease of 6% from the year 2019 to the year 2020 (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). The researcher stipulates that the decrease in school problems can be due to the fact that during the COVID-19 lockdown period schools were closed. Children are not going to school as with the fear surrounding the COVID-19 virus, thus they are not in contact with any of their friends (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4). Many children are yearning to go back as they miss the socialisation that they had, and they miss their friends at school (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:4).

The statistics do show an increase in every category as compared to the year 2019, and this is indicative of the fact the COVID-19 lockdown does have an impact in many of the categories

mentioned above. Some details of the cases dealt with on the ChildLine Gauteng help line during the COVID-19 lockdown are exemplified below:

Calls related to COVID-19

During the COVID-19 pandemic the ChildLine Gauteng assisted with a lot of calls from children that required assistance (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5). Many of the children phoned in to the ChildLine in order to acquire information regarding the COVID-19 – regulations, social isolation rules, safety measures, children who were not in the province wanted information on how to get back home to their family, and problems relating to their health (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5). There were also calls from parents and family members, and these individuals phoned in in-order to get information pertaining to a range of issues. For example, some parents wanted to know about the health risks of contracting COVID-19, the risks of taking their children to the clinic, giving birth at home and not being able to travel to the clinic for the child to receive their birth vaccine shots (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5). The rest of the calls were about, locations where COVID-19 testing is done, the steps to get tested and the procedure if the children are left alone in their homes due to both parents being hospitalised after testing positive for COVID-19 (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5).

Calls related to abuse

The calls that were received by the ChildLine Gauteng that were related to abuse and consisted of the following types: a child being physically abused by their parents every day; a mother abusing her son; and younger siblings that are being abused by their older brothers and sisters (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5). One particular call that concerned abuse was the case of a father that was constantly abusing his three-year-old child. The child had many bruises and grazes. After the ChildLine Gauteng came to know about the situation and assessed the situation, they had removed the child from the household and the child was placed at Gugulethu CYCC, thereafter the father was arrested (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5).

Calls related to emotional and verbal abuse

Abuse can also consist of verbal and emotional abuse which can affect children psychologically. A few cases to note as received by the ChildLine Gauteng, a 17-year teenager was being emotionally and verbally abused by her grandmother due to the fact that she had just

given birth (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5). A few other cases reviewed: a home where the parents were constantly shouting at the child; a foster child running back to the foster mother after being returned to the biological parents and abuse towards 9-year-old stepchild stepfather (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5).

Calls related to sexual abuse

The ChildLine Gauteng assisted with the following cases related to sexual abuse: the call that was made involves the stepchild sleeping in the same bed as stepfather- the biological father reported that his child should not be sleeping in the same bed; a child being sexually abused by the father due to the notion that he is the breadwinner of the family (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5).

Calls related to abandoning of children

These calls pertain to the following cases of abandonment, the child being left with an employer; the mother abandoning a child and not returning; an old man and drug abuser looks after a 2-year-old child after the child was abandoned by him (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5). A child was also removed from his home by family, and a member of the community helped the child and now lives in her back room (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5).

Calls related to neglect

These are cases where children are not cared for by parents. Some cases include, parents leaving children at home to go partying and drinking without food (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5). Specific cases to mention: The child being left with the unemployed father after the mother collects the grant money; grandmothers taking care of children for long period at a time after they are left by parents (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5).

Calls related to gender-based violence

The gender base violence calls relate to the following cases, wife being abused by ex-husband; refusing to wear a condom during sex –marital rape as the person has the fear of contracting STIs and HIV/AIDS (ChildLine Gauteng 2020: 5).

Calls related to care and parenting plans

Fathers not being allowed to visit their children; certain parents not being allowed to visit their children due to them not having custody to do so (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5). There are also cases were prisoners' phone in from prison requesting for check up on family – there was a 21-year-old young adult that phoned the ChildLine Gauteng requesting to ask his family for help with his prison sentence (ChildLine Gauteng 2020:5).

It is important to note that in these times of the COVID-19 pandemic, if the police are ineffective in helping domestic violence victims; the government has to make efforts together with the communities and must work together to support, protect the children from domestic violence abuse in times of need as it is a major crisis around the world (Zhao, Zhu & Hämäläinen 2021:3).

The presentation of analysis show that domestic violence has been in the increase since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, and this increase has been due to the lockdown measures that have been implemented by government. In South Africa, it was noted that there was an increase in calls from the year 2019 to the year 2020 at the ChildLine hotline. The large volume of calls that ChildLine South Africa experienced during the COVID-19 lockdown did not only relate to domestic violence abuse, but as certain calls also pertained to anxiety and panic that children faced as a result of the unknown pertaining to the pandemic. The figure shown at the ChildLine hotline was a 67% increase from the previous of 2019. Apart from the increase in the cases of domestic violence and ChildLine hotline calls, that figure is not adequate as many domestic violence cases are not reported, as in certain cases there is fear to be abused again and as well as the child-protection service being disrupted due to the implemented lockdown rules.

Therefore, even though the data is not reliable since many cases are not being reported, this suggests that the figures would be higher if all cases were reported. The figures do show that there is an increase in domestic violence cases during the lockdown, but these numbers can be inadequate in certain cases, as the data collection methods have also their own weaknesses.

5.2.5 Effective strategies to help children overcome domestic violence

Children need to be protected from domestic violence acts in order to preserve a better future for them. The results show that there are no inclusive and effective strategies in South Africa that would help children to overcome domestic violence abuse. However, in other countries, there are changes being made regarding legal policies that would benefit children to be protected and who are domestically abused. In South Africa, a particularly important aspect was made regarding the change of the old ChildLine number to the issuing of the number '116'. This has been beneficial to many children as the number is easier to remember for many children. Since there has been a 38% increase in ChildLine calls in 2020 from August as compared to August 2019, for this reason the support structure has been strained and not all children can be helped. The strain of many support structures is due to lack of enough resources, as well as lack of personal protective clothing that can be used while assisting these abused children during the pandemic.

The government together with other support structures need to work together to come up with good effective strategies to help children overcome domestic violence abuse. There also needs to be good interventions and mitigation strategies that should be invested towards in order to effectively help children and keep children safe from domestic violence abuse. More specifically, children need to be supported even if they are victims of domestic violence abuse or not. Since schools closed due to the pandemic, many children were at home and many parents have now begun to work from home. The schools must also teach children about domestic violence abuse and what to do if they are faced with circumstances of becoming a victim of domestic abuse.

In certain instances, working from home can cause much stress for parents and this in turn can lead to bouts of frustration and in turn lead to abuse of children. For this reason, effective strategies need to be put in place by governments for instances whereby children do not feel safe at home. Good home space, relationships with family members and guidance from parents can be the reason that domestic abuse will decrease and therefore abuse would gradually stop. Family, members and or neighbours need to also be more alert around children who can be suspected of being a victim domestic violence abuse. The welfare of children needs to be looked after as children need to be protected from abuse.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings and the data analysis for the various articles and case studies that were used in the study. The 39 articles were analysed and synthesised to provide an insight into domestic violence impact on children during the COVID-19 lockdown in South Africa. Based on the qualitative and quantitative analysis, the results indicated that the COVID-19 lockdown exacerbated the violence against children and there was increase concern about children and their safety. Furthermore, the findings show that children experience a range of emotions because of domestic violence abuse during the COVID-19 lockdown and this can affect their mental health. The analysis further concluded that children do not receive adequate protection from domestic violence abuse during the COVID-19, but there are certain South African legislations that do have the potential to protect South African children from domestic violence abuse during the COVID-19 lockdown. It can be concluded that domestic violence is on the increase and there are many fears surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. One case study proved that calls of the cases related to the COVID-19 and domestic violence abuse has increased. The results indicated that children are affected by domestic violence abuse during the COVID-19 lockdown.

CHAPTER 6: GENERAL DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Introduction

The purpose and primary objective of this study was to evaluate domestic violence impact on children during the COVID-19 lockdown. This was done by conducting a systematic review using secondary data. This chapter provides the general discussions and conclusions related to the study. A retrospective discussion was done to discover and discuss the recommendations of effective studies to help children overcome domestic violence abuse. Certain countries that have mitigation factors were also included in this section, and recommendations from such countries can also be applied to the South African context. An exploration of governments around the world responding to violence against children during the COVID-19 was also discussed. Children around the world need to be protected from domestic violence. According to Singh (2021):

> "The COVID-19 pandemic is harming health, social and material well-being of children worldwide. Today, there are more than 2.2 billion children on Earth. Nearly two billion of these live in a developing country."

Since the 14th century, there have been measures put into place whenever there has been a virus with the need to be infection controlled, hence regulations such as quarantining have been put into place as an effective measure (Mittal and Singh 2020:2). The social isolation measures that were set out by the government in each country during the COVID-19 pandemic was necessary to stop the spread of the virus (Mittal and Singh 2020), but the implications that arose with the start of the virus lead to an increase in cases of domestic violence towards children.

The impact of domestic violence on children has many implications and long-term consequences (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:16). According to the United Nations Children Fund (2020:16), there are emerging directions with regards to rising circumstantial evidence. Piquero et al. (2021: 14) notes that domestic violence abuse towards children or exposure to domestic violence has a tremendous toll on children that live in with their perpetrators.

Cerna-Turoff et al. (2021) has said that the act of domestic violence against children is now acknowledged as a public health concern. The impact of COVID-19 has negatively affected the lives of many people, specifically children who can also be impacted by domestic violence. Apart from domestic violence, there are other forms of gender violence towards female women and children, which can include the killing of women (femicide), prostitution and genital mutilation (Boonzaier and De la Rey 2011:367). The increase in domestic violence is aligned to a specific gender and therefore woman and children can be domestically abused without anyone knowing because of the privacy associated with domestic violence (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:670).

In summary, the effects of domestic violence on children are long-lasting and leave indelible impressions on their mental and physical health (Boonzaier and De la Rey 2011:367). Singh (2021:3) echoed this and states that the COVID-19 pandemic would affect children dramatically and have long-term impacts on them. The negative impacts outweigh the positives because it affects millions of children across the world (Singh 2021:3). Nations need to protect the children who are the future, thus many healthcare organisations and children's welfare organisations must work together with the governments of each country to eradicate the effects that the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown have on the children (Singh 2021:3). These organisations and the governments need to work during and after the pandemic to sustain the children and protect them from the violence and abuse caused by the COVID-19 lockdown.

6.2 Recommendations of effective strategies to help children overcome domestic violence abuse

Children would experience some aspect of stress and conflict within the family relationships and parents cannot prevent their children from experiencing this (Holt, Buckley & Whelan 2008:802). This suggests that experiencing some stress and conflict is a part of normal family relationship issues. However, this would affect the child's development pathway, due to failed parenting, the parents lack empathy for their children, and in turn there is no care or help for the children to deal with the domestic violence (Holt, Buckley & Whelan 2008:802). When children have no parents who can help them or who they can go to for comfort with domestic abuse, they need support, help and protection from domestic violence and their perpetrators (UNICEF 2006:3).

The vast majority of children that experience domestic abuse are children that come from disadvantaged communities and poor urban areas (World Health Organization [WHO] 2004:4). The strategies identified by WHO include knowledge child development and health, mental and psychological state of the child, support systems and the socio-economic environments (World Health Organization 2004:4). The recommendations provided are not only intended to help families strengthen their relationships, but it also provides recommendations for children to overcome domestic violence abuse in situations where both the parents are involved. The United Nations Children's Fund (2020) conducted a study which shows the countries that have implemented other effective strategies with regards to violence against children during COVID-19. These recommendations have been discussed under various headings of the recommendations. These recommendations should be considered for implementation within the South African context.

6.2.1 Programmes and services for children affected by domestic violence

In South Africa, there were no domestic violence abuse programmes pre-lockdown and during the lockdown that were specifically geared to meet the needs of children. The programmes aimed at domestic violence victims were generalised to the public. There needs to be specific programmes catered to child domestic violence victims (Lundy and Grossman 2005:18). The programmes and interventions must encompass the economic aspects of domestic violence and how it leads to an increased risk of domestic violence (Vetten 2014). These programmes must understand the developmental needs of children as there is no support system in the lives of these children (Lundy and Grossman 2005:18). Herrenkohl et al. (2008: 90) suggest that there needs to be programmes that are catered to children and tailored specifically as per the form of domestic violence they are exposed to or victims.

The South African government needs to provide services to children of domestic violence victims whose all-around health is affected, as they are in dire need of these services. The services provided to domestic violence victims must, together with other services provide therapy and tools for children to deal with domestic violence (Lundy and Grossman 2005:28). This is because child problems develop and become severe fast, and therefore child domestic violence services need to act promptly (Lundy and Grossman 2005:28). Depending on the circumstances of the domestic violence, special processes need to apply for children. If children have to stay in domestic violence shelter, therefore there needs to be special education

schooling system courses, long term stay in shelter plans, mental health programmes and transition to safety houses for children whose parents are unable to look after them, as they are likely to repeat domestic violence from offenders (Lundy and Grossman 2005:28).

A good example of what programmes countries can implement during the pandemic to deal with domestic violence is provided by Brazil. During the National Day against Sexual Abuse and Exploitation in Brazil, there were empowerment programmes targeted at young adults, and distribution of hygiene kits (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). With the distribution and the empowerment programmes there are also gender-based violence messages targeted at these individuals (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). There was awareness raised at the beginning of the pandemic by UNICEF. The UNICEF made individuals aware of the risk of violence and abuse faced by children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). During the awareness campaigns, UNICEF has also provided guidance on the steps to take to access help for children who are victims of violence and abuse (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). The target audience for the campaign messages against abuse and violence were targeted at the general public, as well as the victim of violence and abuse which can include children, youths and adults (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12).

In Egypt, there have also been hygiene kits that have been packed to be given to the National Child Helpline who would give the children in certain communities to help them in their daily lives (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13).

6.2.2 Increased research and development investigation on violence within families

According to the study conducted by Lundy and Grossman (2005:25), many of the children who struggle with violent families, have emotional problems, social problems, educational problems and their physical health is affected. Vetten (2014) states that there needs to be more research and development investigated on violence that occurs within families, more especially the domestic violence that co-occurs to children as a result of the intimate partner violence towards adults. Research and development must be encouraged and engaging in social and informal networks is important to understand the violence and help with a mitigation mechanism (Peterman et al. 2020:22). There are many factors that can cause abuse and violence to take place. The researcher notes that the sale of alcohol influences abuse and violence. In

certain countries, they have decided to look at the factors that cause or exacerbate violence and abuse (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

Greenland and South Africa have banned alcohol at certain levels of the lockdown because it triggered an increased risk of abuse to children (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). Proactive steps are still to be taken by other countries that prevent the risk of violence and abuse (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). Guedes, Peterman and Deligiorgis (2020) explained that the sale of guns should also be limited in many countries, as it can prevent the risk of there being a fatality due to the stresses of COVID-19 and related factors. Stopping or preventing the purchasing of guns can reduce child deaths during the lockdown (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). If all countries implement certain preventative factors that can reduce abuse and violence, then this can reduce stress and people would get the help which is needed (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

6.2.3 Vigilance by family members

Family members need to be more alert and around children who are more vulnerable of being victims of domestic violence abuse. They need to watch for indications of domestic violence as children can be abused by their mother's spouse or boyfriend (Lundy and Grossman 2005:27). The mother can also be abused by their spouse or partner and at the same time abuse can also happen to the child, causing problems for the child in developmental aspects and certain areas in their lives. For this reason, it is important that children are always in sight and watched as to ensure the safety of the child. Not all mothers would turn to extended family members, community members or faith groups to look for help and hope. Therefore, children that are abused would need to receive support from domestic violence centres and qualified-skilled social workers that thoroughly understand child development and family relationship matters and are trained to help these individuals overcome the issues (Lundy and Grossman 2005:27). The reason for this is due to the fact that if these issues are not dealt with promptly, then they can lead to developmental problems at a later stage of the child's life and create mental, emotional and social issues (Lundy and Grossman 2005:27).

6.2.4 Recording of data by authorities

The increase and decrease of violence against children have been a focus research question (Bourgault, Peterman & O'Donnell 2021:2). The confusion is due to the type of data used and reported on (Bourgault, Peterman & O'Donnell 2021:2). According to Bourgault, Peterman and O'Donnell (2021:2), the majority of studies collect data via surveys which do not generalise to the larger population, but the type of data collated also plays a role in the collection of the correct rates of domestic violence reported. If there are instances of domestic violence in a family, the police must record the relationship to keep records for later stages (Vetten 2014), which can be used for study purposes. The rates of domestic violence need to be measured by paying attention to the different forms of domestic violence (Vetten 2014:2). This is due to the fact that the data that the police keep do not offer comprehensive values pertaining to domestic violence specifically (Vetten 2014:2). Therefore, the collation of data related to domestic violence is of vital importance and authorities need to obtain and maintain the most updated information in order to influence programmes for children.

6.2.5 Shelters and facilities for children affected by domestic violence

Temporary housing and shelters for victims should be expanded, so that children and woman who are vulnerable to violence during the pandemic are pandemic-safe and safe from abuse (Peterman et al. 2020:10). Guedes, Peterman and Deligiorgis (2020) confirms that there has been the construction of safe houses for children that have been victims of violence and abuse in certain countries. This is because many countries acknowledge that the issue of domestic violence is becoming rife. The inclusion of a safe house is meant to protect child victims of abuse and violence and in some instances if parents also do not feel safe in their homes, they are allowed to accompany their minors (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). These individuals who become victims of abuse can temporarily escape from the perpetrators until a solution is found (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). For example, in Canada, they have a COVID-19 relief package and part of this package had been assigned to the upgrading of shelters (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). On 18 March, Canada had allocated $50 million to these shelters (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

France has also increased its funding to abuse organisations (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). There has been a €1.1 million funding package, and part of the funding meant that it includes a 20 000-night hotel stay for victims of abuse and violence to escape their perpetrators – this was ruled on March 30 (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). Another ruling was made in Italy, and it was suggested that the perpetrators of abuse and violence must leave their homes instead of the victim doing so (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). In making this laudable ruling, other countries have also implemented it, and this guarantees that the victims are kept safe and that the abusers do not have access them and their homes (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

When the victim of domestic abuse is the mother, she would bring her child with her to the domestic violence centre (Lundy and Grossman 2005:28). The child who is also a potential domestic violence victim would also require emergency shelter due to the mother leaving home because of the abusive environment (Lundy and Grossman 2005:28). However, in many domestic violence centres, the shelter is not built for children to stay (Lundy and Grossman 2005:28). Domestic violence centres should cater for children and make centres more child inductive as children need childlike quests as they get bored easily (Lundy and Grossman 2005:28). These facilities need to provide child-like resources so as to 'repair' the damage done to them. UNICEF (2006:11), states that all governments around the world need to help children in instances where they are exposed to violence in the household, and they arrive at the domestic violence centre.

The ultimate gaols should be to help them, provide for them, and rehabilitate; the overall context would be support and prevention (UNICEF 2006:11). Domestic violence centres with the help of child psychologists or qualified social workers should cater in special activities for children, as it is essential for their development during their early phases. Therefore, the government together with many state funded services should help the victims of domestic violence, and there needs to be an improvement and drive to help the domestically abused children and adults (Vetten 2014). Long-term housing needs have to be ready and available to assist capacities of domestically abused individuals, and therefore there needs to be microfinance in funding to deal with victims of domestic abuse (Vetten 2014). Domestic violence facilities should offer a function for domestically abused children who would engage them in childlike quests (Lundy and Grossman 2005:28). The safe space for children would

help them grow, and develop mentally and physically, since stages in their lives have been hampered due to be domestically abused or being witnesses of domestic violence.

The example of the role of NGOs in the State of Palestine is provided where, due to the closure of the Ministry of Social Development Safe Home, the services related to sheltering were taken over by an NGO (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). The NGO is based in the Gaza Strip (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). However, in the area of the West Bank, these children are referred to the Ministry of Social Development protection homes for cases pertaining to violence and abuse against children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13).

6.2.6 Educational and counselling services

The study noted that due to the COVID-19 lockdown, many children were affected by the closure of schools. The closures were as a result of the declaration that COVID-19 was a pandemic which would affect the entire world, and therefore governments had to come up with strategies to stop the spread of COVID-19 (Mittal and Singh 2020:2), Hence, there was pressure to close schools, as a measure to stop the spread of the virus. The closure of schools has caused a disruption in learning outcomes and in the children's lives (Minhas and Freeman 2021).

In many private schools and other schools that could afford tutoring, access to education via a range of other ways for children to be at par with the syllabus have been implemented (Minhas and Freeman 2021). The implementation of learning via online sources was executed for one reason only, and that is to protect children from COVID-19 and prevent a viral transmission from children to their households (Minhas and Freeman 2021). Students could now learn online via virtual teacher classrooms, one-on-one teaching, or through virtual in person models (Minhas and Freeman 2021). The distance learning consequently also causes a range of issues (Minhas and Freeman 2021). In many households there were sometimes no quite places, while some households did not have the necessary internet and laptops for the distance learning and some children live in households where there is domestic violence abuse. For this reason, distance learning is very challenging for children to keep up with as it can characterise behavioural and developmental needs (Minhas and Freeman 2021).

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused a change in the way of educational learning and therefore not all children from the different backgrounds are able to afford and keep up with the educational learning platforms. Low-income learners would face more learning challenges that occur with school closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The students from low-income households do have reduced access and support to school related tools generally, but due to the pandemic these resources become even more scarce to them, they are even faced with the burden of not having any support from parents at home as well (Minhas and Freeman 2021).

The conventional way of learning does not exist anymore and the change to another way of learning has taken students and teachers with a surprise and many of them become overwhelmed. Minhas and Freeman (2021) explain that the COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the inequities for the children that are still in school and that have problems in school. The children that have learning disabilities are the ones to look out for, are the ones that need extra attention as they have behavioural, learning, and socio-economic problems (Minhas and Freeman 2021). In South Africa, there needs to be careful assessments of all children that are currently at home during this pandemic, owing to the fact that all children have different backgrounds and different socio-economic statuses.

There also has to be counselling services to help children (Lundy and Grossman 2005:28), especially during the COVID-19 lockdown to support child victims of domestic abuse. The counselling services need also to help with support for education and learning difficulties (Lundy and Grossman 2005:28). During COVID-19, many children face educational difficulties as being victims of domestic abuse. The abuse causes desensitisation in learning and concentration. If children are unable to be removed for domestic violence homes, then they would not be able to recover physically, psychologically, or educationally from the trauma experienced. Effectively, support services provided to adult victims of domestic violence, results in beneficial aid to children (UNICEF 2006:11).

An example of what countries have done to support children who are affected by domestic abuse is that of the State of Palestine which identified many extreme cases of domestic violence towards children, and these cases were prioritised, and support was provided via face-to–face counselling (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). Apart from that, children that were

impacted by abuse and violence received psychosocial support and remote case management services (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13).

6.2.7 Strategies for children from disadvantaged areas

Children living in disadvantaged areas need to be targeted, as the strategies for children to overcome domestic violence and strengthen family relationship should be directed at them. The strategies must include stimulating the children's development process and health at an early age. Therefore, there needs to be effective improvement in the relationships between the parent/guardian, family members and the child as it would be of advantage to the child in the long term (World Health Organization 2004:4). The addition to this intervention would also reduce the risk of child malnutrition and other factors and stressors that children can endure due to poor family relationships and becoming a target of domestic violence (World Health Organization 2004:4).

The strengthening of the family relationships would protect children and help families understand each other better so that that living together does not become difficult for them. When children begin to trust their primary caregivers, then they would feel protected from the negative world. Many people and children in disadvantaged communities flee their homes due to unpredictability and violence (World Health Organization 2004:4). The World Health Organization (2004:4) explains that the impact that the HIV/AIDS epidemic has had devastating effects on children living in disadvantaged communities as they feared for their lives. Children were afraid of becoming victims of domestic violence and being sexually abused. The sexual abuse means the transmittance of the HIV/AIDS virus. Children would endure the effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic for many years to come (World Health Organization 2004:4).

6.2.8 Strategies about good family relationships

It is of vital importance that there are strategies implemented to educate individuals and children in communities about effectiveness of good, caring relationships between adults and children (World Health Organization 2004:4). The relationships would help children and family members understand the peril of the situation and the importance of how good family relationships can improve mental and physical health and developments (World Health

Organization 2004:4). In the same way, the COVID-19 has also impacted on family relationship as in many families there are a lot of stress and violence that has occurred. For that reason, an effective strategy that can help improve family relationships would be beneficial for children and the family.

The effective strategies would help create normalcy with child-family relationships in communities, as according to UNICEF (2006:9), children need normalcy in their lives with similar routines. UNICEF (2006:9) explains that good child-family relationship is vital for a child's development as domestic violence or any violence for that matter can disrupt a child's development process and upturn their world. When children have daily routines, they feel a sense of relief as going to school, participating in extracurricular activities are important for good development (UNICEF 2006:9).

6.2.9 Schools to educate children on domestic violence and its impact

The issue of domestic violence should be taught and emphasised in school, as children need to speak about their issues faced in their households to a counsellor at school (UNICEF 2006:9). Thus, the government needs to develop a strategy for all schools to implement which can include a programme to educate children on domestic violence and its implications in their development. The researcher also suggests that each school, be it private or government should have a counsellor that children can meet and speak to in confident. With the onset on the COVID-19 pandemic, the intervention should also include teachers phoning and speaking to their class children to check up on them as children are exposed to violence at home. Children need to be made aware that there is help if they are victims of domestic violence. Domestic violence can end and the children who are exposed must know that things can change in their households as they need to know that there is hope and a better future (UNICEF 2006:9).

6.2.10 Public education and awareness

The public needs to also be educated and made aware of the implications of domestic violence. Awareness campaigns need to be implemented in communities for public education and must focus on how children are impacted by domestic violence, the signs of a domestic violence victim and ways to help these children or individuals (UNICEF 2006:9). The government, communities, schools, and institutions need to implement effective strategies and speak up on

the implications and impact of domestic violence on children in their household (UNICEF 2006:9).

Caron, Plancq, Tourneux, Gouron and Klein (2020:399) echoes the sentiments made by UNICEF (2006:9) and clarifies that awareness is very important, and in saying this exemplifies the awareness campaign that was launched in France during the lockdown. The domestic violence awareness campaign in France was placed in supermarkets, all social media outlets, radio, television, and the popular newspapers (Caron et al. 2020:399). The campaign would hopefully raise awareness on the child hotline numbers, information pertaining to child domestic violence abuse and make people aware to detect child abuse during the lockdown (Caron et al. 2020:399).

Peterman, Pereira and Palermo (2020) also explain that raising awareness about domestic violence abuse and the protection facilities that are available for children of domestic violence abuse would strive towards children not being afraid and to come forth and report the abuse they are experiencing. The awareness campaigns would show children who are afraid and vulnerable that the essential workers of the social services can be trusted to protect and help them (Peterman, Pereira & Palermo 2020). A country example of a recommendation for implementation is that of Guinea-Bissau, which provided Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as well as materials written in the local language that helped in guiding individuals (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). In addition to that, there was also training provided to individuals that helped inform victims about the consequences of abuse and violence (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). The country targeted 12 000 individuals from the city of Bissau and the surrounding rural areas (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). The mobile services ranged from support to prevent child marriage, domestic violence, genital mutilation, and violence towards children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). However, the support was only provided until June 2020 (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13).

6.2.11 Training of professionals and communities

There needs to be employment of trained professionals or training of staff to improve the child services to understand the issues pertaining to child domestic violence abuse (Peterman, Pereira & Palermo 2020). The awareness pertaining to domestic violence abuse can also be arranged through education and health sectors, as well as residential communities (Peterman, Pereira &

Palermo 2020). Effectively, in order to improve services so that children can access them, children reporting domestic violence abuse should be normalised including children being prevented from reporting abuse (Peterman, Pereira & Palermo 2020).

The City of Mexico sets an example of the 911 operators who are now trained to access and cooperate with calls regarding abuse and violence towards children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). The joint efforts that have initiated this service is due to UNICEF, together with the Welfare Agency, the Secretariat for the Comprehensive Child Protection System and the Ministry of Interior (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). The reason for this in Mexico was due to the increase in domestic violence abuse (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). The operators that are serviced to take 911 calls are now trained to listen to children, deal with calls from children, and to refer the children to the service departments that can help them (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). There is still more training that is continuing in Mexico as only half of the operators are well trained (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). In conjunction with the training there has also been support from the Child Helpline International, with the development of a prompt detection which detects violence in the home, active listening to detect violence, video and info graphics on the psychological first aid of violence and abuse (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12).

To deal with cases of abuse and violence against children in Egypt, there has also been training provided on psychological first aid and remote case management (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). The training has been provided to counsellors, social workers and Child Helpline agents (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). The actions mentioned above have helped Egypt maintain and mitigate child violence slowly (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13).

The country of Pakistan provides an example of conducting research to assess the impact of confinement on children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). The study noted that social isolation or confinement causes change in the home environments (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). The study found that the children had been suffering with stress due to the confinement (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). The caregivers living with the children also had no patience for the children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). UNICEF developed a standard training package which 2600 social service workers or more

went through training which was face-to-face (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). The training that was taught was on stigma prevention and psychosocial support (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). The training package developed by UNICEF was in response to COVID-19 (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). These services have also been integrated in the education and health system for children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). The reason for this is to ensure that when schools do open, the children would still have access to the mental health and psychosocial services (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14).

Another country example is Bangladesh where UNICEF provided online training and on-the-job training (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). While providing the training, they have also increased the number of social service workers (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). With the increase in the number of social service workers, this means that more social workers would get employed by the Child Helpline Call Centre (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). Due to the increase calls that come in the Child Helpline, this is necessary as more families and children would be able to get the help that they need (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). Around 10 000 families are getting helped every week in Bangladesh (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). The children and families are helped though the mental health and psychosocial services, and other services, as well as food and non-food supplies (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). The training provided by UNICEF occurs around twice a week and these training courses include, social worker safety and wellbeing, social work case management and referral pathway (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14).

The training sessions held to also remind social service workers on how to respond to cases during the COVID-19 pandemic. There have also been masks, eyewear protectors, sanitisers, for these social service workers as well (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). These items have been provided for the workers so that they are able to provide the service while keeping safe (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). While wearing the Protective gear they are able to help and support children in face-face that live in slums or on the street (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14). UNICEF has continued to help the Department of Social Services even though it was restricted in March 2020 (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:14).

6.2.12 Regulating the sale of alcohol

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused liquor shops and brothels to be shut down. However, with the ease of the COVID-19 level many shops and brothels have been opened to consumers. Alcohol is also a big cause of domestic violence. According to Vetten (2014), alcohol consumption needs to be regulated. The consumption of alcohol also needs to be examined to disclose the abuse it causes to individuals and family members around them (Vetten 2014).

6.2.13 Use of technology

Video calling, home calls or cell phone calls is a potential way to make use of technology to detect and prevent domestic violence against children (Caron et al. 2020:399). The devices can detect domestic violence against children by checking on them via the devices with child abuse screening tools and questionnaires or in person visits. From the systematic review conducted, the research noted that there is a vast amount of under-reporting of domestic violence by children. There needs to be an effective strategy implemented to improve the inaccessibility of children reporting domestic violence cases at child service agencies.

The Eastern Caribbean was an area where there were free emergency telephones set up by the UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). The emergency telephone services formed part of the COVID-19 response and all 12 countries and locations around the eastern Caribbean have the free emergency telephones which is a support phone for psychosocial and mental health support (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). The collaboration and the efforts of the support telephone were formed together with the Commission for the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, the Pan American Health Organisation in conjunction and the United States Agency for International Development (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12).

The Eastern Caribbean and surrounding regions have come to the conclusion that there can, in the future, develop a mental health crisis (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). The mental health crisis can arise with the unemployed people in the country, and this makes up 40-60 % of the population (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). Largely the fear and stress due to unemployment can create mental health issues and aggravate the domestic

violence towards children in the families (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). Therefore, the country as a whole is more focused on individuals that have psychological and mental health issues (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). Moreover, their focus is on those individuals that are afraid of seeking help due to fear of discrimination (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12).

The individuals that do suffer from the mental health issues can use the free emergency telephones, video call or text message, which all call ensures the highest privacy and confidentiality (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). The service that is offered by the Eastern Caribbean country provides help through self-help assessments, books and digital programmes (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). All of these services mentioned can help as professional intervention (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). The service has helped the country grow in leaps and bounds and they are now more prepared for future mental health concerns and in this way the service would also help them create more innovations and interventions (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12).

In Kenya, there have been many efforts made to protect the children of the country (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). All counsellors in the country have access to remote calls which can be answered anywhere and anytime, which is the technical and financial support to the child helpline (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13).

6.2.14 Creation and growth in the number of helplines

Online platforms that support children and helplines should be implemented or expanded if there are already help services in the country (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). The reason for growth in online help service platforms or helplines is so that information can be shared with child victims of violence and abuse (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). It is noted that when resources are compiled and created, it is shared more quickly with friends and family members. For example, in Italy they have advertised the '1522' helpline number numerous times in order for people to be made aware of, and for them to remember the time in time of need (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). Italy has described it as "an emergency within an emergency" (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). This suggests that they are aware that there has been a drastic increase in cases of violence and abuse during the COVID-19 lockdown as they have been the hardest hit

country. Certain other countries have also implemented or expanded their helpline call lines for children and adults to be kept safe during the COVID-19 lockdown (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

Another country example is that of Kazakhstan which has used an existing helpline number and added a WhatsApp line and introduced the line to report violence and abuse against children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). There has also been the dissemination of child rights focal points (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). The Children's Rights Protection Committee in the country of Kazakhstan has circulated the contact details of all child rights areas that deal with abuse and violence against children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12).

The UNICEF has supported Georgia together with the Human Rights and Civil Integration Committee of the Parliament of Georgia (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12). They have developed a hotline during the COVID-19 pandemic for children which are '111', the children can call, and the requests of their needs would be addressed (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:12).

There were many measures that were put in place to help mitigate the child abuse and violence in Egypt. The child protection services were contracted and to implement remote services that are able to get delivered promptly to solve issues related to child violence and abuse, this is due to the addition of phone lines (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). The addition of the phone lines also made the inspection of services easier to control if they are being checked and assessed (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13).

In Papua New Guinea, a national helpline was created for remote mental health and psychosocial support services (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). The helpline was expanded by UNICEF, together with the national NGO called ChildFund (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). The remote services provided are accessible to children and adolescents (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). The helpline has been around for a long time and since 2015 it began to focus on gender-based violence (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). The start of 2015 recognised the helpline received more than 50 000

calls (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). The helpline offers counselling through the telephone, or SMS or mobile applications (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). This helpline is known to be a service where counselling can be received, referrals and social support; all while it being a free service where individuals can remain anonymous and where there is confidentiality (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15).

6.2.15 Adjust legislation and prompt enforcement of laws

There needs to be adjustments made to certain laws that can alter the policies regarding domestic abuse and violence. For example, in Australia, they have adjusted their law pertaining to family that allows do the justice system to respond to cases during the lockdown (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). More countries need to amend their legislation or laws that allow them to respond to cases of violence and abuse during the lockdown (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). This would ensure that all victims are kept safe and away from the abuser (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

There has also been the distribution of prevention measures to child abuse and violence (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). In Kenya there has also been the enforcement of laws during the COVID-19 pandemic to deliver the essential services promptly to those in need (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13). Within the enforcement of essential services, this also includes the protection of children due to the COVID-19 pandemic (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:13).

China has implemented a lot of legislations and services that protect children from abuse and violence during the COVID-19 outbreak (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). There were many challenges that the country had to overcome as it was the first to experience the epidemic of the COVID-19 (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). There were a lot of rules and laws, restrictions, closures of shops and schools, and a new virus which many feared that was in the country, but they had to find ways to protect the children of the country from neglect, abuse and violence (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). In order to implement the protection against children, they had social workers employ their services to the children in need (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). China provided all social workers necessary protective gear and listed the social workers as essential workers so that they could also be in the frontline protecting children from violence and abuse (United Nations Children's Fund

2020:15). This was all done together with UNICEF China (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15).

6.2.16 Expand access of services and resources for victims of abuse

In order to stop the spread of COVID-19, many countries have limited many resources for its citizens. However, in cases where countries have an increase in the surge of domestic violence abuse, some of these countries are finding ways to expand access to social services for victims of need (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). For example, in France, they have grocery stores in which 'pop up' centres are built into. This idea had come about since women and children do visit grocery stores more frequently, they are able to visit the 'pop up' counselling centre if they experience any form of abuse or violence and would like to report it. Countries such as Italy and Spain have created specified code words that children or women can use at centres or pharmacies that would alert workers to contact the appropriate social services or authorities (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). Other countries have created apps which are incognito and concealed for women and children to use, these apps can be used by those who feel threatened by perpetrators of abuse and violence (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). The victims can use the app to call social services or the relevant authorities in their homes without abuser being notified (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). The UNICEF notes that all services that relate to protecting women and children must not be limited due the lockdown rules put in place, in fact these services need to be seen as 'essential services' (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

Through the power of social media and using loud halers to get the message of child abuse and violence, Cambodia has reached 390 000 people (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). These 390 000 people received mental health and psychosocial services, COVID-19 prevention measures and positive tips for parenting (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). This was known to be a tired strategy employed by UNICEF in Cambodia (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). In individuals that were mentally, negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, there was teleservices and in person psychiatric treatment provided (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). There were also home visits in place in households to see if any help was needed and to show support (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). There were many individuals that received mental health and psychosocial services via hotlines; these include frontline workers, caregivers and around 460 parents (United Nations Children's Fund

2020:15). The mental health and psychosocial services were rendered by trained professional counsellors (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15).

In Malaysia the mental health and psychosocial services has also been implemented as an online and teleservices facility, and this is due to the partnering of the National Early Childhood Intervention Council together with UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). These services have been provided to children as well as children with disabilities (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). There has been a significant increase in access to the support provided (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). Around 806 individuals were reached for the mental health and psychosocial support (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15). Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, many things have been limited, but the treatment of 407 children and 399 parents is still a good target (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:15).

6.3 Governments around the world responding to violence against children during COVID-19

The responses by various Governments in the world have been detailed in the previous section. However, Guedes, Peterman and Deligiorgis (2020) identified that the consequences of the COVID-19 crisis caught everyone in the world off guard. The issue of domestic violence impact on children is an issue that has been going on for a long time, but the COVID-19 lockdown has only accelerated the domestic violence abuse. Therefore, governments around the world should have been prepared to handle the increase in domestic violence cases, and they should have been equipped to respond to the rise in cases and take care of the safety and wellbeing of children (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). The domestic violence that children experience is widespread around the world and there is a common risk factor which is the implementation of the COVID-19 lockdown (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). The violence against children also has the same severe consequences (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

Guedes, Peterman and Deligiorgis (2020) explained that although there are limited studies done on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children, nonetheless, from the research that is already published, there is enough evidence for the following statement to be made:

"Related factors—such as confinement, social isolation, increased levels of financial stress, and weak institutional responses—can increase or intensify levels of violence (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020)."

Over the past few months, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019 and the implementation of lockdown rules in majority of countries, many countries have reported that there would be a "perfect storm" brewing (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). This implied that there would be an increase in police reports, support services and call for help to the ChildLine (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). This statement was proven to be correct as many multinational organisations also cautioned that there would be increased cases of domestic violence and other forms of violence (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). Due to the statements made, the researcher decided to assess studies that have been done in the past relating to mitigation services amidst violence against children (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020).

Many countries are also fighting through a pandemic, trying to stop the virus from spreading plus protecting its citizens, and they are also producing effective measures to safeguard the children in their country from the violence and the abuse. Many social workers in some countries work online, via the telephone as they can no longer conduct the social work site visits in person due to COVID-19 (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:16). However, there are some countries that are taking the extra precautions with giving their social workers personal protective gear so that they can present themselves to the cases noted (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:16).

The researcher noted that South Africa was not mentioned in the official 2020 United Nations Children Fund report. According to the United Nations Children Fund (2020:16), the government must make violence and abuse against children a priority (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:16). This is a crisis therefore and there needs to be prevention measures to protect children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:16). To say the least, UNICEF has help most of the countries mentioned above. As in some cases there were helplines created or tools and resources needed (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:16).

The study which was conducted by Haffejee and Levine (2020:11), researched how the holistic and coordinated sound collaboration would be sufficient to help and protect children from domestic violence and abuse. They had noted that the governments should also collaborate with non-governmental organisations (NGO's), specifically the NGOs cannot take full responsibility for all cases, services and resources that children who are domestically abused require (Haffejee and Levine 2020:11). The governments have a responsibility to fulfil and look after the welfare of the children in the country, and some way which this can be done is by working with other organisations and uphold to the constitutional rights of children (Haffejee and Levine 2020:11).

Governments, and officials are becoming aware of the domestic violence abuse due to the increase cases of domestic violence reports, hence government needs to take leadership and provide assistance while working together with organisations to pool resources to assist the domestically abused victims. Hence, while working with them, they can provide a place of safety for children and adults, that is easily accessible for the victims to report the abuse (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:672). Bartlett, Griffin & Thomson (2020:2) express that apart from a holistic and collaborated approach, adults also need to understand that feelings of children due to the lockdown and the pandemic are valid, and if they are unable to understand the emotional wellbeing of their child then a caregiver should be brought to support the child and show care.

In South Africa, there has been no guidance and leadership from governments and, therefore, some organisations have designed emergency plans for children of domestic violence (Haffejee and Levine 2020:11). For this reason, social services and other facilities that care for children of domestic abuse or children in general need to be regarded as an essential service (Haffejee and Levine 2020:11). These social services play an important essential service role during the pandemic. It is imperative that domestic violence needs are put to the forefront for the issues to be sorted out (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020:672). As Haffejee and Levine (2020:11) have highlighted in their study that there are concerns of mental wellbeing and schooling, and therefore the Department of Education need to make the services available for children and students to access the social service support in times of need, as well as prioritise access to the learning facilities.

Being a victim of domestic violence has long lasting effects on the victim. Therefore, in cases where children are affected by domestic violence, there needs to be effective and efficient strategies implemented and which maintain a sense of urgency towards children who have been affected by domestic violence (Mittal and Singh 2020:5). Domestic violence abuse towards children is a huge concern, and there needs to be more emphasis placed on the impact of children affected by domestic abuse during the pandemic (Mittal and Singh 2020:5). For this to happen legislation policies need to be changed, support networks need to work together and be more accessible to victims, and there needs to be awareness made and resources need to be made available for victims to access (Mittal and Singh 2020:2).

Figure 6. 1: Countries that have reported disruption of violence against children services per the total and region
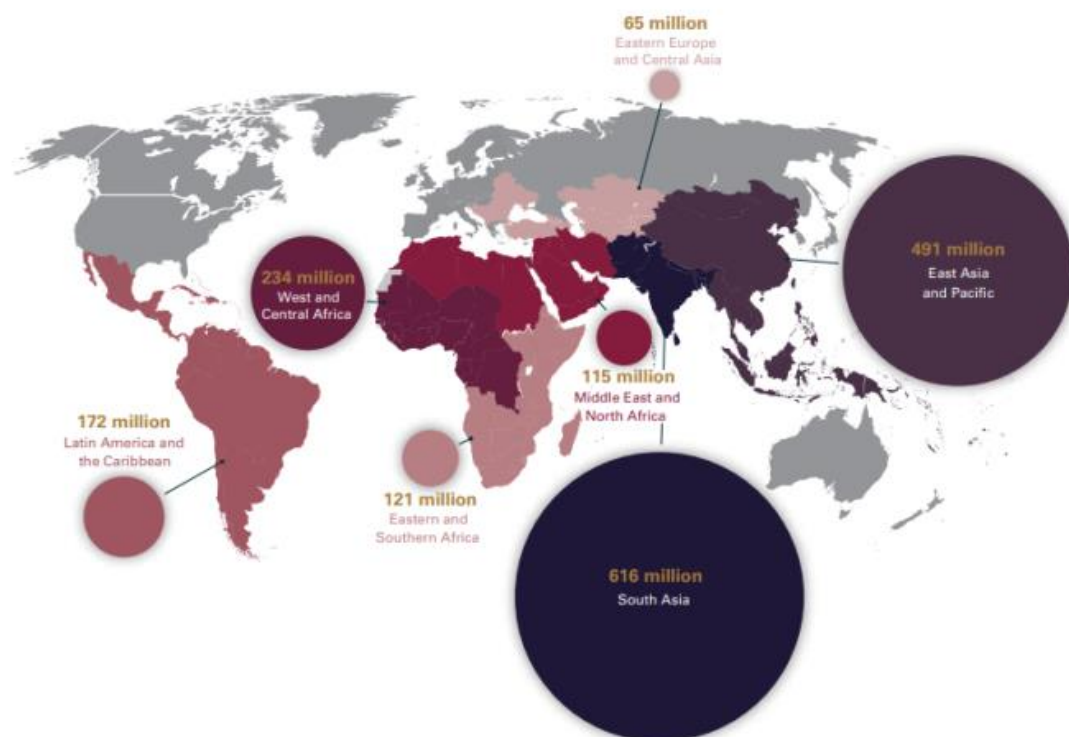
Source: United Nations Children's Fund (2020:8).

Figure 6.1 above shows all the countries that have reported disruption in any service related to violence against children. South Asia is seen to have the most amounts of children and the greatest number of disruptions against children (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:8). Eastern Europe and Central Asia have the least amount of children with the least number of disruptions (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:8).

6.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the world has come a long way since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic at the end of 2019. The absence of vaccines made it more difficult for countries to control the virus. Therefore, many countries utilised the effective measure of quarantining and social isolation as a way of the preventing the virus from spreading (Mittal and Singh 2020:2). Social isolation meant a change in everyone's lifestyle, such as online school and working from home. These social distancing measures that were implemented were used to stop the spread of the virus but also to protect the healthcare system (Mittal and Singh 2020:2). These orders set out by the government to protect its citizens show the positive outcomes that can be associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, but there were also negative consequences (Mittal and Singh 2020:2). Other such negative consequences are unemployment, mental health issues, financial difficulties, economic vulnerabilities, stress, and loneliness (Mittal and Singh 2020:2).

The research focused on exploring the impact of domestic violence on children during the COVID-19 pandemic. Research findings revealed that that the implementation of the well-intentioned COVID-19 lockdown was effective in reducing the rapid spread of the infectious virus but had the negative impact of increasing the risk of domestic violence abuse towards children and women. Pandemics are known to cause irreversible changes to an individual's life. Children either become victims of domestic violence or are traumatised by witnessing domestic violence abuse in the household. The marginalised segments in society such as women and children become affected and are abused and neglected due to the implementation of the COVID-19 lockdown and the social isolation. The significant increase of violence against females and children is seen to be a challenging threat in society.

The common element that all countries around the world need to use is the collaborative approach of the communities in their countries or city to tackle the important issue relating to the increase in domestic violence during the COVID-19 pandemic (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson

2020:672). The issue of domestic violence during social isolation needs a holistic response model that would help to control or stop the increase in domestic violence cases for future pandemics as well (Mittal and Singh 2020:5). The reasoning for certain individuals to commit acts of domestic violence was as a result of numerous possibilities that occurred due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some of which include, job loss, mental trauma, financial strains, dislocation from the community, discrimination and stress (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020: 668).

There needs to be effective resources to help children that are faced with abuse and violence in their households due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Governments need to work effectively to train more social workers to work at child helplines. They should also provide resources for the current ChildLine workers so that they are adept with the issues surrounding child abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic, and they should enhance their child counselling facilities and familiarising themselves with referral mechanisms (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:16). Applying all of these resources and extra training would not only help them effectively operate during the global COVID-19 pandemic, but it would also prepare them for any other crisis that can happen in the future (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:16).

The governments from various countries, throughout the COVID-19 global pandemic have implemented orders which restricted the citizens of their country from going out and coming into contact with others that had the virus, and this was done to protect the community for the greater good of the country (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020: 668). However, vulnerable children who were at home, due to the social isolation became victims of domestic violence abuse due to being trapped in their households (Rauhaus, Sibila & Johnson 2020: 668). This phenomenon which has been highlighted by several research studies provides the foundation for the objectives of the study.

Further studies should consider that domestic violence has a huge impact on children who are mentally, physically, and biologically affected. Governments in all countries should recognise that social workers are also fundamentally health care workers who need to work in the frontline to protect the children from the dangers of domestic violence (United Nations Children's Fund 2020:16). The effective strategies mentioned above are commendable for the countries that are following them. However, many other countries also need to commit to these

points presented above and commit to the resources in order to keep child victims of violence and abuse safe (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). The countries that are following these points are from high-income countries (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). Low-income countries do not have the money and resources to respond to the cases of abuse and violence (Guedes, Peterman & Deligiorgis 2020). The researcher undertook the study to address the pandemic of domestic violence against children and recommends that additional research be done on this topic as proposed by Peterman, Pereira and Palermo (2020) who state that other individuals can advance the research and practice to end violence against children. This is because children need to be protected from domestic violence abuse.

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