

**Conceptions and Beliefs about Spousal Abuse among Social Work Undergraduate
Students in Hong Kong**

TAM, Suet Yan

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
Gender Studies**

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Declaration

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TAM, Suet Yan

January 2009

Abstract

Abstract of thesis entitled:

Conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse among social work undergraduate students in Hong Kong

Submitted by Tam Suet Yan

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Gender Studies

at The Chinese University of Hong Kong (January 2009)

The lay conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse among social work undergraduates in Hong Kong were studied and lay conceptions were compared with legal and experts' perspectives. Adopting an ecological model, it was hypothesized that gender, attitudes toward gender, socialization of gender stereotypes and violence approval, and identification with Chinese traditional and modern cultural values were psychosocial correlates of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

A post-positivistic research paradigm was adopted and a qualitative (less dominant) with quantitative (dominant) method was the research design. Phase I Study was a focus group study aiming at understanding conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse with five focus groups involving 40 undergraduates. Phase II Study was a questionnaire survey with some of the items in questionnaire derived from the qualitative findings of the focus groups. Based on a stratified sampling strategy, 361 social work undergraduates were randomly selected from all undergraduate social work training institutions to participate in this survey. They completed a 252-item questionnaire which measured their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse and the psychosocial correlates within the proposed ecological model.

Results showed that social work undergraduates' conceptions of physical abuse were highly consistent with legal and experts' perspectives, while their conceptions of psychological abuse were more from laymen's perspectives, which were relatively unclear and less consistent with legal and experts' perspectives. They also had broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse by identifying more behavioral manifestations as wife abuse. In general, the breadth of their conceptions of spousal abuse depended on their gender (same sex favoritism), victims' gender, and types of abuse (physical vs. psychological). Furthermore, they endorsed more biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse. Male students endorsed more biased beliefs about spousal abuse than their female counterparts.

By applying the ecological model, attitudes toward gender, identification with

Chinese traditional and modern culture were significant correlates of the conceptions of spousal abuse; while gender, attitudes toward gender and identification with Chinese traditional culture were the significant correlates of beliefs about spousal abuse. The socialization influences were also significant correlates of the outcome variables in the male sample. These observations provided support for the thesis that there are individual and environmental correlates of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Coverage on spousal abuse in social work curriculum was found to be inadequate and request for training was high. Meanwhile, undergraduates with adequate training showed broader conceptions of spousal abuse, which indicated that training might help to broaden their conceptions of spousal abuse.

This study has several contributions. First, it enhances our understanding of the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the lay, legal, and professional perspectives. Second, with reference to our limited understanding on husband abuse, the present findings enhance our understanding on husband abuse. Third, it contributes to the development of theoretical models pertinent to the psychosocial correlates at the individual, interpersonal, and cultural levels. Finally, it facilitates improvement in coverage of spousal abuse in social work education.

摘要

本研究探討社會工作本科課程學生（下稱：社工學生）對虐待配偶（下稱：虐偶）的（非專業）定義和信念，同時比較他們的定義與法律和學術定義的異同。本研究運用生態學模型，了解社工學生對虐偶的定義和信念的相關心理社會因素，包括性別、對兩性的態度、社教化對性別定型及允許使用暴力的影響、中國傳統和現代文化的承襲。

本研究以後實証主義研究範式，以量性研究方法為主，質性研究方法為輔作為研究設計。研究的第一部份是聚焦小組討論，有五組共四十位社工學生參與，目的為收集他們對虐偶的定義和信念。研究員分析及綜合所有討論，將部份資料組成問卷及應用在研究的第二部份。研究的第二部份是問卷調查。根據分層隨機抽樣的方法，有三百六十一位來自香港不同院校的社工學生參與。每位受訪者完成一份有二百五十二題的問卷，收集他們對虐偶的定義和信念，與及在生態學模型建議的相關心理社會因素的資料。

研究發現社工學生對身體虐待有一致的定義，有關看法與法律和學術的定義相似。然而，他們對精神虐待的定義則較為含糊，與法律和學術的有分歧。他們對虐妻的定義較虐夫的廣闊，涵蓋的虐待行為較多。虐偶定義的廣闊程度取決於社工學生的性別（同性偏袒），受虐者性別，及虐待的性質（身體或精神）。社工學生一般對虐夫較虐妻有更多偏見。男性較女性社工學生對虐偶抱有更多偏見。

套用生態學模式，結果發現對兩性的態度，中國傳統和現代文化的承襲是虐偶定義的相關因素；而性別，對兩性的態度和中國傳統的承襲是虐偶信念的相關因素。對男性社工學生而言，社教化對性別定型及允許使用暴力的影響是虐偶定義和信念的相關因素。這些結果顯示了個人及環境因素與虐偶定義和信念有關。社工課程中涵蓋虐偶的課題被評為不足，社工學生要求有更多相關的知識和資訊。同時，對虐偶有較多認識的學生有較廣闊的虐偶定義，這顯示了訓練可能有助擴闊社工學生的虐偶定義。

本研究有多方面的貢獻。第一，本研究透過比較法律，學術及非專業對虐偶的定義和信念，提升我們對虐偶的理解。第二，針對對虐夫有限的認識，本研究提供了有關虐夫的定義和信念的資料。第三，研究找出虐偶的定義和信念在個人、父母及文化層面的相關心理社會因素。最後，研究結果亦有助改善社會工作教育在虐偶課題上的關注。

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

It is not uncommon to find news about spousal abuse reported in the media, several examples are shown below:

“社會福利署數字顯示，去年(2007)首9個月有4,795宗虐偶新增個案，超過八成受害者是女性，數目較前年(2006)全年的4,424宗還要多。”(蘋果日報, A18, 08/03/2008) *“According to the Social Welfare Department, there were 4,795 new incidence of spousal abuse from January to September 2007 and over 80% of the victims were females. The incidence rate of spousal abuse was higher than the 4,424 new incidence recorded within the whole of year 2006.”*(Apple Daily, A18, 08/03/2008, translated by the present researcher)

“虐待配偶方面，全港每10對夫婦，便有一對受身體或言語虐待，近年更有上升趨勢。”(文匯報, C04, 04/02/2008) *“For spousal abuse, one out of ten married couples in Hong Kong are either suffering from physical or verbal abuse, the trend is also rising in recent years.”* (Wenweipo, C04, 04/02/2008, translated by the present researcher)

“除了(家庭暴力事件)數目多了，研究發現使用武器施虐的比例增加，由1999年的佔10%，增至2005年的19%。……研究發現，293名受虐婦女中，平均每人身上有1.5個瘀傷或擦傷，屯門醫院急症部主管醫生甘澤華表示：「她們通常有多個傷口，亦有重覆受襲，當中62%婦女來院時已是第三次受虐。」”(明報, A18, 19/08/2006) *“Apart from the rising number of spousal abuse cases, research found that cases involved weapons increased from 10% in 1999 to 19% in 2005…… Research also showed that among the 293 abused female victims, each on average suffered from 1.5 units of wounds and bruises. According to Dr.*

Kam, the head of Accident and Emergency (A&E) Department in Tuen Mun Hospital, the abused women usually suffered from multiple wounds, and being abused repeatedly. About 62% of the victims visited the A&E Department was the third times being abused." (Mingpaonews, A18, 19/08/2006, translated by the present researcher)

Based on the above statistics, two major phenomena of spousal abuse can be observed: not only is spousal abuse increasing in frequency, but its intensity is also becoming more severe. This indicates that spousal abuse is a growing social problem in Hong Kong. It is estimated that over 17 new cases of spousal abuse happen everyday in Hong Kong based on the figures reported in the first news citation. In year 2006, "the Chief Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, Donald Tsang, had pledged that Hong Kong must have zero tolerance of domestic violence." (South China Morning Post, Editorial, 06/11/2006).

Domestic violence is typically grouped under four categories, including spousal abuse, child abuse, elder abuse, and sexual abuse. Since spousal abuse constitutes nearly 80 percent of the reported domestic violence (Wenweipo, C04, 04/02/2008), and since abuse between spouses may transmit to the next generation, high priority should be given to combating spousal abuse in Hong Kong.

Unfortunately, despite its importance, there are several hindrances in eliminating spousal abuse. First, we do not have clear and consentaneous conceptions that constitute spousal abuse. Although spousal abuse is commonly conceived in terms of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, we do not have an adequate understanding of how professionals and their trainees (as part of the general public) conceptualize this topic. Second, people still hold certain biased beliefs about spousal abuse. For instance, many people hold the belief that spousal

abuse is a private family matter. Such belief prevents effective intervention in many spousal abuse cases. Furthermore, people generally perceive spousal abuse as wife abuse. This perception is related to their sexist belief that only husband (man) will be violent against his wife (woman). Although women are the dominant victims in spousal abuse, husband abuse is also happening. As opposed to this general perception, the term "spousal abuse" will be used to include both wife abuse and husband abuse in this thesis and both will be equally focused upon. The third obstacle is that we do not have a systematic understanding of the factors that influence individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Individuals usually construct their own meanings toward spousal abuse based on their experiences and/or influences from their external environment, such as the media and their significant others (Mally-Morrison, 2004). Locating these influences is key to understand the concept formation process and it also helps to clarify existing unclear conceptions and biased beliefs about spousal abuse. It would be difficult to alter these misconceptions unless we have knowledge on the contributing factors.

In response to the issues identified above, this study will examine the conceptions (the behavioral manifestations of wife abuse and husband abuse) and beliefs (for example, "spousal abuse is a private family matter.") about spousal abuse among social work undergraduates in Hong Kong. There are two major purposes in this study. First, this study examines the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse among social work undergraduates in Hong Kong. The conceptions are defined as the behavioral manifestations that are considered as violent and abusive in conjugal relationships. Both conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse are explored. These conceptions, regarded as the lay perspective, are compared and contrasted with the perspectives of legal and academic experts. The conceptions of spousal abuse from the legal and academic experts' perspectives are

discussed in detail in Chapter 2. The beliefs about spousal abuse are summarized based on previous studies on spousal abuse. A detailed discussion on beliefs about spousal abuse is presented in Chapter 4.

Secondly, this study investigates the psychosocial factors that influence social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. The proposed psychosocial factors are organized in an ecological framework with levels of individual, interpersonal, and cultural factors. This conceptual framework elaborates individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, and is formulated based on individuals and the influences from their surrounding environment. Detailed discussion on this ecological framework is presented in Chapter 5.

Social work undergraduates were chosen as the participants in this study because they are the potential service professionals in handling spousal abuse cases in the future. As individuals' conceptions and beliefs systems affect their responses and reactions to spousal abuse, it is crucial that we understand how they interpret spousal abuse and the related psychosocial factors in formulating these conceptions and beliefs.

The present study is significant for several areas. From an academic standpoint, this study enriches the existing understanding of spousal abuse. It enriches the scopes of wife abuse and it is the first study to examine the conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse in the Chinese cultural context. Furthermore, the different viewpoints regarding this topic amongst laymen, legal and academic experts are analyzed and evaluated against each other. This thesis also investigates individual, interpersonal, and cultural factors in relating to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

From a theoretical perspective, this is the first study to adopt an ecological model to examine the related individual and ecological factors in influencing

individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Previous studies tended to stress on individual factors but overlooked the influences of ecological factors in constructing individuals' notions on spousal abuse.

For educational purposes, this study will have great implications on social work training targeted to knowledge of spousal abuse. The results of the present study helps to outline the patterns in which social work undergraduates conceive spousal abuse, which will indirectly reflect the training methods required in social work education.

From a practical angle, this study promotes reform in the public education system regarding spousal abuse by revealing how the general public understands this subject matter. Once individual's notions along with its influencing psychosocial factors are identified, certain misunderstandings on the subject can be clarified. The significance of this thesis is further discussed in Section 4.6 of Chapter 4.

1.1 Organization of this thesis

This thesis is organized in ten chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction. Chapter 2 reviews the statistics and the conceptions of spousal abuse. Statistics in Hong Kong and in the global context are presented in order to indicate the seriousness of this issue to the health of human groups. This is followed by a review on conceptions of spousal abuse defined by legal experts and academic scholars. Finally, there is an introduction about lay perspectives and a discussion on the relationships among lay, legal, and academic experts' perspectives of spousal abuse.

Chapter 3 is a discussion on the theories of spousal abuse. Different theoretical explanations of spousal abuse are analyzed. The theoretical framework based on ecological perspective is also briefly introduced. Chapter 4 is a literature review on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Reviews on conceptions and beliefs

about spousal abuse are first presented. Literature review on the psychosocial factors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse is also presented.

Chapter 5 presents the conceptual framework and the exposition of the research questions and research hypotheses. Chapter 6 is a methodology chapter, which presents the research paradigm, research design and the method of the two phases of studies (Phase I Study: Focus groups and Phase II Study: Questionnaire survey) in detail.

Chapter 7 presents the results of Phase I Study: Focus groups as well as the development of several measurements for Phase II Study: Questionnaire Survey.

Chapter 8 gives the results of Phase II Study: Questionnaire survey. Chapter 9 is the discussion of this thesis.

Chapter 10 is a conclusion chapter, where summary and limitations of this thesis are elucidated.

CHAPTER 2: SPOUSAL ABUSE IN HONG KONG AND THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

There are several sections in this chapter. First, the statistics regarding spousal abuse in Hong Kong and in the global context are presented in order to show the seriousness of spousal abuse in Hong Kong and worldwide. The second section presents the conceptions of spousal abuse from the legal and the academic experts' viewpoints. Finally, the last section introduces the lay perspectives and discusses the relationships among lay, legal and academic experts' perspectives of spousal abuse.

2.1 Statistics of spousal abuse

2.1.1 Statistics of spousal abuse in Hong Kong

Spousal abuse is a growing social problem and Hong Kong is no exception. There is an increasing trend in the number of both wife abuse and husband abuse cases in Hong Kong over the past decade. The following reported figures of spousal abuse are based on the statistics from the Social Welfare Department, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academic studies, and newspapers' reports. The figures are measured based on either prevalence rate or incidence rate. The former denotes the total number of cases of spousal abuse in the population in a given period of time, while the latter means the number of new cases in a given period of time (Barlow & Durand, 1998).

2.1.1a Statistics from the Social Welfare Department

The Centralized Information System on Battered Spouse Cases was established by the Social Welfare Department in April 1997. The system records the incidence of spousal abuse and the victim's gender. The incidence of spousal abuse increased by nearly 2.7 times in comparison with the rates recorded in 1997 and 2006. In

addition, the number of female victims increased by nearly 2.4 times whereas the number of male victims increased by over 10.2 times. Table 2.1 summarizes the incidence rates of spousal abuse from 1997 to 2007 based on The Centralized Information System on Battered Spouse Cases from the Social Welfare Department. There were 6,404 incidence of spousal abuse recorded in 2007, 68.7 percent was physical abuse, 0.2 percent was sexual abuse, 27.1 percent was psychological abuse, and 0.4 percent was multiple abuse.

After the Tin Shui Wai domestic violence tragedy of April 2004, Social Welfare Department commissioned a consultancy study on child abuse and spousal battering for the years 2003 to 2004. The aims of this territory-wide household study were to examine the different types of, the incidence and prevalence rates, and the related risk factors of child abuse and spousal abuse (Chan, 2005). It was found that one out of ten couples was facing spousal abuse during the past one year prior to the study. Based on the above findings, The Hong Kong Council of Social Service estimated that there were about 160 thousand couples facing spousal abuse within a married population of approximately three million as recorded in Hong Kong census year 2001 (HKCSS, 2005a).

In addition, Chan's study also revealed that relatively more female respondents were both victims and perpetrators of physical and psychological aggression in spousal abuse. Female victims tended to experience more physical violence, while male victims tended to experience more psychological abuse. Moreover, the reported rates of being victimized by spouses were quite similar among male and female respondents. This finding is consistent with some earlier findings that the frequency of wife abuse and husband abuse are approximately equal (Steinmetz, 1977; Stets and Straus 1989; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). Table 2.2 summarizes the number of victims and perpetrators in spousal abuse reported in this consultancy

study.

2.1.1b Statistics from non-governmental organizations

The number of spousal abuse cases can also be reflected by the utilization rate of shelters and hotline services of victims and perpetrators by non-governmental organizations. Taking the statistics from Harmony House as an example, below is an illustration of the increasing number of spousal abuse cases in Hong Kong.

Established in 1985, Harmony House was the first shelter for abused women and children in Hong Kong. The number of abused women admitted in the shelter has increased by nearly 1.4 times and the utilization of hotline services by abused women has increased by nearly 2.8 times over the past decade. Table 2.3 summarizes the number of abused women in utilizing shelter and hotline services of Harmony House over the past decade.

Harmony House launched its Men's Hotline to assist male batterers to seek professional help in the year 2000. Contrary to its original purpose of stopping abusive behavior of male batterers, there were male victims of husband abuse seeking help through this hotline as well. In years 2000 to 2003, 2,206 men called the Men's Hotline to seek help for spousal abuse, and 793 men reported having been abused by their female partners (Harmony House Annual Report, 2002-2003). Based on the male callers, psychological abuse was the most commonly reported form of abuse, though physical and sexual abuse were also recorded. Psychological abuse included teasing male victims as incapable to financially support the family, humiliating their sexual ability, and degrading their self-image and self-esteem.

2.1.1c Statistics about spousal abuse reported in the media

Apart from systematic records from government and non-governmental

organizations, cases of spousal abuse are reported in newspapers. The followings are some examples. It is revealed that some husbands experienced psychological abuse, such as: being belittled as incapable to financially support the family, not allowed to sleep for not able to satisfy wife's sexual needs; and physical abuse, such as: being slapped and scratched by their wives (Apple Daily, A14, 18/02/2005). Since 2002, there has been around 200 to 400 husband abuse cases reported annually, but there is no refugee center for male victims. The Association of Hong Kong Family Relationship Network Development (香港家庭關係網絡發展協會) reported that it failed to rent any places when the landlords knew they planned to set up a refugee center for abused men (Oriental Daily, A12, 31/05/ 2005). They could only use cargos, poultry lodgings, and pig lodgings to set up temporary refugee centers for the abused men. Over 3,000 abused men sought help from this organization from October 2004 to July 2005. There were on average 300 husband abuse cases happening each month over this period.

In addition, it was found that 42 percent of 460 (193) female local youngsters and 31 percent of 191 (59) male local youngsters said they had carried out minor or severe physical assaults to their partners, as reported in a local study (South China Morning Post, National 5, 18/07/2004). It is believed that violence during the dating stage of a relationship can pave the way for violence later on in marriage. The evidence above proves that men are not the only ones who initiate violence in intimate relationships; rather, both sexes can be the initiator. However, it is worth noting that reports from media may be sentimental that may not capture the objective reality.

2.1.2 Summary on statistics of spousal abuse in the global context

The World Health Organization (Heise & Moreno, 2002) presented a summary

of statistics on violence against women, it was found that in 48 population-based surveys around the world (including countries from Africa, Latin America, North America, Asia and Western Pacific, Europe, and Eastern Mediterranean), between 10 to 69 percent of women reported being physically assaulted by an intimate male partner at some points in their lives.

Mally-Morrison (2004) commented that domestic violence happens worldwide. In England, Donovan (2004) reported that based on the domestic violence data in 2001, the lifetime prevalence of spousal abuse is around one in four women. In Germany, it is estimated that 46,000 German women spend some time at women's refugees every year because of domestic violence (Leembruggen-Kallberg, Rupprecht, & Cadmus, 2004). Moreover, approximately 5 to 10 percent of the domestic violence in Germany consists of women acting against men. In Russia, violence against women happens in 1 out of every 4 families according to information from the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs in 1998 (Fastenko & Timofeeva, 2004). In Greece, a survey in 1999 showed that 1 in 5 Greek women had been physically abused at least once in their lifetime by a husband or partner (Stathopoulou, 2004).

In South Africa, Fourie (2004) reported 48 percent of 412 female respondents in Mitchell's Plain, Cape Town expressed that they have been abused by their partners at some points in their life. They also indicated that verbal abuse was the most common, followed by emotional, physical, isolation, sexual, and financial abuse. Domestic violence also happens in Asia and the Pacific, in Japan, 57 percent of 613 women reported they had suffered all three types of abuse, included physical, psychological, and sexual abuse during the year before enumeration (Yoshihama & Sorenson, 1994, as cited in Heise & Moreno, 2002). In Korea, based on large national studies, the percentage of women being assaulted by their male partners

during the year before enumeration was 38 percent (Heise & Moreno, 2002). In Taiwan, Liu (2004) reported that one person died because of domestic violence every 3 days in 1999. Moreover, 26,215 domestic violence cases were reported in years 1999-2001.

In Australia, West (2004) commented that both men and women perpetrate domestic violence. In Nicaragua, Latin American, Powell (2004) reported that nearly one-third of Nicaraguan women reported being physically abused during pregnancy and/or their children were present. In Mexico, 52 percent of physically abused women reported that their partners sexually abused them (Granados, 1996, as cited in Heise & Moreno, 2002).

In the United States, according to the report from National Crime Victimization Survey, more than 960,000 cases of violence against a current or former spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend occur each year (Greenfield et al., 1998; as cited in McFarlane, Willson, Makeche, and Lemmey, 2000). In addition, Tjaden and Thoennes (1998, as cited in Heise & Moreno, 2002) reported that the lifetime prevalence rate of wife abuse was 22 percent and husband abuse was 7 percent over a random sample in a population based survey. Table 2.4 summarizes the prevalence and incidence rates of spousal abuse in the global context.

According to the statistics of spousal abuse in Hong Kong and among the global context, several phenomena of spousal abuse can be noticed. First, the number of incidence of spousal abuse is increasing. Moreover, its intensity is also growing. This shows that the spousal abuse phenomenon is becoming serious and worth concern, thus corresponding actions should be carried out in combating it. Second, as most of the statistics are based on reports from women victims, plenty of information on women victims is available, but this also creates a deficiency in statistics on male victims. This lack of complete information is an obstacle in

gaining a full understanding on the whole phenomenon of spousal abuse. Furthermore, this also hinders our responses and actions to male victims. Third, statistics reported are summarized based on various survey methods and conceptualization of spousal abuse. It makes comparison among statistics difficult. Therefore, a consentaneous conception of spousal abuse is needed for a clear understanding on the statistics of spousal abuse. Fourth, there are few statistics of spousal abuse among Chinese people. Statistics of spousal abuse are available from Taiwan and Hong Kong, but statistics of spousal abuse in mainland China are seldom recorded. We still lack a clear understanding of spousal abuse among Chinese people. Finally, the statistics only provide descriptive data on spousal abuse, explanatory studies on the topic are still needed. For instance, people's conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse as well as the differences in their conceptions.

2.1.3 Proposed reasons of increasing number of spousal abuse cases in Hong Kong

Wife abuse is generally endorsed by people in Chinese societies because of their patriarchal cultural background. Therefore, it is believed that wife abuse is keep on happening behind the family's closed doors. The rising number of wife abuse cases maybe related to the increase in reporting of wife abuse. The possible reason of increase in reporting can be linked to the heightened awareness of gender equality promoted by feminists. Gender equality is particularly observed in the public domain, and women's participation in the workforce and monetary contribution to the family has increased their power of negotiation for fair relationship with their male partners (Stier & Lewin-Epstein, 2000). Another possible reason maybe the increased supporting services provided to women victims by government and non-governmental organizations. These encourage women victims to voice out and seek outside help, thus add to the reporting of wife abuse

cases.

Apart from wife abuse, the number of husband abuse is also escalating. The proposed reasons could be economic recession in Hong Kong and the changes of the family structure which put men in a relatively disadvantage position within the family. As some of the husbands may be underemployed or unemployed during economic recession, they may depend on wives' economic support. Moreover, women have higher education and social status nowadays. Under these structural changes in power and status between men and women, the power relation had been changed which might give rise to chances of husband abuse. It was claimed by a local researcher that females are becoming more likely to initiate attack to their male partners due to the break down in gender stereotypical beliefs (South China Morning Post, 18/07/2004). Indeed, academic research in the past two decades had revealed that attitudes toward gender are moving from traditional to egalitarian (Myers & Booth, 2002; Presser, 1994). Finally, the increased cases in both wife abuse and husband abuse may also be connected to the wider media coverage on spousal abuse which leads to higher recognition and reporting of abuse incidents.

2.2 Conceptions of spousal abuse

The conceptions of spousal abuse are defined as the behavioral manifestations that constitute spousal abuse. Typically, the conceptions of spousal abuse can be generally categorized into three perspectives. They are legal, academic experts' and lay perspectives. This section will briefly introduce these different concepts.

2.2.1 Legal conceptions of spousal abuse in Hong Kong

There is no criminal law exclusively legislated against spousal abuse, but there are several criminal laws in combating violent crimes in Hong Kong. These violent

crimes may occur in spousal abuse incidents. Table 2.5 summarizes those criminal laws.

In addition to the general criminal laws, the Domestic Violence Ordinance is a civil law especially for handling domestic violence cases. Table 2.6 shows the Domestic Violence Ordinance. However, it does not explicitly conceptualize the behavioral manifestations of domestic violence. Its definition of abuse is broad but not clear, includes physical abuse which ranges from assault (conducting unlawful violent behavior with or without direct body contact with victims) to beating (conducting unlawful violent behavior with direct body contact with victims). Apart from physical abuse, stalking is also regarded as spousal abuse, which includes non-stop phone calling, sending letters with offensive content, posting insulting posters in victims' workplace, and psychological abuse, such as insulting or swearing, and shouting or yelling. Moreover, sexual abuse, such as forcing a partner or spouse to engage in sexual activities is also regarded as spousal abuse.

According to the Multi-disciplinary Guidelines on the Handling of Battered Spouse Cases,

“Spousal battering is a kind of domestic violence. In using violence or the threat of violence, physical or psychological harm is inflicted with the effect of establishing control by one individual over another. It covers incidents of physical attack, when it may take the form of physical and sexual violations, such as slapping, pushing, pinching, spitting, kicking, hitting, punching, choking, burning, clubbing, stabbing, throwing boiling water or acid and setting on fire as well as spouse being forced to be involved in sex or undesirable sexual acts. It also includes psychological or mental violence, which consists of repeated verbal abuse, harassment, confinement, and

deprivation of physical, financial, personal resources, and social activities, etc.” (Social Welfare Department, 2004, p.2)

The conceptions of spousal abuse stated in this guideline are consistent with those defined by the World Health Organization (Heise & Moreno, 2002). Spousal abuse is regarded as a kind of intimate partner violence according to World Health Organization (WHO).

“Intimate partner violence refers to any behavior within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship. Such behavior includes: acts of physical aggression, such as slapping, hitting, kicking and beating; psychological abuse, such as intimidation, constant belittling and humiliating; forced intercourse and other forms of sexual coercion; various controlling behaviors, such as isolating a person from their family and friends, monitoring their movements, and restricting their access to information or assistance.” (Heise & Moreno, 2002, p.89)

In addition, it is stated that the abusive behavior covered above should happen between partners in a long-term relationship, they could be married, cohabited, or divorced. Though females tend to be the victims in most of the spousal abuse cases, victims who encounter spousal abuse can be female and/or male.

Above are the laws and guidelines for Police Force and Social Welfare Department in handling domestic violence. Behavioral manifestations stated in the above guidelines and Domestic Violence Ordinance is regarded as the legal conceptions of spousal abuse in this study.

2.2.2 Academic experts' conceptions of spousal abuse

Academic experts' conceptions of spousal abuse are based on experts' views (in particular researchers within social science field) and suggested based on empirical research. In order to have a comprehensive analysis of spousal abuse and scientific measurements, researchers need to define various forms of abuse before they conduct their research.

Over the years, social science researchers have different terms and their own definitions of spousal abuse. Spousal abuse is generally put under the category of "domestic violence". However, it is commented that "there are no uniform definitions of domestic violence and no measure that are used worldwide to accurately record its incidence" (Summers & Hoffman, 2002, p. xiv). The terms "domestic violence" and "family violence" specify the setting of violence. Dwyer, Smokowski, Bricout and Wodarski (1995) had defined "domestic" as the setting of the violent act, which is within a marital or intimate cohabiting relationship. The term "violence" means intentional, hostile, aggressive physical and psychological violent acts. Schornstein (1997) stated the working definition of domestic violence.

"A systemic pattern of abusive behaviors, occurring over a period of time, which may become more frequent and severe and are done for the purpose of control, domination, and /or coercion. Such behaviors may include verbal abuse and threats; physical, psychological, sexual abuse; as well as the destruction of property and pets." (p.1)

This working definition is good at highlighting the accumulative nature of violence on its frequency and severity as well as the purposes of violence. However, the definition tautologically defines violence as abusive behavior and it does not

mention the behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse extensively.

Other terms such as “wife battering” and “wife abuse” also denoted the same meanings of domestic violence and family violence. However, these terms emphasize on wives as the victims of abuse. Some other terms focus on the relationships and do not specify the gender of the victims, for instance “intimate partner violence” and “spousal abuse”. Wallace (2005) stated the definition of spousal abuse.

“(Spousal abuse) is any intentional act or series of acts that cause injury to a spouse. These acts may be physical, emotional, or sexual. Spouse is gender-neutral, and therefore the abuse may occur to a male or female. The term includes those who are married, cohabitating, or involved in a serious relationship. It also encompasses individuals who are separated and living apart from their former spouse.” (p.182)

This definition is good at pointing out the gender-neutral nature of spousal abuse. This confirms that husbands can also be the victims of spousal abuse. Moreover, it also extends the marital relationship from married couples to couples involved in serious relationships. This extends our concern to the people who suffered from abuse in an intimate relationship. However, this definition is also relatively general and does not articulate spousal abuse with clear and extensive behavioral manifestations. In this study, the term “spousal abuse” is used, which is generally defined as the physical, psychological, and sexual abuse happened between marital couples and couples involved in a serious relationship. The behavioral manifestations are examined through focus group studies and questionnaire surveys with social work undergraduates in Hong Kong.

In addition to the definitions of spousal abuse, social science researchers also developed measurement scales with behavioral manifestations of abuse based on empirical research with spousal abuse victims. For instance, the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS: Straus, 1979) and its revised version (CTS2: Straus & Hamby, 1996) were the most widely adopted instruments in mass surveys to measure spousal abuse. Moreover, there are other scales, such as the Abusive Behavior Inventory (Shepard & Campbell, 1992), the Severity of Violence against Women Scales (Marshall, 1992), and the Abuse within Intimate Relationships Scale (Borjesson et al., 2003). The following are the brief summaries of these measurement scales.

The rationale of Conflict Tactics Scales was based on the conception that conflict between human beings is an inevitable part of life (Straus, 1979). There are three proposed tactics in resolving conflicts, including 1) the use of rational discussion, argument, and reasoning; 2) the use of verbal and non-verbal acts which symbolically hurt the other, or the use of threats to hurt the other; and 3) the use of physical force against another person as a way of resolving conflict, called “violence”. Conflict Tactics Scales were designed to measure tactics in resolving conflicts between spouses. Spouses were asked to “indicate how often they did each act in relation to their partners in the past year, and how often their partners carried out each action” (Straus, 1979, p.78). Based on the same rationale with the original scales, the revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2) made an extension and clearer classification of conflict tactics between spouses. This is a 39-item self-report scale with five subscales. These five subscales are 1) negotiation (believing can work out the problem with partner), 2) psychological aggression (from insulting partner to destroying partner’s belongings), 3) physical assault (from throwing something that could hurt their partner to choking partner), 4) physical injury (from feeling physical pain the next day after fighting with partner to having a broken bone from a fight

with partner, and 5) sexual coercion (from making partner have sex without a condom to using threats to make partner have oral or anal sex). Though the behaviors defined under each subscale were not derived from the legal definitions of violence, they were agreed to be different types of violent behavior in resolving conflicts between partners in intimate relationships (Chan, 2005). This revised version was used frequently to measure the frequency and intensity of violence experienced by female victims in wife abuse.

However, Conflict Tactics Scales were being criticized for ignoring the context of abuse and consisting poorly constructed items that combined threatened, attempted, and actual violence (Dobash & Dobash, 1988). Thus researchers developed other measurement scales, such as the Abusive Behavior Inventory (ABI: Shepard & Campbell, 1992) and the Severity of Violence against Women Scale (Marshall, 1992). Both of these scales are based on feminist perspectives which view men using physical and psychological abuse as a means to establish power and control over women under the support of patriarchal culture. The purpose of violence and abuse is to maintain dominance of men over women but not necessarily in resolving conflicts (Schechter, 1982). The Abusive Behavior Inventory is a 30-item instrument containing 10 items on physical assault and 20 items on psychological abuse, including emotional abuse, isolation, intimidation, use of male privilege, and economic abuse. The Severity of Violence against Women Scales consists of 46 items with four subscales on abusive acts, including symbolic violence, threats of physical violence, actual violence, and sexual violence.

In response to the drawbacks of CTS, Borjesson et al. (2003) developed a scale to assess young adults' subtle violent behavior, called the Abuse within Intimate Relationships Scale. The researchers believed that Conflict Tactics Scales are suitable for clinical sample and for measuring conflict resolution tactics rather than

early stages of abusive behavior. Therefore, they developed another scale to tap into subtle violent behavior, which can be applied to the general young adult population. Similar to previous measurements, physical and psychological abuses were found to be the two major components, but they contained different subscales. Physical abuse consists of: 1) overtly violent acts (pushing, shoving, and throwing objects) and 2) restrictive acts (grabbing and squeezing), while psychological abuse consists 1) emotional abuse (mocking, ridicule, and belittling), 2) deceptive behaviors (betrayal and deception), and 3) verbal abuse (screaming and ignoring) (Borjesson et al., 2003).

Though this scale is developed to tap on subtle violent behavior amongst the young adult population, its items largely overlap with those within the revised Conflict Tactics Scales. Moreover, since the Abusive Behavior Inventory and the Severity of Violence against Women Scales are based on feminist perspectives, their behavioral manifestations of abuse may not be as neutral as the revised Conflict Tactics Scales, which mainly tap on tactics in solving conflicts between couples. Though conflicts do not directly equal to violence, they are situations prone to violence. The academic experts' conceptions of spousal abuse in this study are based on the revised Conflict Tactics Scales, including the physical assault and psychological aggression subscales.

To summarize, the conceptions of spousal abuse based on social science experts are generally divided into three domains, including physical, psychological, and sexual abuse. The behavioral manifestations of physical abuse consist of intentional inflictions of pain that usually involve overt use of force and direct body contacts, such as pushing, slapping, kicking, beating, and throwing objects that could hurt. Physical abuse leaves victims with physical injuries, psychological fear, and threats of further physical abuse. The behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse

include covert hurts, such as exertion of power, control, and dehumanization. These manifestations may cover verbal belittlement, isolation of victims from friends and relatives. Psychological abuse causes damage to victims' mental health and psychological development, such as lowered self-esteem. The behavioral manifestations of sexual abuse mainly cover sexual coercion, such as making partner have sex without a condom and using threats to force partner to have sexual activities.

However, we should be cautious to the following limitations in the conceptions of spousal abuse derived by academic experts. First, the conceptions were predominantly developed based on female victims' experiences. The conceptions from male victims are unknown. Second, conceptions were primarily discovered in Western countries, conceptions of spousal abuse among Asian countries with non-Western cultural background are unclear. No existing study has examined the conceptions and beliefs as well as their psychosocial correlates (the influence of Chinese culture) among Chinese samples. Third, as the conceptions were built based on self-reported data, these retrospective data could be subjective and biased due to distortion and reconstruction of memory. Fourth, the conceptions of husband abuse were never examined in previous studies, while the conceptions of wife abuse could never be directly converted into husband abuse.

2.2.3 Comparison between legal and academic experts' conceptions of spousal abuse

Both legal and academic experts' conceptions of spousal abuse are generally divided into three domains, including physical, psychological, and sexual. The behavioral manifestations of physical abuse are quite similar among legal and academic experts' perspectives. Both of them focus on the overt use of violence and force which cause bodily harms and injuries to the victims. There are many

overlapping of the behavioral manifestations of two perspectives in defining physical abuse as shown in Table 2.7.

However, legal conceptions tend to primarily focus on physical abuse. Most of the general criminal laws in combating violent crime target physical violence, but laws in combating psychological abuse are unclear. In the Domestic Violence Ordinance, the term “assault” is defined as conducting unlawful violent behavior with or without direct body contact. This may imply assault can be psychological, such as verbal assault. Meanwhile, in the guidelines provided by the Social Welfare Department, no explicit behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse are stated. Academic experts defined sexual and psychological abuse more elaborate as compared with the legal perspective. There is only one behavioral manifestation of sexual abuse in the legal perspective, while academic experts extend to seven behavioral manifestations of sexual abuse. The behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse are also more in depth as compared with those in the legal perspective. It can be concluded that the legal conceptions of sexual and psychological abuse are quite loose and vague as compared with academic experts’ conceptions. Table 2.7 presents the behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse, showing the differences between legal and academic experts’ perspectives. The symbol (√) indicates that behavioral manifestation of abuse is explicitly stated in that particular perspective. The symbol (○) indicates that behavioral manifestation of abuse is not explicitly stated in that particular perspective but can be incorporated in the conception of abuse under that particular perspective.

2.3 Lay perspectives of spousal abuse

The conceptions of spousal abuse of legal and academic experts are based on professional viewpoints, which may neglect the viewpoints of the general public or

layperson. Indeed, the conceptions from layperson are also important in contributing to the whole understanding of spousal abuse. This section discusses the meaning of lay perspectives and differences among lay, legal, and academic experts' perspectives on spousal abuse. Finally, the importance of these three perspectives in understanding and combating spousal abuse is also discussed.

According to Kelly's (1955) theory of personal constructs, individuals are theorists who try to develop their own theories in organizing their daily life experiences. Those theories are termed as lay theories. They are lay because individuals are not always consciously aware that they have certain theories towards their experiences. Even though individuals may report their lay theories explicitly, they may not be aware of the influences of those theories on their social understanding (Hong, Levy, & Chiu, 2001).

Sternberg (1985) proposed that lay theories are constructions of particular factors, such as success, love, and wisdom, which are all present in individuals' minds. Lay theories are different from scientific theories, the latter refer to theories that are constructed by psychologists and other scientists based on empirical research (Sternberg et al., 1981). Even though lay theories may lack the rigor of scientific theories and sometimes can lead to flawed predictions, human behavior is guided by lay theories no matter how "naive" those theories may be (Heider, 1958). Hong, Levy, and Chiu (2001) proposed that lay theories help people efficiently create a constant and meaningful system to understand, interpret, predict, and control their surrounding environment. Lay theories also possess heuristic value and ability to represent how people view the world (Furnham, 1988). Cole and Bradac (1996) suggested that lay theories identify the causal components of a given phenomenon and suggested an organized pattern of relationships among those

components. Lay theories serve three functions. 1) They provide a sense of understanding and control; 2) provide interpretive frameworks; and 3) help to predict human behavior. Lay theories are important because they are both the partial cause and the consequence of social behavior (Furnham, 1988). However, as lay theories did not undergo systematic and scientific empirical testing, some of these lay theories are false and are myths.

Previous studies on lay theories showed people had specific, coherent, and well-organized ideas about various social and psychological phenomena. Hong, Levy, and Chiu (2001) summarized a series of studies on lay theories approach to group perceptions and behavior, such as lay theories of children attitudes toward in-groups and out-groups (Cameron, Alvarez, Ruble, & Fuligni, 2001). Other studies on lay theories toward certain social and psychological phenomena, including beliefs on crime (Warr, 1980), intelligence (Sternberg, Conway, Ketron, & Bernstein, 1981), wealth and economic success (Forgas & Morris, 1982), delinquency (Furnham & Henderson, 1983), the causes of alcoholism (Furnham & Lowick, 1984), personality (Semin & Krahe, 1986), unemployment (Furnham & Hesketh, 1987), schizophrenia (Furnham & Murao, 1999; Furnham & Rees, 1988), causal structure of examination failure (Lunt, 1988), poverty (Heaven, 1989a; Shek 2004a, 2004b), unemployment (Heaven, 1989b), homosexuality (Furnham & Taylor, 1990), causal structure of loneliness (Lunt, 1991), comparison between scientific and lay beliefs on anorexia nervosa (Furnham & Hume-Wright, 1992), Chinese lay beliefs about psychological problems (Luk & Bond, 1992), definitions of sexual harassment (Frazier, Cochran, & Olson, 1995), child development (Furnham & Weir, 1996), relational satisfaction with best friend (Cole & Bradac, 1996), and lay theories of happiness (Furnham & Cheng, 2000).

Lay theory of spousal abuse was only recently suggested by Mally-Morrison (2004) as an important issue to be examined in domestic violence. Based on Kelly's theory of personal constructs, Mally-Morrison and her collaborators believed that individuals are not passive learners, instead they actively construct understanding of the social world. They suggested that lay theories of abuse developed through individuals' experiences within their environment and through the stories they were told. For example, an East Asian male respondent put emphasis on violation of family roles and lack of respect in defining abuse, while an American female respondent put emphasis on physical and psychological aggression. These two respondents have different concern and focus in defining abuse. Mally-Morrison suggested that these differences may be the results of their different gender identities (man vs. woman), different cultural heritage (East vs. West), different socialization of gender roles and acceptance of aggression and violence. These are all the environmental factors that affect individuals' development of certain social phenomena.

Mally-Morrison further suggested that these environmental factors match with the ecological framework developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979). The environmental factors could be organized as niches of macro to micro environment and individuals are embedded in the center. Individuals' formulation of lay theories toward certain social phenomena is indeed the interactions between individuals' responses and endorsement to the influences from their external environment. The present study followed Mally-Morrison's suggestion in examining social work undergraduates' lay conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse as well as examining the related environmental factors organized within an ecological framework.

2.3.1 Working definition of lay perspective in this study

Luk and Bond (1992) proposed that “lay theories are the explanations that typical members of a culture give for particular social behaviors and events” (p.140). Furnham and Cheng (2000) suggested lay perspectives are personal and idiosyncratic thoughts. Hamilton and Sherman (2001) proposed that lay theories are intuitive theories that laymen hold about certain phenomena. Hong, Levy and Chiu (2001) suggested that lay theories are conceptions, beliefs or common sense people used to construct their social understanding but they may not be aware about their existence. Molden and Dweck (2006) defined lay theories are individuals’ fundamental assumptions about themselves and their social world. According to Furnham and Cheng (2000), lay theories are different from scientific theories, which are “empirically and observationally derived and tested” (p. 227). Based on the above definitions and preceding discussion on lay perspectives, the working definition of lay perspectives in the present study is defined as anything that is not empirically and observationally generated, non-professional, and intuitively derived from individuals’ mind without systematic training on the issue upon concerned.

With such working definition of lay perspectives, social work undergraduates are considered as laymen of spousal abuse in the present study. It is because social work undergraduates as part of the general public also have their intuitively “pop-up” conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Their personal thoughts on spousal abuse are not subject to systematic empirical test. Their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are non-professional. Moreover, pervious studies on lay perspectives also sampled undergraduate students. Chen and Mak (2008) examined beliefs about mental illness and help-seeking behaviors among groups of undergraduates in the America, Hong Kong and Mainland China. Knight, Furnham and Lester (1999) investigated the lay theories about suicide among 150

undergraduates. Cole and Bradac (1996) studied undergraduates' lay theories of relational satisfaction with best friends. These showed that undergraduate students are typically considered as part of the general public and their lay perspectives of different social phenomena are studied.

Moreover, social work undergraduates are not considered as social work professional as they have not yet finished their training on social work. Indeed, the coverage on spousal abuse in social work curriculum is relatively inadequate in local institutions. According to the course descriptions showed on the homepages among the six institutions and personal communication with social work undergraduates in The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Shue Yan University and Hong Kong Baptist University, curricula of the first year and the second year seldom cover knowledge and information about spousal abuse. For the third year and the fourth year undergraduates, the chance of learning about spousal abuse is higher but the formal course content about spousal abuse is still limited. Spousal abuse is usually mentioned through module format in courses on family issues. Students may be required to do group presentation on topic of spousal abuse, but usually only few numbers (one group) of students have chance to do so. Furthermore, students are required to have placement practice in certain social welfare organizations. Some of them may be assigned to have placement in organizations that primarily handle family issues. However, as they are still under training, they seldom have chance to come across spousal abuse cases. It can be concluded that social work undergraduates are generally laymen toward spousal abuse as they have not yet come across full training on knowledge of spousal abuse especially the first and second years of undergraduates. Though undergraduates of third and fourth years may have some chances of training on knowledge of spousal abuse, the content on spousal abuse is still limited. Social work undergraduates as part of the general

public also possess their intuitive conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

2.3.2 Differences and relationships among legal, academic experts, and lay perspectives of spousal abuse

According to Chow (1992), laws are legislated in order to restrain human behavior. As human are social animals, in order to maintain harmonious interactions among individuals, social standards that state the proper interactions between individuals are required. Rituals and teaching among different cultures can help to confine human behavior, but only law possesses the strong restraining ability in controlling human behavior.

The legislation of law involves a rigor and thorough process where legislators and related experts are consulted. Laws represent social standards, and in society, it is the strongest constraint over human behavior, with the power to assign punishment to human misbehavior. Thus it is different from academic experts' and lay perspectives. However, the legislation of law also involves the consultation of experts of related social phenomena. Therefore, theories contributed by academic experts can serve as references for legal perspectives.

Academic experts try to explain human behavior in scientific and systematic ways. They construct theories, which are used to describe, explain, and predict human behavior. Based on theories, they propose hypotheses and conduct empirical tests based on data in qualitative and/ or quantitative formats to validate their hypotheses. Contrasting with laymen, their theories are systematic and have support from real life experiences. Based on the review on conceptions of spousal abuse from academic experts in previous sections, experiences of women victims in wife abuse are the major references in formulating the behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse. Because they collected the first-hand information from abused

victims, the behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse are described as more detailed when compared with those in the legal perspectives. However, academic experts have not yet come to consentaneous sets of behavioral manifestations that constitute spousal abuse. Moreover, most of them only focus on wife abuse and neglect husband abuse. Thus the experiences of abused husbands are overlooked.

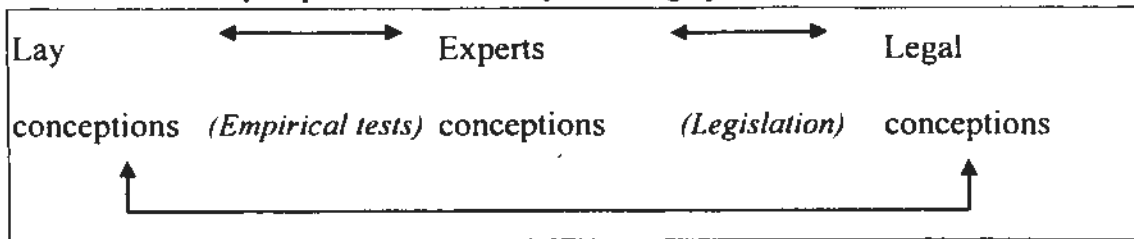
Contrast to academic experts' theories, lay theories refer to the general public's everyday understanding toward phenomena and persons in their social world. Lay theories can in fact serve as the bedrock of scientific theories. Wegener and Petty (1998) stated that lay theories of social and psychological phenomena include many truths, which can form the basic of scientific theories. Sternberg (1985) suggested that scientists, like laymen also have lay theories toward social and psychological phenomena. Certainly there are measures in maintaining researchers' objectivity in scientific research. These measures include "critical tradition" (ensure study is consistent with existing scholarly tradition) and "critical community" (the use of peer reviews) (Guba, 1990).

Although lay theories are not systematically organized and empirically tested, they are still vital to our understanding of human behavior. O'Toole and Webster (1988) suggested that lay conceptions and reactions to potential forms of misconduct are important. It is because "lay conceptions 1) help to shape the actions, interactions, and responses of the batterers, victims, and witnesses, 2) spousal abuse as one type of deviant behavior is often identified by lay persons before reporting to professionals and agencies, 3) professional and scientific knowledge is often constructed on the basis of commonly held conceptions" (p.349). Furnham and Rees (1988) proposed that though lay theories can never replace academic theories, they still provide ideas from alternative perspectives in understanding social issues. They

suggested that it is important to investigate layman's conceptions on different social issues because we should identify and correct some misleading layman's conceptions. "Where implicit theories are both wrong and misleading they should be changed or corrected." (p.219) Social issues not only involve perspectives from academic experts, but also involve perspectives from the general public. In particular, when the issue is controversial, we should examine different theories from different groups of people. Moreover, some social issues such as mental illness and husband abuse involve discrimination to their sufferers, so examining lay theories are highly recommended.

Based on the third point suggested by O'Toole and Webster (1988), we can actually find that the relationships among legal, academic experts' and lay conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are interrelated. Laymen and academic experts can be influenced by legal conceptions of violence and abuse when formulating their own conceptions of spousal abuse. Furthermore, academic experts' conceptions can be based on legal and lay conceptions. It is because law as one form of social standard can serve as the external factor in influencing individuals' responses to certain social issues. As mentioned earlier, lay theories can serve as the bedrock of scientific theories, academic experts can get inspirations from the lay perspectives. As laymen never test their theories systematically, academic experts help to organize and empirically test the lay theories. Academic experts also help to identify any mythic theories held by the laymen. Moreover, they may also provide consultation services during the legislation process of law. Thus lay, academic experts and legal perspectives are interrelated. Figure 2.1 illustrates the interrelationships amongst legal, academic experts, and lay perspectives in conceptualizing spousal abuse.

Figure 2.1: The interrelationships amongst legal, academic experts, and lay perspectives in conceptualizing spousal abuse



To sum up, lay, academic experts' and legal perspectives of spousal abuse are interrelated and affecting each other greatly. They are all important in combating spousal abuse. A systematic examination of the conceptions of spousal abuse among these three perspectives is necessary. In this study, the lay conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are examined through focus groups study. The findings based on lay perspectives are then formulated into questionnaires, which are used to assess the lay conceptions from a representative sample of social work undergraduates. These findings from lay perspectives indeed enrich the instruments to be used to assess the lay conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

Table 2.1: Incidence of spousal abuse from year 1997- 2007

Year	Female Victims (%)	Male Victims (%)	Total Number of Newly Reported Spousal Abuse Cases
1997	1,153 (96)	47 (4)	1,200
1998	1,115 (95)	57 (5)	1,172
1999	1,568 (93)	121 (7)	1,689
2000	2,199 (93)	171 (7)	2,370
2001	2,236 (92)	197 (8)	2,433
2002	2,787 (92)	247 (8)	3,034
2003	2,925 (89)	373 (11)	3,298
2004	2,966 (88)	405 (12)	3,371
2005	3,153 (87.6)	445 (12.4)	3,598
2006	3,894 (88)	530 (12)	4,424
2007	5,169 (80.7)	1,235 (19.3)	6,404

Source: Social Welfare Department (<http://www.swd.gov.hk/vs/english/stat.html>)

Table 2.2: Number of victims and perpetrators in spousal abuse reported in Chan's study (2005)

	Female victims (%*)	Male victims (%*)	Female perpetrators (%*)	Male perpetrators (%*)
<i>Lifetime prevalence rates</i>				
Physical assault, injury, sexual coercion	793 (15.7)	605 (12)	772 (15.3)	752 (14.9)
Psychological aggression	2,910 (57.64)	2,866 (56.77)	3,101 (61.43)	3,063 (60.67)
<i>Incidence rates (during the past 12 months prior to enumeration)</i>				
Physical assault, injury, sexual coercion	374 (7.4)	328 (6.5)	399 (7.9)	419 (8.3)
Psychological aggression	2,007 (39.75)	2,119 (41.98)	2,512 (42.63)	2,280 (45.16)

Source: Chan (2005).

Note: * Percentage over total number of participants, N= 5,049

Table 2.3: Utilization of shelter and domestic violence hotline of Harmony House by abused women in the past decade

Year	No. of abused women residents	No. of women utilizing domestic violence hotline service
2005-2006	229	11,000
2004-2005	263	10,457
2003-2004	218	8,542
2002-2003	217	9,542
2001-2002	210	8,411
2000-2001	208	8,190
1999-2000	202	6,648
1998-1999	174	6,021
1997-1998	165	4,836
1996-1997	164	4,041

Sources: Harmony House Website
 (http://www.harmonyhousehk.org/chi/statimage/stat_chi.html)

Table 2.4: Prevalence and incidence rates of spousal abuse in the global context

Regions/ Cities	Wife abuse	Husband abuse
	<i>Estimated lifetime prevalence rates</i>	
Europe		
England		
2001 (Source: Donovan, 2004)	1 in 4 women	Not known
Russia		
1998 (Source: Fastenko & Timofeeva, 2004)	1 in 4 women	Not known
Greece		
1999 (Source: Stathopoulou, 2004)	1 in 5 women	Not known
Germany		
(Source: Leembruggen-Kallberg & Rupprecht, 2004)	46,000 victims in refugees annually	5-10%
Africa		
South Africa		
(Source: Fourie, 2004)	48% in 412 women sample	Not known
Latin America		
Nicaragua		
2001 (Source: Heise & Moreno, 2002)	1 in 3 women suffered physical abuse during pregnancy/ when their children were present	Not known
North America		
United States		
1998 (Greenfield et al., 1998)	>960,000 cases of violence against intimate partners	
1998 (Source: Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998 in Heise & Moreno, 2002)	22% over a random sample in a population based survey	7% over a random sample in a population based survey
<i>Estimated incidence rates</i>		
Asia and the Pacific		
Japan		
(Source: Yoshihama & Sorenson, 1994 in Heise & Moreno, 2002)	57% of 613 women sample	Not known
Korea		
2001 (Source: Heise & Moreno, 2002)	38% over a random sample in a population based survey	Not known
Taiwan		
1999-2001 (Source: Liu, 2004)	26,215 cases of domestic violence	

Note: The definitions of abuse and survey methods varied among the reported studies, it should be cautious when comparing the number of spousal abuse cases.

Table 2.5: Criminal laws in combating violent crime

Ordinance/ Law		Offenses	Guilty/ Court Order
Offences Against The Person Ordinance (Hong Kong Law Chapter 212)	Section 2	Murder	Imprisonment for life
	Section 7	Manslaughter	Imprisonment for life and to pay such fine as the court may award
	Section 19	Wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm	Imprisonment for 3 years
	Section 39	Assault occasioning actual bodily harm	Imprisonment for 3 years
	Section 40	Common assault	Imprisonment for 1 year
Crimes Ordinance (Hong Kong Law Chapter 200)	Section 118	Rape	Imprisonment for life
	Section 122	Indecent assault	Imprisonment for 10 years

Sources: "Guidelines for social work professional in handling spousal abuse cases, 1st edition" designed by The Hong Kong Social Workers Association (HKCSS, 2005c) (Chinese version)

Table 2.6: Domestic Violence Ordinance (Hong Kong Law Chapter 189)

Section	Title	Domestic Violence Ordinance
	Long title	To provide protection of persons from domestic violence and for matters ancillary thereto.
1	Short title	This Ordinance may be cited as the Domestic Violence Ordinance.
2	Interpretation and application	<p>1) In this Ordinance, unless the context otherwise requires- "child" (兒童) means a person under the age of 18 years; (Amended 80 of 1997 s. 25)"matrimonial home" (婚姻居所) includes a home in which the parties to a marriage ordinarily reside together whether or not it is occupied at the same time by other persons.</p> <p>(2) Subject to section 6(3) this Ordinance shall apply to the cohabitation of a man and a woman as it applies to marriage and references in this Ordinance to "marriage" (婚姻) and "matrimonial home" (婚姻居所) shall be construed accordingly.</p>
3	Power of District Court to grant injunction	<p>(1) On an application by a party to a marriage the District Court, if it is satisfied that the applicant or a child living with the applicant has been molested by the other party to the marriage and subject to section 6, may grant an injunction containing any or all of the following provisions-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) a provision restraining that other party from molesting the applicant; (b) a provision restraining that other party from molesting any child living with the applicant; (c) a provision excluding that other party from the matrimonial home, or from a specified part of the matrimonial home, or from a specified area whether or not the matrimonial home is included in that area; (d) a provision requiring that other party to permit the applicant to enter and remain in the matrimonial home or in a specified part of the matrimonial home, whether or not any other relief is being sought in the proceedings. <p>(2) In the exercise of its jurisdiction to grant an injunction containing a provision mentioned in subsection (1) (c) or (d) the District Court shall have regard to the conduct of the parties, both in relation to each other and otherwise, to their respective needs and financial resources, to the needs of any child living with the applicant and to all the circumstances of the case.</p>
4	Court of First Instance may exercise powers of District Court in certain cases	<p>The Court of First Instance may exercise the powers conferred on the District Court under section 3-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) in a case of urgency; or (b) where the Court of First Instance is satisfied that special circumstances are present which make it appropriate for the Court of First Instance rather than the District Court to exercise those powers.

5	Arrest for the breach of order	<p>(1) Where, on an application by a party to a marriage, the Court of First Instance or the District Court grants an injunction (whether pursuant to jurisdiction conferred by this Ordinance or pursuant to any other jurisdiction) containing a provision, in whatever terms, which-</p> <p>(a) restrains the other party from using violence against the applicant or a child living with the applicant; or</p> <p>(b) excludes that other party from the matrimonial home or from a specified part of the matrimonial home or from a specified area, the Court of First Instance or the District Court, as the case may be, if it is satisfied that the other party has caused actual bodily harm to the applicant or, as the case may be, to the child concerned, may, subject to section 6, at the same time as it grants the injunction or at any time during the period for which the injunction is granted, attach to the injunction a power of arrest in the prescribed form.</p> <p>(2) Where under subsection (1) a power of arrest is attached to an injunction a police officer may arrest without warrant any person whom he reasonably suspects of being in breach of the injunction by reason of that person's use of violence or, as the case may be, his entry into any premises or area specified in the injunction, and the police officer shall have all necessary powers including the power of entry by the use of reasonable force to effect that arrest.</p> <p>(3) Where a person is arrested under subsection (2) he shall-</p> <p>(a) be brought-</p> <p>(i) in the case of a power of arrest attached under subsection (1) to an injunction by the Court of First Instance, before the Court of First Instance; and</p> <p>(ii) in the case of a power of arrest attached under that subsection to an injunction by the District Court, before the District Court, before the expiry of the day after the day of his arrest; and</p> <p>(b) not be released within the period referred to in paragraph (a) except on the direction of the Court of First Instance or of the District Court, as the case may be, but nothing in this section shall authorize his detention at any time after the expiry of the period mentioned in paragraph (a).</p> <p>(4) Section 71 of the Interpretation and General Clauses Ordinance (Cap 1) shall not apply to this section except in so far as that section applies to a gale warning day.</p>
6	Limitations with respect to certain injunctions and power of arrest	<p>(1) A provision mentioned in section 3(1)(c) or (d) contained in an injunction granted under this Ordinance shall have effect for such period, not exceeding 3 months, as the court considers necessary.</p> <p>(2) A power of arrest attached under section 5(1) to an injunction shall-</p> <p>(a) be granted for such period, not exceeding 3 months, as the court considers necessary; and</p> <p>(b) lapse on the expiry of the period for which the injunction was granted.</p> <p>(3) Nothing in this Ordinance shall authorize a court on an application by one of the parties to a relationship to which this Ordinance applies by virtue of section 2(2) to grant an injunction</p>

		containing a provision mentioned in section 3(1)(c) or (d), or, under section 5(1), attach to an injunction a power of arrest, unless that court is satisfied that having regard to the permanence of that relationship it is appropriate in all the circumstances to grant that injunction or attach that power of arrest.
7	Power of court to grant extension	A court may extend- (a) an injunction granted under this Ordinance containing a provision mentioned in section 3(1)(c) or (d); or (b) a power of arrest attached to an injunction under section 5(1), prior to the expiry of the period thereof for a further period so that the total period thereof does not exceed 6 months from the date when that injunction was granted or that power of arrest attached.
8	Rules of practice and procedure	The Chief Justice may make rules for the purposes of this Ordinance in respect of the following matters- (a) the hearing and determination of applications under this Ordinance; (b) forms to be used in connection with any application or order under this Ordinance; (c) the service of documents; (d) the attendance of parties; (e) the release on bail of persons arrested under a power of arrest attached, under section 5(1), to an injunction; and (f) the transfer of proceedings commenced in the Court of First Instance from the Court of First Instance to the District Court and of proceedings commenced in the District Court from the District Court to the Court of First Instance. (Amended 25 of 1998 s. 2)
9	Saving as to existing jurisdiction	The powers conferred under this Ordinance shall be in addition to and not in derogation from the powers of the Court of First Instance and the District Court.
10	Injunctions not to be registered	An injunction containing a provision mentioned in section 3(1) (c) or (d) shall not be registered under the Land Registration Ordinance (Cap 128).
11	Powers of the court to be exercised by a judge	(1) The powers conferred by this Ordinance on the Court of First Instance shall be exercised by a judge. (Amended 25 of 1998 s. 2) (2) The powers conferred by this Ordinance on the District Court shall be exercised by a District Judge.

Sources: Bilingual Laws Information System <http://www.legislation.gov.hk/eng/home.htm>

Table 2.7: Legal and academic experts' conceptions of spousal abuse

Domains of abuse	Behavioral manifestations of abuse	Legal conceptions ("Multi-disciplinary Guidelines on the Handling of Battered Spouse Cases" of SWD)	Experts' conceptions (CTS2, Straus & Hamby, 1996)
Physical Abuse	Slapping	√	√
	Pushing	√	√
	Hitting	√	√
	Punching	√	√
	Kicking	√	√
	Choking	√	√
	Burning	√	√
	Throwing boiling water	√	√
	Throwing acid	√	√
	Clubbing	√	√
	Pinching	√	○
	Spitting	√	○
	Stabbing	√	○
	Setting on fire	√	○
	Grabbing	○	√
	Twisting partner's arm or hair	○	√
	Slamming partner against the wall	○	√
Using knife or gun on partner	○	√	
Sexual abuse	Forcing partner or spouse to have sexual activities	√	√
	Making partner have sex without a condom	○	√
	Insisting on sex when partner does not want to	○	√
	Insisting partner have oral or anal sex but does not use physical force	○	√
	Using force (hitting, holding down, or using a weapon) to make partner have oral or anal sex	○	√
	Using force to make partner have sex	○	√
	Using threats to make partner have oral or anal sex	○	√
Using threats to make partner have sex	○	√	
Psychological abuse	Swearing at (incl. shouting and yelling)	√	√
	Stalking	√	○
	Confining and depriving material, financial, personal resources and social activities	√	○
	Stomping out of the room during a disagreement	○	√
	Saying something that spite partner	○	√
	Calling partner fat or ugly	○	√
	Destroying partner's belongings	○	√
	Accusing partner as a lousy lover	○	√
Threatening to hit or throw something at partner	○	√	

Key: √ Behavioral manifestation is explicitly stated in that particular perspective;

○ Behavioral manifestation is not explicitly stated in that particular perspective but can be incorporated in the conception of abuse

CHAPTER 3: THEORIES OF SPOUSAL ABUSE

Over the past few decades, researchers have put many efforts to investigate the etiology of spousal abuse. Different theories have been developed to explain the causes of spousal abuse. The identification of these perspectives provides foundation for intervention and policies to eradicate spousal abuse (Jenkins & Davidson, 2001).

In this chapter, 11 theoretical perspectives of spousal abuse are summarized and discussed. They can be categorized into two major perspectives, intra-personal (micro) and extra-personal (macro). Intra-personal perspectives explain spousal abuse from the individual levels, including biological and psychological perspectives (Freudian and neo-Freudian, personality and psychological disturbances, behavioral and cognitive-behavioral, cognitive, as well as social-cognitive developmental theories). Extra-personal perspectives expand the explanation from individual to social and cultural levels. They are family, socio-cultural, feminist, and cultural perspectives. By combining intra-personal (micro) and extra-personal (macro), the ecological perspective is finally presented.

The chapter starts with a discussion on the meanings of theory and criteria in evaluating a theory. Brief introduction and critiques of each theoretical perspective are discussed in later sub-sections. Finally, the chapter ends with a comparison among the 11 theories and a brief introduction of the ecological model adopted in this study.

3.1 Criteria in evaluating a theory

“A theory is a system of interrelated ideas used to explain a set of observations” (Weiten, 2007, p.23). Chibucos, Leite, and Weis (2005) suggested that “theorizing is the process of systematically developing and organizing ideas to explain phenomena,

and a theory is the total set of empirically testable, interconnected ideas formulated to explain those phenomena” (p.1). Theory is important to a research, which sets the perspectives and selection of groups of variables used in explaining a phenomenon.

In this study, nine general criteria for evaluating theories are summarized and adopted based on discussion from Shaughnessy and Zechmeister (1997), Burger (2004), as well as Pervin and John (2005). These nine criteria are influenced by the post-positivistic paradigm. In this paradigm, objective reality exists but researchers can only approach it incompletely through the development of different theories. Theory is used to understand, explain, and predict social phenomena with a set of proposed concepts and their underlying processes. Therefore, a theory should explain a wide range of phenomena with reference to the issue under consideration (Criterion 1); possess clearly defined concepts (Criterion 2), simple with a few numbers of concepts (Criterion 3), without internal flaws and contradictions (Criterion 4), which consider the social and historical context (Criterion 5). Moreover, as theories are refuted and supported by empirical test, it should be capable of generating testable hypotheses (Criterion 6) and have accurate predictions about a phenomenon (Criterion 7). As theory helps to predict social phenomena, it should have power to stimulate further research (Criterion 8) and facilitate new approach to social phenomena (Criterion 9). These nine criteria are summarized below:

A. Structure of a theory:

1. **Comprehensiveness:** a theory should provide an understanding of a wide range of phenomena, particularly with reference to the issue under consideration. Spousal abuse includes wife abuse, husband abuse, and their subtypes of abuse (physical, psychological, and sexual). A theory is regarded to be comprehensive if it explains a wide range of these phenomena.

2. Precision: a theory should contain clearly defined concepts.
3. Parsimony: a theory should be simple and contains concepts and assumptions that are necessary for the explanation of a phenomenon.
4. Internal consistency: a theory should be logically consistent and free of contradictions.
5. Consideration of contextual factors: a theory should consider social and historical context of a phenomenon.

B. Testability and validity of a theory:

6. Testability: a theory could be tested empirically.
7. Empirical validity: a theory should be capable of generating precise and accurate predictions of a phenomenon.

C. Generalization power of a theory:

8. Heuristic value: a theory should stimulate thinking and further research.
9. Applied value: a theory should bring new approach and be applied to social problems, policies and programs of action.

In the following sections, brief summaries of each theory of spousal abuse are discussed and commented based on the above nine criteria. The comments of each criterion ranged from poor, fair to good. Justifications on comments are also presented.

3.2 Biological perspectives of spousal abuse

Biological perspectives focus on explaining perpetrators (predominantly males) being violent to their partners based on biochemistry or genetic make-ups of individuals, and suggests that “there is an evolutionary need for men to be dominant” (Hague & Malos, 2005, p.57). Thus “all men are naturally aggressive” is regarded as one of the common reasons of abuse (Dallos & McLanghlin, 1993, p.14).

Researches focused on the levels of biochemistry and neural components in relating to human violent behavior.

Hormonal differences between males and females are suggested to explain males' aggression and females' passivity. The level of testosterone (a male hormone) is linked to males' levels of violence. Dabbs, Frady, Carr, and Besch (1987) found that violent crimes committed by adolescent male offenders were related to higher rates of testosterone. Moreover, hormonal components, neural components and their processes were found to be related to males' aggression. A recent study conducted by Rilling, Winslow and Kilts (2004) found that dominant male monkeys became more aggressive when experienced sexual jealousy in mate competition. Through brain imaging, it was found that the sexual jealousy feelings greatly activated the biochemical, in particular the central grey matter in the mid-brain, which resulted in more aggression. This indicates the neural correlates of male violent behavior. This also indirectly helps to explain why a husband becomes more aggressive when he notices infidelity of his wife.

Critique of biological perspectives

Biological perspectives provide support for the biological bases for human violent behavior, for instance, high level of testosterone is related to more aggression. Biological explanation provides simple theory, clear and testable concepts, such as the levels of testosterone. However, certain concepts are difficult to be examined, such as the neural correlates. Moreover, it involves many ethical problems in using either humans or animals in conducting empirical experiment. Furthermore, biological perspectives fail to explain the fact that most of the individuals did not become violent when they experienced sexual jealousy. Counterevidence also showed that there was no difference in the levels of

testosterone between young violent males and non-violent males (Gulbenkian Foundation, 1995; as cited in Pryke & Thomas, 1998). Therefore, they fail to generate accurate and consistent prediction in relating biochemical and genetic make-ups to violence. The application power of biological perspectives is low as it is commented that the explanations help to ease the anxiety of perpetrators who use biological reasons as excuses for being violent. This indeed dismisses the responsibility of male perpetrators.

Males needed to be dominant and violent because of male hormones and neural components are not sufficient to explain the whole issue of spousal abuse. Biological perspectives tend to view human as a biological system and subject to natural biological processes. They focus on the explicit expression of human aggression, so it can only explain physical abuse. However, it cannot explain psychological abuse, such as neglecting partner and sexual abuse. This approach also minimizes human rationality and denies human cognitive abilities in analyzing, planning, and communicating with own and others' behaviors (Dallos & McLanghlin, 1993, p.16). Biological perspectives limit the explanation of human behavior in biological factors, but neglect the importance of psychological, socio-cultural factors and the environmental context in influencing human behavior. Furthermore, it does not explain spousal abuse completely as it only focuses on males' aggression. Table 3.1 presents the evaluation of biological perspectives of spousal abuse.

3.3 Psychological perspectives of spousal abuse

The psychological perspectives emphasize individual psychological and social psychological characteristics in explaining spousal abuse (Jenkins & Davidson, 2001). There are different versions of psychological perspectives in explaining spousal abuse. They are Freudian and neo-Freudian, personality and psychological

disturbances, behavioral and cognitive-behavioral, cognitive, as well as social-cognitive developmental theories.

3.3.1 Freudian and neo-Freudian perspectives of spousal abuse

Freudian and neo-Freudian perspectives are based on Freud's and his followers' theory on psychoanalysis and aggression. Freud (1920) suggested that aggression was an instinctual drive which originated from the death instinct. Combined with the libidinal drive, aggressive drive are the fundamental aspects of human nature. They are genetically predisposed that enable the survival of human beings. The aggressive drive is accumulated within human beings and required regularly release (O'Neil, 1998). It is released when we are threatened and frustrated. Freud did not directly comment on the relationship between aggressive instinct and spousal abuse.

Based on such instinctual discourse, men are regarded as the violent creatures and the aggressive instinct is "wired" into all human in order to protect the individual and the species (Storr, 1970). When there is threat to our human species, males are always the protectors and habitually more aggressive than females.

In addition, psychoanalytic perspectives also view masochism as the fundamental component of female personality, while men are sadistic. Masochism means the direct enjoyment of painful stimuli (Okun, 1986). Women abused by their male partners because they have their unconscious needs for enjoyment of pain and being humiliated. It is also the reason for abused women to stay with their abusive partner. Sadism means "the exercise of violence, or power upon some other person or object" (Freud, 1915, p.127). Male sadism, which is the overpowering of the female, is a normal prerequisite of sexual act (Sternbach, 2006, p. 860). Men experience sexual arousal only if they can beat or abuse women in some ways. These build up the sadomasochistic relationship between males' aggression against

females.

Fromm, as one of the neo-Freudians, had another interpretation about the sadomasochistic relationship. As summarized by Funk (1994), Fromm suggested that “the desire for interpersonal fusion is the most powerful striving in man” (p.115). Interpersonal fusion can either be achieved through symbiotic union or mature love. Symbiotic union means two individuals depend on each other and each of them with no individual integrity and individuality. Masochism is a passive expression of the symbiotic union which also means submission. The masochistic individuals follow their partners in the symbiotic union similar as worshipping idol. They do not develop independently but depend on their partners. Sadism is corresponding to masochism, which is the active expression of symbiotic union, which means domination. “The sadistic person wants to escape from his aloneness and his sense of imprisonment by making another person part and parcel of himself” (Funk, 1994, p.116). The sadomasochistic relationship is formed within the symbiotic union.

Mature love is also a form of interpersonal union but it is totally different from symbiotic union. The two individuals are together but remain two separate individuals with own integrity and individuality. The sadomasochistic relationship arises from the symbiotic union as one form of human existence, which is not because of instinctual drives as suggested by Freud. The symbiotic union is also applied by later researchers in spousal violence, which is presented in the later section on gender scripting under the social-cognitive developmental theories.

Furthermore, Fromm also suggested that human beings not only influenced by individual unconscious, but also influenced by the society. According to Fromm, human being can be regarded as a product of society (Funk, 2000). Fromm (1986) suggested that there are two forms of human aggression, one is biologically

programmed and the other is rooted from individuals' characters, such as sadism. Sadism here means "the desire to have complete and absolute control over another person" which is not necessarily in the sexual sensual form (Fromm, 1986, p. 52). Biologically programmed aggression is experienced by both animals and human. Threats to the physical existence of animals and human trigger their aggressiveness, which functions as self-defense. However, human experience threats more extensive than animals. It is because human have the ability to anticipate threats and they are also influenced by suggestions of threats. The aggression is triggered as a reactive and defensive response to threats among human. Fromm departed from Freud by suggesting that aggression is not because of the natural instinctual drives, instead it is far different from animal nature.

Critique of Freudian and neo-Freudian perspectives of spousal abuse

Freudian perspectives regard human aggression as a natural instinctual drive innate in human. Similar to biological perspectives, which reduce human aggression to biology, Freudian perspectives reduce human aggression to human instinct. Both schools of the perspectives regard human aggression as natural. It falls into a circular explanation that human is aggressive because they are aggressive in nature. Freudian perspectives are simple but the concepts are not clearly defined. Most of the Freudian concepts, such as instinctual drive are very abstract which reside in the unconscious level of human mind and difficult to be operationalized.

Furthermore, the suggestion of masochism as the major component of female personality just adds the fuel to blame female victims. It also supports the view that women deserve to be beaten. Freudian perspectives pessimistically view aggression is the results of natural instinctual drive of human. It appears that spousal abuse can never be stopped as males are naturally governed by the innate instinctual aggressive

drive, and females enjoy being abused because of their unconscious masochistic needs. In fact, Freudian perspectives did not directly comment on spousal abuse. They only explain spousal abuse in a narrow sense, which only explain wife abuse but do not comment on husband abuse. Nevertheless, neo-Freudians such as Fromm proposed different interpretations in viewing human aggression which departed from the pessimistic view of human aggression. This contributes to later researchers in understanding more about spousal abuse. Table 3.2 presents the evaluation of Freudian and neo-Freudian perspectives of spousal abuse.

3.3.2 Personality and psychological disturbances perspectives of spousal abuse

Personality and psychological disturbances perspectives analyze individuals' personality traits and other psychological disturbances, including mental disorders and substance abuse in explaining spousal abuse. Research found that violence is the results of personality defects or disorders (Miller & Wellford, 1997; Ptacek, 1983) and psychopathology (Brienes & Gorden, 1983; Gelles & Straus, 1979). Under these perspectives, perpetrators and victims are groups of people who are distinctively different from other individuals. These differences made them become either perpetrators or victims in spousal abuse (Dallos & McLanghlin, 1993).

3.3.2a Personality traits of victims in spousal abuse

Ryan (1971) commented that women victims in spousal abuse are often characterized as violence liking, or possessing higher level of tolerance towards violence than other women. Women victims may also possess some "provocative" characteristics, such as nagging, not understanding the difficulties faced by man, sexually unresponsive, excessively demanding or passive (Pryke & Thomas, 1998). According to Gelles (1997), women victims are "dependent, with low self-esteem

and feeling of inadequacy and helplessness. They report high incidence of depression and stress and consistently witnessing parental violence as a child” (p.81). However, Gelles (1997) also commented that these characteristics cannot be generalized to all battered women because the findings were based on a small sample of women victims, and there was no comparison group.

3.3.2b Personality traits of perpetrators in spousal abuse

Spousal abusers are found to be more possessive and jealous for their partners comparing to non-abusers (Coleman, 1980; Roy, 1982; Walker, 1979). Moreover, perpetrators might have worse communication skills than their partners, who tended to use violence to resort such deficit (Dutton & Strachan, 1987). It was also found that perpetrators with high level of violence were associated with anxiety, depression, poor impulse control (Scheuriger & Reigle, 1988), lower level of self-esteem (Green, 1984), as well as lower self-concepts who would like to use violence to gain power (Conger et al., 1979). Gelles (1997) also found that perpetrators are having low self-esteem, vulnerable self-concepts, feeling helpless, powerless, inadequate, sadistic, passive-aggressive, addition prone, pathologically jealous, passive and dependent (p.79-80).

3.3.2c Psychological disturbances of perpetrators in spousal abuse

Hamberger and Hastings (1986) proposed that men who physically abused their wives were “generally violent and aggressive within the family” (p.111). Moreover, they might suffer from three different profiles of personality disorders, including schizoid/borderline, narcissistic/antisocial, and passive dependent/compulsive. Holtzworth-Munroe and Stuart (1994) suggested three typologies of batterers’ personality profiles include 1) family-only, 2) dysphoric-borderline, and 3) generally

violent antisocial types. They suggested that the family-type was the least dangerous and with lower level of psychopathology as compared to the other two types.

Taylor and Gunn (1984) found that more than one-third of 107 men who were charged with or convicted of homicide showed symptoms of mental disorders, including schizophrenia, affective psychosis and mixed disorders. However, researchers failed to specify which mental disorder is related to violent behavior (Wallace, 2005).

Apart from mental illnesses, researches also showed correlation between substance abuse and spousal abuse. It is believed that substance impairs human inhibition system and causes aggressive behavior. Bennett and Williams (2003) showed that approximately half of the spouse abusers attending clinical treatment had significant alcohol problems. They also found that over half of the men in batterer programs were substance abusers. About half to two-thirds of the male alcoholics physically abused their partners during the year before they attended alcoholism treatment (Gondolf & Foster, 1991; Stuart, et al., 2004). van Wormer and Davis (2003) found that high dosage of cocaine, methamphetamine, and alcohol are all related to hyperactivity and violence. However, researchers fail to explain the phenomenon that not all alcohol and drug abusers are violent.

Critique of personality and psychological disturbances perspectives of spousal abuse

Personality and psychological disturbances perspectives propose that spousal abuse is caused by individual's personality defects or mental dysfunctions. Though the theory is simple and has clear defined concepts, the theory provides a tautological explanation. The explanation goes into a circular reasoning that violent perpetrators being violent because they have violent personality traits and/or other dysfunctions that trigger their violent behavior. The timing of the cause (violent

personality traits/mental dysfunctions) and the consequence (being violent against spouse) is confused. It seems that both spousal abuse and violent personality traits or mental dysfunctions coexist simultaneously. For example, depression can either be the cause or the consequence of violence (Chan, 2000). Furthermore, the theory also fails to elucidate which personality traits are associated with violence.

Counterevidence also showed that only a small proportion of people with mental illness and substance abuse was violent (Burgess & Draper, 1989). Reports revealed that lower than 10 percent of family violence cases was caused by mental illness or psychopathology (Gelles, 1997, p.6). Gelles (1973) commented that it is problematic to correlate psychopathology and spousal abuse based on findings from clinical sample, as these individuals had been identified as sufficiently disturbed. Tolman and Bennett (1990) commented that pathological factors provide “excuses” for perpetrators to justify their violent behavior.

These perspectives explain spousal abuse in a narrow sense. They only focus on violent behavior of males who are either affected by personality defects or mental dysfunctions. They can explain wife abuse and physical abuse only. Table 3.3 summarizes the evaluation of personality and psychological disturbances perspectives of spousal abuse.

3.3.3 Behavioral and cognitive-behavioral perspectives of spousal abuse

Behavioral and cognitive-behavioral perspectives emphasize on the learning processes of human behavior. Violent behavior is acquired through learning. Learning means the acquisition of abilities which are not innate. The repetition of a behavior is based on its consequences. The “law of effect” proposed by Thorndike (Weiten, 2007) suggested that an act would be likely repeated if it is followed by a favorable effect. An act tends not to be repeated if unfavorable effect follows.

Skinner made use of this law and proposed reinforcements and punishments in governing human behavior, which is called the “operant conditioning” (1953). Reinforcements mean something desirable while punishments mean something aversive. This learning process can be applied to human behavior. Perpetrators abused their partners because they experienced negative reinforcement, such as the release of anger. As they experienced reinforcement, they tend to repeat their abusive behavior again. This operant conditioning is the basic of the exchange theory that will be discussed later in this section.

Skinner's operant conditioning focuses purely on behavior, while Bandura suggested the social-learning theory, which emphasizes more on the modeling of behavior and the internal cognitive processes (Bandura, 1986). There are two major components of social learning theory, which are modeling and reinforcements. Modeling means individuals adopt a behavior by observing and imitating role models. The repetition of that particular behavior based on whether the observed role model is reinforced or the individuals are reinforced when performing the same behavior. Social-learning theory suggested that human not only learn by observing models, but also by observing the consequences of others' behavior.

Social learning theory proposes that the disposition to use violence is a learned behavior and much of the learning processes take place in childhood from individuals' significant others, especially their parents (Owen & Straus, 1975). Some researchers stressed that children learned to use violence through imitation, while others suggested that they learned to legitimize and approve the use of violence (Simons, Lin, & Gordon, 1998). Children who witnessed and/or experienced violence would show a higher tendency to tolerate violence as compared with children growing up in non-violent homes (Straus, 1991; Widom, 1989). This indicates that witnessing and experiencing violence in childhood provide children a

modeling script for violent behavior. However, social learning theory does not elaborate the cognitive processes of how the modeling script is maintained from childhood to adulthood. The cognitive processes will be discussed in the cognitive perspectives in the coming section.

Various researches support that observational learning of violence during childhood leads to violent behavior in adulthood. Strauss, Gelles, and Steinmetz (1980) proposed that both harsh parenting and parental violence educated children that using violence against the one they love was legitimate. Kalmuss (1984) revealed that the observation of hitting between parents during childhood was correlated with involvement in severe marital aggression. Haj-Yahia and Dawud-Noursi (1998) found that individuals who witnessed or experienced verbal abuse and physical violence would have greater tendency to use verbal abuse and physical violence against their siblings. Moreover, Swinford, DeMaris, Cernkovich, and Giordano (2000) revealed that individuals who experienced harsh parenting in childhood tended to have greater perpetration of violence against their intimate partners in their adulthood.

Researchers also found that the transmission of learned violence had different effects on genders. Halford, Sanders, and Behrens (2000) revealed that males who reported observing parental violence showed more negative emotions and communication during conflict with their female partners as compared to those without observation of parental violence. However, this association was not found among female participants. Female participants who reported observing parental violence only showed more negative cognitions, such as anger during conflicts with male partners. This supported that males who exposed to parental violence had a higher tendency in expressing more nonverbal negative emotions and behavior during conflicts with female partners. The researchers concluded that boys who had

observed more parental violence were likely to develop externalizing disorders, such as aggression; while girls were likely to develop internalizing disorders, like anxiety. Thus males as compared with females tended to internalize and exercise aggression more in intimate relationship.

However, it was suggested that observational learning could not fully explain individuals' use of violence (O'Keefe, 1998). Kaufman and Zigler (1987) reviewed researches on social learning of violent behavior and suggested that only 30 percent of children who witnessed violence became violent. It was because observation might not directly link to behavioral outcomes in adulthood. Simons, Lin, and Gordon (1998) suggested that there were other factors, like ineffective parenting and general anti-social orientation that contribute to individuals' use of violence in adulthood. Wallace (2005) also commented that social learning theory could not explain "spontaneous acts of violent behavior", such as frustrated father suddenly slaps his crying child (p.11).

One variant of the cognitive-behavioral perspective is exchange theory. It is based on concepts from classical economics and behavioral psychology (O'Neil, 1998). Gelles (1983) suggested that "people hit and abuse other family members because they can." (p.157). Exchange theory explains spousal abuse based on the framework of costs and rewards. Batterers tend to pursue their satisfaction of demands that outweigh the cost. Privacy of the family and refusal to intervention from outsiders are stressed in our society, thus batterers in the family could escape the costs, such as legal and moral punishment in obtaining goals from their partner in the private family setting (Viano, 1992). Campbell and Lardenburger (1995) commented that exchange theory supported the myth that abused women asked for abuse through satisfying and being compliance to their partners.

Critique of behavioral and cognitive-behavioral perspectives of spousal abuse

Behavioral and cognitive-behavioral perspectives provide a simple and clearly defined theory about human violent behavior. They suggest that human learns by imitating and observing others' behavior. They provide measurable concepts, such as the repetition of behavior, reinforcements and punishments. However, there are several short-comings of behavioral perspectives.

First, they solely focus on the learning process of human behavior. However, individuals also adopted attitudes, beliefs, and values from people around them. Behavioral perspectives adopt a reductionist view and reduce the study of human to behavioral level only.

Second, behavioral perspectives believe that human behavior is programmed to the different schedule of reinforcements and punishments. This oversimplifies human behavior to a "stimuli and response" relationship. In fact, human not only just response to external stimuli, they also have their rationality in determining their own behavior. Behavioral perspectives ignore the complex interactions between human and their external environment in affecting their behavior.

Third, the perspectives stress on learning from models of individuals' surrounding, but do not consider the social context seriously. They predict that individuals who witnessed and/or experienced violence in childhood had a high tendency to be violent in the future. Nevertheless, not all the individuals follow this prediction. Some of them developed to detest violence and never being violent against others. Behavioral perspectives cannot explain such different development as they do not study the social context and cognitive ability of human in planning and controlling their behavior. The cognitive components of human behavior are further explained by the cognitive perspectives, which is an advance as compared to behavioral perspectives in understanding human violence and spousal abuse.

Although there are shortcomings for behavioral perspectives, they do provide a new approach to spousal abuse. It is believed that violence is a learned behavior, which can be unlearned. Individuals can learn other appropriate behavior to replace violence. Table 3.4 presents the evaluation of behavioral and cognitive-behavioral perspectives of spousal abuse.

3.3.4 Cognitive perspectives of spousal abuse

Cognitive perspectives focus on the cognitive processes of individuals' development and habitual enactment of violence among different social situations. Information processing model and personal construct theory are discussed under cognitive perspectives. Information processing model is a process of individuals' decoding, retrieving, and enacting of responses to certain social situations. Violent individuals possess violent scripts and habitually responses to social problems with violence. In addition, George Kelly's personal construct theory emphasizes on individuals' personal construction of meanings of people and things around them (Kelly, 1955). Violent individuals regard people around them as violent and violence is an appropriate means to solve problems.

3.3.4.1 Information processing model and spousal abuse

Huesmann (1987) elaborated how an individual's learned violent behavior develops into habitual behavioral pattern through the information processing model. According to Husemann, cognitive scripts of aggressive behavior are first acquired through enactive learning and/or observational learning. Cognitive scripts "are stored in a person's memory and are used as guides for behavior and social problem solving" (p.15). There are four major processes in utilizing the cognitive scripts: evaluating the environmental cues, searching memory for script to guide behavior,

evaluating the generated script, and behaving according to the acceptable generated script. The content of the memory scripts and the evaluation of the generated scripts vary among individuals. They depend on the reinforcement history and the social norms adopted by each individual.

Cognitive scripts of aggressive behavior are initially encoded by children who had witnessed or experienced salient violence scenes. The violence scene is said to be salient when the situation is realistic and the violence is performed by someone the children can identify with. Therefore, witnessing father hitting mother during argument provides children realistic scenes of violence, and they can identify with their parents' violent behavior. Such salient violent scenes are encoded as a cognitive script of violence and are retrieved when the children come across similar situational cues, such as argument with peers in school. Children with the violent scripts may recall the memory and enact the violence. If the violent act is not punished, it is rehearsed and reinforced. As a result, "a network of cognitive scripts for social behavior emphasizing aggressive responding is formed" (p. 13).

Holtzworth-Munroe (1991) made use of the information processing by applying it into social interaction and termed it as social information processing. There are three major steps of the social information processing: decoding, decision-making and enactment. Holtzworth-Munroe proposed that violent men have certain skill deficits in these three steps in processing incoming information. Decoding means perceiving and interpreting the incoming social stimuli. Violent men usually misinterpret and attribute wives' behavior as negative. Holtzworth and Hutchinson (1993) found that violent men were more likely to attribute wives' behavior in problematic marital situations with negative intentions and selfish motivations when comparing to nonviolent men. Violent men were also more likely to blame their wives for abuse scenes. When such attribution is made and violence is

justified to retaliate against wife's hostile behavior, violence is usually the result.

In the decision-making step, violent men may not be able to generate other possible responses, especially when violent responses are reinforced previously. In the enactment step, violent men may lack the skills to execute the appropriate responses, such as verbally expressing their feelings to their wives, instead violence is enacted instead. Based on the information processing model, it is believed that human behavior is generated from rational cognitive information processing. Violent men in abuse cases have more salient cognitive scripts of aggressive responses to social problems, and insufficient skills in processing information and making appropriate responses.

3.3.4.2 Kelly's personal construct theory

Personal construct theory proposed by George Kelly focuses on the cognitive processes in which individuals categorize people and things, and construct meanings of events happened around them. Constructs are thoughts or categories that people use to attribute meanings and predict events. Contrast to the psychodynamic and behavioral theories, individuals are treated as actors not reactors in the personal construct theory (Fransella, 1995). Thus, individuals create their own reality and create themselves. Moreover, individuals are always free to interpret and re-interpret their own experience.

Everyone has his or her unique collection of personal construct system to interpret the world (Kelly, 1955). Phenomena are meaningful only in relation to the ways in which they are constructed or interpreted by the individuals. "Constructive alternativism" is the major proposition of the theory. This means there are many alternative collections of construct for individuals to interpret the world. It is because of the complexity of the world, there is no objective and absolute truth.

Thus, no one can have a complete and perfect construction. There are infinite numbers of alternative constructions which individuals can apply to interpret the social phenomena (Burger, 2004).

With regard to spousal abuse, Mally-Morrison, as mentioned in Chapter 2, adopted the personal construct theory and proposed that everyone has their own perceptions and interpretations about spousal abuse. Individuals develop their own construct about spousal abuse based on their personal experiences within their environment and stories they heard from others. Environmental factors are important sources of influences on individuals' constructs of spousal abuse. The present study incorporate Kelly's theory and Mally-Marrison's suggestion that individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are personally constructed through the influences of environmental factors within their social and cultural context.

3.3.4.3 Critique of cognitive perspectives of spousal abuse

Cognitive perspectives extend the explanation of spousal abuse from behavioral level to cognitive level. They emphasize on individuals' cognitive processing in interpreting and responding to their social world. They explain the process that learned violent behavior in childhood is sustained and developed into habitual responses in adulthood. Spousal abuse may also be the results of violent individuals who construct his or her world full of violence and thus responses to others violently. The perspectives are basically well defined, simple, and internally consistent. However, the perspectives are intra-personal analyses, the socio-cultural and environmental context are seldom considered. Though the theory has its shortcomings, it contributes a lot to the treatment programs of perpetrators. Treatments of skills deficits in males' behavior are proposed, such as anger management (Holtzworth-Munroe, 1991) and the exertion of power through

non-interpersonal strategies (running or weight-lifting) (Dutton & Strachan, 1997).

Table 3.5 presents the evaluation of cognitive perspectives of spousal abuse.

3.3.5 Social-cognitive developmental theories of spousal abuse

Social-cognitive developmental theories emphasize on how individuals interpret others and are influenced by others within a social environment. Under social-developmental theories, social learning theory is still an important process contributes to human behavioral development. However, the social-cognitive developmental theories go further to examine the social context that reinforces and sustains the learned violent behavior. Two major theories, gender scripting and socialization are discussed. Gender scripting emphasizes on the building of masculine and feminine identities. Such gender identities contribute to the development of males as perpetrators and females as victims in spousal abuse. The gender scripting also affects victims' and perpetrators' schema among the incidents of abuse and helps to maintain and sustain the abusive relationship. Socialization is an important process contributes to individuals' attitudes and beliefs about spousal abuse. Socialization helps to sustain gender scripts and gender stereotypical thoughts in the society. They contribute to the causation and maintenance of spousal abuse.

3.3.5.1 Gender scripting and spousal abuse

Scripts mean guidelines to behavior. Scripts usually firmly imprinted in human mind during childhood and are played out throughout life. Gregory (2001) summarized masculine and feminine gender scripts and proposed their relationship with domestic violence. In general, she found that men are regarded as superior over women, who should not perform feminine characteristics and expresses their emotional feelings except anger and lust. Moreover, men should be dominant,

success, tough and hard (p.174). However, women should be dependent, vulnerable, make everyone happy, please their male partners, and should not show intelligence as well as feelings and expressions of anger (p.175). Couples who try to live up with such gender scripts tend to develop into a symbiotic relationship. This symbiotic relationship was proposed by Fromm as discussed in previous section. Gregory commented that “neither partner uses his or her full functioning or develops a capacity to be independent” (p.176) in such symbiotic relationship. Any changes in such relationship may trigger males’ use of violence to take the relationship into control. It is because male partner tends to regard female partner as his extension, the individuality or being adequate of female partner means disrespect and threat to male partner’s self-esteem. The fear of being abandonment is greatly felt by the male partner and he may exercise violence to take his partner into control. Female partner who lives up with the feminine scripts tend to disempower herself and be dependent on the male partner so as not to leave him alone and cause his fear of being abandoned.

3.3.5.1a Females’ gender scripts and responses to spousal abuse

As females tend to live up with the feminine gender scripts, they tend to develop maladaptive scripts when responding to abuse by their male partners. The most typical maladaptive response of female victims is blaming themselves for causing the violence (Dutton, Bughardt, Perrin, Chrestman, & Halle, 1994). Moreover, some of them also perceive their partner’s violence as an indication of love (Bookwala, Frieze, & Grote, 1994; Cate et al., 1982; Henton et al., 1983). Furthermore, learned helplessness and learned hopefulness are another two common cognitive changes among female victims. These are two major reasons of female victims staying with their abusive partners. Learned helplessness means victims

found no way to stop the abuse and leave the abusive partner. According to Campbell and Landenburger (1995), there are three basic characteristics of learned helplessness, including 1) passivity or lack of motivation toward controlling own environment, 2) a negative stance, one believes that actions taken will result in failure, and 3) a belief that outcomes are uncontrollable (p.414). Because of learned helplessness, abused victims give up to escape from the abusive partner and finally accept abuse. This increases the feeling of being trapped and isolated from external sources of help. Thus it further intensifies the feeling of helplessness.

Apart from learned helplessness, learned hopefulness is also the characteristic of abused victims. In fact, their hopes are distorted who tend to falsely hope their abusive partner would change and their relationship would resume to normal (Bowker, 1983). They may believe that their partner being abusive is only a special incident and would not happen in a long-term. Although abuse happens in a regular pattern, they keep on hoping their partners will change. Calvete, Corral, and Extevez (2007) found that the maladaptive scripts greatly affect the self-worth and self-efficacy of female victims. Such maladaptive scripts also constraint them from applying appropriate coping strategy to spousal abuse.

3.3.5.1b Males' gender scripts and responses to spousal abuse

Males in order to live up with the masculine gender scripts must be dominant and tough. They have to suppress their emotional feelings like longing for love in intimate relationship. The intense feelings of fear and shame of not living up to be manly put men in great risk. They are sensitive to female partner's threat to their competency. However, they cannot express their emotional feelings except anger and lust. They tend to resort to violence when they would like to take their female partners into control. Dutton and Strachan (1987) found that violent men in their

sample were having higher need to exert power and control in intimate relationships but they lack the verbal resources to do so. Holtzworth and Hutchinson (1993) found that marital situations like jealousy, rejection of wife and abandonment from wife triggered more negative attributions to wife behavior from violent husbands. When they found their masculinity was challenged by rejection or abandonment from wife, their fear was intensified. As they have to suppress their fear, they channel their fear to anger, and violence may be the externalized form of their anger.

3.3.5.2 Socialization of gender scripts and gender stereotyping

Socialization is the acquirement of social norms and behavior expected of people in a particular society (Weiten, 2007). It is a transmission process that prescriptions and prohibitions within a cultural group are passed to its members (Knight, Bernal, Garza, & Cota, 1993). It covers all means a society makes to guarantee its members who learn to behave in proper and socially accepted manners. Various agents participate and facilitate the socialization process, including familial agents (parents, siblings, and members in the extended family) and non-familial agents (teachers, peers, neighbors, and the media) (Knight et al., 1993). Individuals meet various socialization agents starting from their date of birth. The most influential socialization agent is individuals' family, especially parents. Family filters the views of norms and values of the larger society and pass to its members (Pillari & Newsom, 1998).

Gender means the social and cultural constructed men and women. It is different from sex that is basically based on biological categorizations of males and females. Gender scripts as mentioned are the prescribed and expected identities performed by males and females. Gender stereotypes are "beliefs about females' and males' abilities, personality traits, and social behavior" (Weiten, 2007, p. 465).

Gender scripts and stereotypes suggest that men are superior over women, while women are inferior. The superior status of men over women is pre-assigned by social and cultural norms. In the patriarchal and patrilineal society, male children are those who can keep on their family names and who are supposed to be the main supporters to the parents in their old age. Therefore, most parents prefer male children (Steinbacher & Holmes, as cited in Basow, 1992).

Socialization teaches boys to be the major breadwinner in the family who dominate their female partners and become the head of the household by maintaining absolute power and control (Weiten, 2007). However, girls are socialized to meet with the needs of the dominant men through adopting roles as wives and mothers (Mihalic & Eillott, 1997). This asymmetrical relationship patterns were one of the risk factors of family violence (Coleman & Strauss, 1986; Yllo, 1993).

3.3.5.3 Critique of social-cognitive developmental theories of spousal abuse

Social-cognitive developmental theories suggest gender scripts and socialization are important processes in passing thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and values to our next generation. The passing of gender scripting and gender stereotypes is vital to individuals' beliefs about spousal abuse, in particular the support of males as the legitimate perpetrators and females as the legitimate victims. Socialization is important in maintaining the asymmetric gender relationship and indirectly support spousal abuse, in particular wife abuse.

Social-cognitive developmental theories provide simple, clearly defined concepts in explaining spousal abuse. Gender scripts and gender stereotypes are the major content in relating to spousal abuse and transmitted through socialization. However, the measure on the influences of socialization of gender scripting may

need longitudinal study in order to obtain a stronger support for the relationship among socialization, gender scripting and spousal abuse. Moreover, the theories only stress on the external influences of environment but neglects individuals' responses to the external influences. Furthermore, the gender scripting theory presumes males being violent against females, it does not explain female violence against male. This hinders our understanding of the whole picture of spousal abuse, when husband abuse is not considered. Though there are some weaknesses, social-cognitive developmental theories stimulate research to examine the external influences on individuals' perceptions of spousal abuse. They also provide different approach to spousal abuse, such as one can socialize children to have egalitarian attitudes toward gender. New gender scripts emphasizing respect and equality among gender are proposed to change the deeply rooted gender scripts (Gregory, 2001). Thus spousal abuse may be prevented because of the modified beliefs about gender. Table 3.6 presents the evaluation of social-cognitive developmental theories in explaining spousal abuse.

3.4 Family perspectives of spousal abuse

Family perspectives frame spousal abuse as a sub-type of family violence. They regard family violence as the product of a family. Family means a group of intimate people living together with dynamics of interactions. These dynamics of interactions contribute to both the warmth and the cruelty within family. Family perspectives depart from intra-personal to extra-personal perspectives in explaining spousal abuse based on the interaction pattern of family members. They also regard family as a system and discuss characteristics within family that prone to violence. Furthermore, family-of-origin perspectives suggest that intergenerational transmission of violence is a related factor of adults' use of violence in intimate or marital relationships.

Finally, resources theory is proposed to explain family violence based on the resources differential among family members.

3.4.1 Family as a system susceptible to violence

Family perspectives regard family as a system and family violence is the results of the interaction among family members. Therefore violence is not because of individual's pathology, instead it is the product of a family (Straus, 1973). According to Barker (2007), family therapists regard family is "more than a collection of individuals" (p.25). It is important to treat every family member in order to combat family violence (Chan, 2000). Cybernetics theory, general systems theory, and learning theory are important theories that govern the operation of the family.

Cybernetics theory emphasizes on the feedback mechanism within the family. Family is regarded as a fixed system but with dysfunctions. Cybernetics theory describe systems operate on regulatory basic through means of feedback loops (Barker, 2007) among family members. Those feedback loops can either be positive or negative. Erchak (1984) applied the cybernetics model in explaining the escalation and maintenance of spousal abuse. He stressed that it is the regenerative feedback between spouses in the family that escalates and maintains the violence. An asymmetry relationship is set with complementary interaction between spouses, for example husband is assertive and wife responds as submissive, thus husband's assertiveness may escalate to violence. The violence may also be maintained through the regenerative feedback of wife who keeps on her submissiveness.

General systems theory emphasizes that the family is the sum of its parts which is an open system with boundary of certain degrees of permeability (Barker, 2007). Family is an open system with steady inflow and outflow of information crossing the boundary. General systems theory proposes circular causality as the basic for

understanding family processes. The causes of events are not only based on linear relationship or feedback mechanism as suggested by the cybernetics theory, but also the changes happen within the family. There are subsystems (parental, marital, and child) and suprasystems within the general system.

Straus (1979) proposed a general systems theory of family violence. It is suggested that family violence have many causes and family as a system helps to maintain family violence. The exercise of violence from one family member against the other depends on the feedback given within the system. If positive feedback is presented, violent person continues the violent behavior because it leads to desirable outcomes. Family members may also engage into violence so as to fulfill others' expectations of their own concept of violence.

Learning theory as discussed previously is about individuals' learning process of violent behavior. Learning theory proposes that individuals learn violent behavior by experiencing and observing violence during childhood. However, inconsistencies are found in the predictions based on social learning theory. Research showed that most people who witnessed or experienced abuse in childhood did not commit violence to their intimate partners in their adulthood. Systems theory adopts this learning theory but on an extra-personal level and focuses on mediating factors within the family system that reinforce and sustain the learned violent behavior. The application of learning theory within the systems theory emphasizes the factors of family-of-origin contribute to family violence.

Capaldi and Clark (1998) proposed that family as a whole includes not only modeling of violent behavior but also other family process variables in shaping and sustaining the intergenerational transmission of aggression. They found that unskilled parenting, which means ineffective and coercive discipline practices as well as low level of parental monitoring, contributed to the boys' antisocial behavior

and later aggression to their female partners.

Dattilio (2006) suggested that the transmission of “family schemas” contributes to victims’ endurance of their abusive partners. Based on the transmission of “family schemas”, he also explained why some of the individuals follow the prediction based on social learning theory while some are not. He agreed that not only behavior, but also thoughts, beliefs, emotions and values are transmitted from one generation to the next within the family. Because of the prolonged association and interaction among family members, the beliefs system shared among family members become quite ingrained. Schemas are the lens that we comprehend our world, which are stable and difficult to be changed. A case study was used to illustrate the transmission of family schemas. Social learning theory explains an abused woman endured her husband’s abuse because she learned to identify with the victim role when she witnessed her mother abused by her father in her childhood. However, Dattilio suggested that family schemas transmitted from her family-of-origin should also be considered. The dyadic interaction between family members is an important contributor to women’s endurance of abuse. For instance, the victim may identify with her mother who was a passive-submissive woman, depended and idolized males, and rationalized abuse by her husband as an expression of love. The victim may also rationalized father’s abusive behavior based on suggestions from mother that father was actually a good man but just lost control and beaten her after drunk. The victim then repeats her mother’s experience and absorbs abuse by her husband based on the same schemas rationalized by her mother. The above two research made use of learning theory in the family systems and suggested that family as a whole contribute to the continuation of violence from one generation to the next.

3.4.2 Family-of-origin perspectives

Apart from interactions among family members and unique characteristics of individual family, family-of-origin perspectives propose intergenerational transmission of violence as another contributing factor to spousal abuse. Intergenerational transmission of violence is also termed as “cycle of violence”, which emphasizes on the transmission and development of violence from one generation to the next (Maxfield & Widom, 1996; Widom, 1989). It means “being victimized as a child increase a person’s risk for becoming the perpetrators of violence in the future” (Widom & Brzustowicz, 2006). A consistent and modest association is found between exposure to family violence in childhood and approval of violence or marital violence in adulthood (Cappell & Heiner, 1990; Owens & Straus, 1975; Kalmus, 1984; Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980). As mentioned in the behavioral perspectives, Dumas et al. (1994) found that the effects of exposure to violence had different effects on males and females. They found that males extend their violence to both their female partners and children, while females only extend their violence to their male partners. In a recent study conducted by Fang and Corso (2007), it is also found that victims of child maltreatment are found to be more likely to perpetrate youth violence and young adult intimate partner violence as compared with non-victims of child maltreatment. Furthermore, it is found that males are more susceptible to the long-term consequences of victimization in childhood. The likelihood of males to perpetrate youth violence ranged from 3.7 percent to 11.9 percent, while that of females ranged from 1.2 percent to 6.6 percent. The likelihood of males to perpetrate intimate partner violence ranged from 1.3 percent to 17.2 percent, while that for females ranged from 8.7 percent to 10.4 percent in Fang and Corso’s study.

There are two major mechanisms of the transmission of violence. They are

socialization of violence approval (Huggins & Straus, 1980; Steinmetz, 1977) and social learning theory (Bandura, 1973; Feshbach, 1980; Halford, Sanders, & Behrens, 2000). These two mechanisms are inter-related in which society approves certain forms of violence and individuals provide modeling of violence for their next generation by performing the socially approved violence. Though moderate relationships of childhood victimization and perpetration of violence in adulthood are found, such long-term consequences of victimization are difficult to be determined. Widom (1989) commented that findings are based on retrospective data of victimization in childhood and few of the studies provided appropriate comparison groups. Thus, the association may be based on biased self-report data. Moreover, not everyone becomes violent adults by observing and experiencing violence in childhood. Furthermore, it is found that there are environmental factors in moderating the consequences of victimization. For instance, Fagan (2005) found that family income, area of residence, and family structure moderates the effect of childhood victimization in the perpetration of violence in adulthood. Intergenerational transmission of violence may be one of the causes of spousal abuse. However, the effects of the consequences of childhood victimization may be indirect and certain environmental factors may need to be considered in sustaining such effects.

3.4.3 Resources theory and spousal abuse

Resources theory stresses on the control of resources and the associated power within a family. Goode (1971) proposed that there are four major resources, including economic resources, prestige, attractiveness, and force. Family member can use these resources to control other members. Thus, family is indeed a power system. Warner, Lee, and Lee (1986) proposed that the one who has more resources,

such as money usually occupies a dominant position in a relationship. Within a family, man is typically the breadwinner who controls the financial resources of the whole family. Thus he is the one who have power and can exercise control over other family members. Such power differentials allow the happening of spousal abuse and child abuse, in both cases powerless individuals are controlled and abused by the powerful figure in the family. Allen and Straus (1980) and Gelles (1993) found that family with wife occupying higher status than the husband usually resulted in violence between couples. This may indicate that males tend to exercise violence when their power is being challenged.

3.4.4 Critique of family perspectives of spousal abuse

Family perspectives view family as a whole unit in causing family violence. It shifts the focus from intra-personal to interpersonal analysis. It proposes that family violence is not because of individual's pathology but rather the results of the whole family. Individual family members, interaction and feedback processes among members all contribute to family violence. It further addresses that family can be a place of love and warmth but simultaneously it can be a place of cruelty and violence. It urges people to notice and face the problem of family violence. The intergenerational transmission of family proposed that violence may be transmitted from one generation to the next through socialization and social learning. Thus individuals who experience family violence in childhood have a higher chance of perpetrating violence in their adulthood.

The theory explains a wide range of violence incidents within the family, and proposes well-defined concepts. However, it is not a simple theory as it suggests multiple causes of violence. It has good heuristic value and application value.

Viewing family as a whole which contribute to family violence is the foundation of

family therapy in treating family violence. Nevertheless, Bograd (1984) commented that family perspectives assume men have authority to exercise violence against female within the family. This indeed decontextualizes the social and cultural context which sanctions male dominance. This also implicitly blames female victims who contribute to the violence incident. Table 3.7 presents the evaluation of family perspectives of spousal abuse.

3.5 Socio-cultural perspectives of spousal abuse

Socio-cultural perspectives emphasize on the extra-personal elements and processes, including social structure, sub-culture influences on spousal abuse.

3.5.1 Social structure and spousal abuse

Apart from the characteristics of family per se, social structure such as socio-economic class is also related to family violence. Researchers had documented that high violence happened in poorer, less educated (Gelles, 1987; Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986, 1990; Smith, 1990), low socio-economic class (Bowker, 1983; Gelles & Cornell, 1990), and family which lack access to resources, such as job opportunities and social facilities (Hamberger & Hastings, 1988). The theories basically viewed that more violence is happened in working class and poor families. Stith and Rosen (1990) commented that poor families generally lack the skills and resources to deal with family life stressors effectively. Moreover, "poverty attacks self-esteem and lead to despair" (p.15). Such despairing feelings easily trigger violence within family. People with such socio-demographic background are structurally predisposed to family violence (O'Neil, 1998, p.465). However, middle-class families are regarded as having more resources and no need to resort conflicts through violence and abuse (Hague & Malos, 2005).

3.5.2 Sub-cultural influences on the acceptance of violence and gender stereotyping

The sub-culture of violence theory was originally suggested by Wolfgang and Ferracuti (1967). They proposed that certain sub-cultural groups justify use of force as a social norm. This proposition implies that violence is unevenly distributed in the society. Consistent with the discussion on social structure and violence, low socio-economic class who lacks resources and skills tend to use violence to solve their daily-life hassles and conflicts as compared with the general population. They also regard violence as a learned behavior which is sustained through the socialization process.

Apart from sub-culture of violence, gender stereotypes which emphasize the subordinate status of women are prevalent in our society. Patriarchal culture is maintained in both Western and Eastern societies. In general, males are regarded as having higher value and status in both the private and the public spheres. Contrast with men, women are occupying the subordinate positions. The acceptance of sub-culture violence and gender stereotypes are transmitted from one generation to the next through socialization process as discussed in social-cognitive developmental theories. Both of these factors contribute to spousal abuse as men are socialized to control women and women are the legitimate targets to be controlled.

3.5.3 Critique of socio-cultural perspectives

Socio-cultural perspectives basically regard family violence is related to social structure and sub-cultural values. They explain spousal abuse from a relatively macro approach which focus less on individual's factors in relating to spousal abuse. They suggest that social structure may be related to spousal abuse. People who are occupying in low socio-economic class who lack access to various resources are more at risk of violence. This indeed provides insights in preventing spousal abuse,

for example more resources and assistance can be provided to the low socio-economic class before they resolve their problems through violence. However, counterevidence showed that social class did not have significant correlation with spousal abuse (Borkowski et al., 1993; Hanmer & Saunders, 1984). Socio-cultural perspectives fail to explain why abuse happen among all social class. Social structure may be part of the contributing factors to spousal abuse, but they may not be the direct cause.

Socio-cultural perspectives highlight socio-culture values on violence and gender stereotypes are important to spousal abuse. This further suggests that combating spousal abuse can target on the social and cultural levels. However, counterevidence presented that not all people being violent even though they grew up from culture full of violence. Therefore, socio-cultural perspectives might neglect individuals' characteristics that contribute to spousal abuse. Lastly, the perspectives are not comprehensive enough as they do not explain husband abuse and the phenomenon of "males as the dominant perpetrators". Table 3.8 presents the evaluation of socio-cultural perspectives of spousal abuse.

3.6 Feminist perspectives of spousal abuse

"Wife battering" gained its public concern through women's consciousness raising groups when waves of feminist political movements were carried out in 1970s (Atwood & Olsen, 1996; Okun, 1986). Feminists basically conceptualized spousal abuse as "wife battering" as they found that over 95 percent of spousal abuse was violence perpetrated by men (Hamel, 2007). They suggest that "wife battering" is more appropriate than "family violence" as suggested by family theorists in describing the situations of women.

In general, feminists emphasize that wife abuse is the results of patriarchy.

“Patriarchy is a universal ideology that refers to a set of ideas and beliefs that justify male domination over women in society” (Ahmad et al., 2004, p.262). It structures the inequality between males and females and formulates the male-dominated society. Wife battering is regarded as a gendered issue which is resulted from the patriarchal culture that sanctions males’ dominance and control over women in both domestic (private) and work (public) spheres. Under patriarchal culture, traditional values and legal systems all support males’ control over females within the domestic (private) sphere.

Historically, husband was regarded as the head of household who had power to exercise force to discipline his family members. In the West, there was a famous Rule of Thumb restriction that allowed husbands to beat up their wives with instrument no larger than their thumb (Jenkins & Davidson, 2001). In traditional Chinese culture, Confucian teaching also kept women in submissive status. Women were subject to “three obedience and four virtues” in the old days (Chan, 2000; Tang, 1994; Xu, 1997). According to the Chinese classic literature of filial piety “*xiao jing*”, three obedience means women should follow the lead of her father before marriage, follow her husband after marriage, and follow her son after the death of her husband; and the four virtues mean women should be 1) loyal and respect to husband, 2) careful in speech, 3) in proper demeanor, and 4) good in needlework. (Details on the relationships between Chinese patriarchal culture and spousal abuse are presented in later sub-section and Section 4.4 of Chapter 4). In both Western and Chinese culture, traditional values and legal systems all support husbands are authorized to discipline their wives through violence. Thus abused wives could only receive little assistance from the legal and social welfare systems. This further reinforces and justifies husbands’ use of violence.

Women not only occupying subordinate positions in the domestic sphere, they

are also being controlled in their development in the work sphere. Patriarchal culture maintains men occupying in a higher social status by limiting education and career development of women. Because of traditional roles expectations, women are confined within the domestic sphere as they are expected to be the homemakers and caregivers of the younger and elder members in the family. Social and economic systems all discriminate females in the work (public) sphere. As a result, women are excluded from the public sphere and have to depend on their husbands for financial and other materials support. Even though women have higher education and pursuit of own career nowadays, they are still the major homemakers and caregivers of the family. Women are commented as suffering from the “double day burden” (Bacik & Drew, 2006; Hartmann, 1981), who need to work both at home and in the labor market. Moreover, their career development is usually interrupted by the period of pregnancy. Therefore, women are occupying lower status in both private and public spheres when compared with men.

There are different branches of feminist theories in explaining wife abuse. Though there are differences in some of their perspectives, feminists all agree that patriarchy is the “enemy” in combating “wife abuse”.

Liberal feminists suggest that wife abuse could be solved by providing women the same civil rights that solely enjoyed by men in both public and private spheres (Mill, 1989). Friedan (1974) also suggested that economic independency of women can free them from depending on men and support them to leave their abusive partners. Women liberation, having equal rights and treatments with men in both public and private spheres are the major propositions of liberal feminists. They suggest that more liberated gender relations could be achieved by modifying the gender-role socialization which socializes individuals to be more egalitarian (Andersen, 1983). They also propose that the prevention of wife abuse can be done

by providing therapeutic program to modify batterers' violent behavior, by socializing and training boys to be more sensitive, nurturing, and nonviolent, as well as by offering more relief to the marginalized groups, such as the poor (Haaken, 2002). State intervention is required and reforms should be carried out among the political, social, and economic spheres of the society.

Radical feminists with their motto "personal is political" bring the problem of wife abuse to all women in the society (Jenkins & Davidson, 2001). They suggested that wife abuse is the ultimate results of "patriarchy control of female sexuality and female fertility" (Freeman, 1990, p76). Men got both material and psychological advantages from the subordinate positions of women (Okun, 1986). Violence is a way to keep women in their subordinate positions. Therefore, radical feminists suggest that women should be united to fight for their own rights. That is why women's personal experiences are regarded as political. The ultimate goal of radical feminists is to overthrow the whole system of patriarchy (Anderson, 1983; Jaggar, 1983).

Socialist feminists propose that women's oppression is the results of interaction between class inequalities in capitalism and gender inequalities in patriarchy (Freeman, 1990). Similar to radical feminists, they also view patriarchy as the major source of women's subordinate positions. However, they suggested that women in different social class with different racial backgrounds experience different degrees of oppression. These differences are related to the class inequalities under capitalist system. The problem of wife abuse should be comprehensively examined by considering oppression not only from gender inequalities, but also from class inequalities and racism.

There are two current branches of feminist thoughts on spousal abuse (Okun, 1986). One is basically focuses on "women abuse", which regard women are the

sole target of abuse; while the other is about “female sexual slavery”, which regard various forms of violence against women is mainly because of the sexual objectification of women.

Schechter (1982) suggested that “women abuse” should be the main focus. She suggested that analyses at both individual and interpersonal are important in examining women abuse. She proposed that capitalism is the major force that divides men and women into public and private spheres. Women are assigned with unpaid domestic work. This responsibility is furthered framed as a moral obligation that women have to fulfill. Based on such gender division and the socialization of gender stereotypes, women develop as passive dependents who need both financial and material support from their male partners. These explain why men are the dominant perpetrators and women are the dominant victims in women abuse.

Barry (1981) regarded women abuse as a subset of violence against women. Violence against women is originated from the sexual objectification of female’s body. She proposed that female sexual slavery represents sexual terrorism that affects all women. Violence against women at home includes wife-battering, child abuse and incest abuse all serve the precondition of forced prostitution. Prostitutes are mostly the victims of violence against women at home. Wife battering is one of the components that support the whole system of female sexual slavery.

Based on the preceding discussion, it is observed that husband abuse is neglect in feminist theories. It may be because of such neglect of male experiences, gender theories instead of feminist theories are developed to settle the situation that both women’s and men’s issues are the concerns of gender theories. Gender theorists of spousal abuse are more inclusive by addressing spousal abuse under the category of intimate violence (Miller, 2000). In intimate violence, both wife abuse and husband abuse are considered. Apart from spousal abuse, it also covers abuse between same

sex intimate partners. Gender theories proposed an inclusive approach in viewing the gender of the abusers in intimate abuse. It is too narrow to adopt patriarchy as the ultimate cause of abuse that proposed by the feminist theorists, as it ignores and uncovers women abusers (Dutton, 2000). According to Soler and Grambs (1997), if only women are regarded as victims of spousal abuse, people will tend to consider wife abuse as normal because this is the typical fate of women. Moreover, if spousal abuse equals wife abuse, then male victims in husband abuse will be neglect and ignored. Thus both male and female victims in spousal abuse would not get appropriate attention and assistance from the society when the society desensitizes the problems of spousal abuse. Society tends to regard wife abuse as normal while husband abuse as impossible. McNeely and Robinson-Simpson (1987) in the late 90's already commented that the underlying assumption of equalizing spousal abuse as wife abuse and regarding wife abuse as a masculine form of assaultive behavior might be biased and not the best way to uncover the truth of spousal abuse.

Critique of feminist perspectives

Feminist perspectives focus on the patriarchal culture which supports and maintains gender inequality among legal, social and economic systems to ensure the dominance and absolute power of men over women. This macro cultural system sanctions spousal abuse, in particular wife abuse.

Feminist perspectives link gender inequality in society to the power imbalance within home and such power differentials are the major risk factor of wife abuse. This contributes to improve the situations of women victims. The first women's shelter was established by feminists' organization (Okun, 1986). As women abuse is regarded as a gendered issue, it also heightens gender sensitivity and awareness among different professions. Social work professions also incorporate women issues

and gender sensitivity in their training (Bricker-Jenkins, 2002; Knight, 1991; Vinton, 1992).

However, Hamel (2007) commented that feminist perspectives fail to explain the translation of patriarchal power into personal power. Socialist feminists add capitalism as another major cause of wife abuse but they also failed to explain how capitalism and patriarchy transform into the power into personal power. Researches showed that most of the men are not assaulting and exercising control over women (Dutton, 1994; Lenton, 1995; Yllo, 1993). Some of the men are even reluctant to hit women because they believe that they are not supposed to hit women who are physically weaker. Moreover, feminist perspectives cannot explain the happening of husband abuse and abuse in homosexual relationships. Migliaccio (2002) proposed that "gender inequality is not sufficient to establish the abusive relationship between couples, there are other factors, including socialization factors, socioeconomic factors and stress." (p.30). Indeed, feminists encounter "great difficulties in explaining husband abuse" as they predominantly consider males as the perpetrators and females as the victims in spousal abuse (McCall & Shields, 1986, p.108). They are not sure to regard husband abuse as exceptional cases in order to presume their explanation based on patriarchy or theoretically separate it from wife abuse (Okun, 1986). With the evidence from reports of child abuse, husband abuse and abuse against same-sex partners, women can also be abusers. Thus feminist perspectives are not comprehensive enough to explain spousal abuse. Though gender theories have a more balance address on both wife abuse and husband abuse, it is developed basically in responses to the typical neglect of male victims. Gender theories proposed an inclusive view in regarding both male and female as abusers in spousal abuse. Gender theories as compared with feminist theories should be a better theoretical framework in addressing spousal abuse, though gender theories are still

developing and encountering counter arguments from feminist theorists. Table 3.9 presents the evaluation of feminist perspectives of spousal abuse.

3.7 Cultural perspectives of spousal abuse

Cultural influence is emphasized by cross-cultural theorists (Cheung & Leung, 1998) in understanding social phenomena. Cultural perspectives explain spousal abuse from the macro level of analysis (Wallace, 2005), which emphasize widespread cultural values and norms about family, violence and gender in condoning spousal abuse.

Culture roughly means social heredity (Hotaling & Straus, 1980) which denotes the ability of a society to cope with its social problems and to survive for its existence (Tsai, 1986). It has a set of norms and values that shape and justify human behavior, human actions and interactions, as well as human goals (Wong et al., 2008). Norms are rules of conduct or social expectations, which specify people's behavior among different social situations. Values are abstract conceptions, which can either be explicit or implicit, shared by people in a society on what are important and worthwhile.

Cultural values stress on the privacy and sanctity of the family (Straus & Gelles, 1986) and the importance of family unity (Chan, 2000). Keeping the reputation of an individual family is highly stressed and individuals are required to subordinate themselves under the interests of family (Yick, 2001). It is also important to maintain the privacy of family, thus individual members seldom disclose problems within the family to outsiders. These indeed hinder the help seeking of victims and stop outside intervention into spousal abuse cases. Victims are reluctant to seek outside help because it means disclosing the dark side of the family and betrayal to the family. Spousal abuse is regarded as a private family matter and should be

resolved within the family. As incidences of spousal abuse are privatized, they keep on happening behind the closed doors of the families.

Culture not only privatizes violence within domestic setting, it also glorifies the use of violence. Indeed, violence is widespread in our culture. Violence is accepted to be used in solving conflicts, protecting families and nations, as well as maintaining control (Campbell & Landenburger, 1995). Moreover, violence is maintained and supported as a norm for males. Violent interactions between males represent the “machismo” lifestyle (Barnes, 1999). Men are typically socialized to be tough, assertive, and appropriate to use force when the situations require. With such cultural glorification of violence, it is argued that “the cultural approval of violence in the larger society legitimates, inspires, and reinforces the use of violence in the family” (McCall & Shields, 1986, p.100).

In Chinese society, culture is an essential component in studying spousal abuse. Confucianism characterizes a system of norms and values of the traditional Chinese society. It is commented that Confucian thinking did not directly support wife abuse but provided a cultural and legal base for the legitimization of wife abuse in Chinese society (Xu, 1997). Although Chinese traditional values also include the ideas from Taoism (Fang, 1988) and Buddhism, Confucian thinking is the fundamental value system that guides Chinese for over two thousands of years (Tsai, 1986). Confucianism emphasizes the establishment of harmonious social relations, which suggests individuals behave according to their role norms and the role relations they have when they are interacting with others. Under Confucian thoughts, women are usually placed in subordinate positions in Chinese society (Yang, 1989). Chinese wives are taught to obey their husbands, *chu jia cong fu* (when a woman get married, she should obey her husband) (Shek, 2002). Moreover, Chinese are required to be forbore and self-suppressed in dealing with family issues (Shek, 2002). Buddhism

as an incoming religion also follows Confucianism in supporting the wives to be obedient to their husbands in order to maintain a harmony family (Wong, 1995). The advocating of subordinate status of women in Chinese contributes to the incidences of spousal abuse and women victims' endurance of abuse. A detailed review on Chinese culture on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse is presented in Chapter 4.

Critique of cultural perspectives of spousal abuse

Cultural perspectives address the preservation of family sanctity and unity, the widespread of violent culture, as well as the legitimatization of female gender roles as major contributors of spousal abuse. They provide multiple factors and focus on the macro level of analysis in explaining spousal abuse. However, the perspectives are not comprehensive enough in explaining the whole issue of spousal abuse. They only provide cultural base in supporting males' violence against females in the domestic setting, while females' violence against males and children are not addressed. Moreover, there is little empirical support for the proposition that individuals approve violence under violent culture. It is because research found that most individuals disapprove the use of violence within family (Greenbelt, 1983).

McCall and Shields (1986) criticized that cultural perspectives selectively present the aspects that are supportive to the use of violence and males' violence against females. However, cultural perspectives seldom present norms that do not support violence, such as boys are not supposed to hit girls (p.109). Table 3.10 presents the evaluation of cultural perspectives of spousal abuse.

3.8 Summary of intra- and extra-personal perspectives of spousal abuse

Ten perspectives of spousal abuse are summarized and discussed above. All of

them are commented as poor or fair in their comprehensiveness in explaining spousal abuse. These perspectives explain spousal abuse in a narrow sense by focusing on wife abuse only. As the main goal of this study is to examine the conceptions and beliefs about both wife abuse and husband abuse, these perspectives are not ideal to be adopted in this study. Although behavioral and cognitive-behavioral as well as cognitive perspectives explain spousal abuse in a relatively broad sense, they mainly posit on the intra-personal level and fail to take contextual factors into consideration. Family perspectives explain spousal abuse in a relatively broad sense but they posit on the extra-personal level of explanation and fail to consider socio-cultural context. These three perspectives do not recognize the importance of interactions between intra- and extra-personal levels. Indeed, spousal abuse is caused by both individual and environmental (familial, social and cultural) factors, as well as their interaction processes. Therefore, a more holistic and comprehensive model which combine both intra- and extra-personal levels of explanation of spousal abuse is needed. Ecological perspectives provide such an advantage and a holistic understanding of spousal abuse. The last sub-section introduces ecological perspectives and the ecological model adopted in this study.

3.9 Ecological perspectives of spousal abuse

This section presents ecological perspective in detail as it is the theoretical framework of this study. There are three major areas of discussion in this sub-section. The first area is about the origins of ecological perspectives. The second area is a literature review of ecological perspectives in explaining domestic violence. The last area is the critique of ecological perspectives.

3.9.1 Introduction of "ecology"

"The term "ecology" is originally a biological term that used to refer to the mutual interdependence of plants, animals, people, and their physical environments" (Jack, 2001, p.185). Ecological perspectives propose that human development and their behavior are the results of interaction between individuals and their surrounding environment. There are encouraging and discouraging (Ekblad, 1996), constructive and deconstructive (Jack, 2001), as well as healthy and unhealthy (Tropman, 2004) factors within individuals' environment that interact with human development and behavior. Lewin's classic equation, $B=f(P\&E)$ precisely elaborates this perspective, which suggested that behavior (B) evolve as a function of interaction between person (P) and environment (E). Human behavior is a "progressive, mutual accommodation between an active, growing human being and the changing properties of the immediate settings in which the developing person lives, as this process is affected by relations between these settings, and by the larger contexts in which the settings are embedded" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p.21). Germain (1978, p.522) suggested that "where the environment is supportive, creative adaptation and growth occur. Where the environment is non-protective or depriving, stress is created and growth and adaptive functioning may be impeded." Moreover, individuals are striving to achieve a goodness-of-fit equilibrium level between one's own self and the surrounding environment (Germain, 1978). Thus, individual self and the environment keep on changing and shaping each other.

Ecological perspective is quite similar to Holism suggested by Smuts (1926). It is proposed that there are individual specific characters for every organism, from the lowest micro-organism to complex human personality. Every organism is apparently a unity of parts (a whole) but its parts are actually determined by the reciprocal synthesis between its parts and the wholes. These wholes include not only

biological domains (internal biological organization), but also inorganic substances (inorganic order of Nature); sense of human associations (society and state); and human spirits (ideals of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness). There are seven hierarchal levels of Holism, which create the "wholes with progressive phases of reality" (p.106). These seven levels are nested and interacting with each others reciprocally. Both ecological model and holism model are transactional, which view the individual and its immediate and larger contexts as actively influencing each other. Both perspectives expand this basically biological concept to apply to social and human functioning.

Similar to the systems theory, individuals' experiences are regarded as subsystems within systems and systems within larger systems in the ecological perspective (Garbarino & Collins, 1999). This is similar to "a set of nested structures, each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls" (Bronferbrenner, 1979, p.22). Bronferbrenner (1979) proposed that there were four nested systems interacting and shaping individuals' development, including microsystem (individuals' immediate connections, such as family), mesosystem (interrelations among individuals' immediate connections, such as family and work), exosystem (an extended interrelations among individuals' immediate connections, such as community), and macrosystem (sub-cultural and cultural ideology).

Therefore we have to look into the systems within larger systems and subsystems within systems in interacting with individual development and behavior. It is commented that this ecological system approach helps to discover connections and interplay of biological, psychological, social, and cultural factors, which would otherwise be invisible (Garbarino & Collins, 1999). Thus an ecological approach enables researcher to adopt a multidimensional approach in order to fully understand the complexity of a problem. Ecological model has explored different behavior, such

as ending male violence against female (Douglas et al., 2008), suicidal behavior (vanBergen et al., 2006), community violence among children and adolescents (Meyer & Post, 2006; Overstreet & Mazza, 2003), sexual health risk behavior (Campbell et al., 2004), healthcare service to elder adults (Greene & Sullivan, 2004), sexual revictimization (Grauerholz, 2000), as well as youth violence (Jonson-Reid, 1998).

3.9.2 Ecological perspective in studying domestic violence

According to the ecological perspective, spousal abuse is the result of complex interactions between individual, interpersonal, social, cultural, and environmental factors. It is commented that understanding of the relationships between these factors and violence is one of the important steps to prevent violence (Heise & Moreno, 2002). As spousal abuse is a complex issue with various contributing contextual factors, different intervention strategies are required at different levels of the society in order to stop and prevent its happening.

Ecological perspective is used in explaining and identifying risk factors of violence against women. Carlson (1984) applied an ecological framework with four-level of factors in analyzing the causes and maintenance of wife abuse. These four-level of factors included 1) individual, 2) family, 3) social structural, and 4) socio-cultural. Individual factors meant couples' personal factors that they bring to the conjugal relationships and contribute to spousal abuse. These factors included "attitudes, values, and beliefs learned in one's family-of-origin; personal resources, skills and abilities; subjective perceptions of reality and views of the world; and personal weaknesses, problems, and pathologies" (p.571). Thus individual partners had their own ways in dealing with problems in their life and conjugal relationships, and these may contribute to the happening of spousal abuse. The family level meant

the individual couple's family-of-origin, family structure and family roles. Carlson suggested that individuals tend to replicate their own family structure, thus their family-of-origin greatly influences the ways they deal with problems in their own family. The social structural level referred to the economic realities and trends, community and neighborhood characteristics, law enforcement as well as criminal practices. Economic recession and unemployment are related to marital conflict. A positive relationship between unemployment and family violence was found in Belsky's (1980) research. Moreover, stress and tension may be created because of insufficient material resources. These are the factors prone to conflicts which may be resolved through violence. Finally, the socio-cultural level focuses on law, social norms, and community responses to spousal abuse. "Sexism, gender-role stereotyping, general acceptance of violence and norms about the family" are factors related to the causation and maintenance of domestic violence.

Heise (1998) combined feminist theories with social ecology to show patriarchal value of male dominance contributes to violence against women. She proposed two hypothetical ecological frameworks in examining violence against women in individual level and cross-cultural level. Similar to ecology applied in examining the etiology of child maltreatment, Heise pointed out individual characteristics (child abuse experience), environmental factors among the microsystem (male dominance in the family), exosystem (low socioeconomic status), and macrosystem (male entitlement of women and rigid gender roles within specific culture) were all correlated to violence against women.

Ecological perspective was also applied in other domestic violence situations, including abuse against older parents (elder abuse) and abuse against women with developmental disabilities. Schiamberg and Gans (2000) proposed an ecological model in incorporating older adults' individual characteristics (chronic illness) and

contextual factors (social isolation and ageism culture) with adult child's individual characteristics (lack of care giving experience) and contextual factors (unemployment and cultural norm support violence) in explaining elder abuse. The researchers suggested that in order to prevent and carry out intervention in elder abuse, one must understand all the individual and ecological factors that contribute to older parents becoming victims and adult children becoming perpetrators in elder abuse cases. Carlson (1997) presented an ecological model and identified factors from microsystem (internalized devaluation), mesosystem (social isolation and deficit in communication skills), and macrosystem (sexism and myths about disability) that contributed to violence and abuse among women with mental retardation. In line with Carlson (1997), Curry, Hassouneh-Phillips, and Johnston-Silverberg (2001) who also proposed an ecological model in understanding abuse of women with physical disabilities. They highlighted that harsh, pervasive negative stereotypes, rolelessness toward women with disabilities, as well as discrimination against them further worsen their conditions when facing abuse. They faced double disadvantages due to their disabilities, such as being isolated and dependent on caregivers for financial and health care resources, as well as being unable to seek help and/ or physically leave the abusers whom mostly are their caregivers. Finally, ecological perspective was also used in understanding factors related to sexual revictimization of adults who had experienced child sexual abuse in Grauerholz's study (2000).

3.9.3 Critique of ecological perspectives

Ecological perspective not only helps to investigate the universal risk factors of domestic violence, but also discovers culture-specific elements of it. This indeed contributes to a complete understanding on domestic violence by combining both

intra- and extra-personal risk factors of spousal abuse.

However, ecological model also has its limitations. It is because it allows a broad spectrum of contributing factors to domestic violence, it cannot provide clear and particular causal relationships between factors (Carlson, 1984). Moreover, the identified contributing factors are not identical and equally weighted in explaining among different domestic violence cases. Wakefield (1996) commented that ecological perspectives just provide a way of perceiving that individuals are connected with their environment. Thus there are multiple causes of human behavior and social phenomena. However, such connectedness claim does not contribute to the causal connections among variables of human behavior and social phenomena. Moreover, the connectedness of causes and effects are flow in a circular direction. Therefore, it does not help to increase our understanding of human behavior and social phenomena. Indeed, some of the previous research (Belsky, 1980; Curry, Phillips, & Silverberg, 2001; Garbarino & Collins, 1999; Jack, 2001; Schiamberg & Gans, 2000) just proposed the risk or related factors of abuse organized in an ecological model, but they seldom provide empirical evidence to show the direction or processes of effects among the related factors within the model. In fact, it is relatively difficult to test the processes of effects among the correlates within the ecological model as it may involve a massive collection of data of the related correlates. Further empirical data are needed in validating the proposed direction and processes of effects among the variables. In addition, Wakefield (1996) suggested that domain specific theories that could generate testable hypotheses are needed in accompany with the ecological perspective. It is meaningless to stress on the connectedness between individuals and their environment. Instead, well-defined causal connections among variables generated from theories contribute better to our understanding on human behavior and social phenomena. It is observed that

ecological model is addressing certain facts that are always true and providing tautological explanation if appropriate domain specific theories are not specified.

Even though ecological approach has its limitations, it still enhances our understanding of domestic violence in the following ways. First, it heightens our awareness about the multiple causes or contributing factors to domestic violence. It takes the full context of domestic violence into account, which highlights related factors from different levels of analysis provided that proper domain specific theories are applied (Wakefield, 1996). It is suggested by Carlson (1984) that ecological model has its advantages in 1) identifying multiple causation of domestic violence, 2) providing interaction between factors across different levels of analysis, 3) analyzing domestic violence which occurs over time or at a given point in time, and 4) differentiating between factors that cause and those serve to perpetuate or maintain violence. Second, ecological perspective enriches our understanding to domestic violence happened among different racial and cultural groups, especially those from non-Western cultures. It highlights specific risk markers of violence to groups with different characteristics, such as non-Western groups, older adults, and women with disabilities. Third, ecological perspective contributes to the contextual understanding of domestic violence, which reminds us to notice and cater for the special needs of victims from different groups. As domestic violence is the results of complex interplay of individual, social, cultural, and environmental factors (Heise & Moreno, 2002), we certainly require a perspective that can encompass analysis from all these levels. A contextual perspective offered by ecological perspective is vital in studying the causes, maintenance, prevention, and intervention to domestic violence. Table 3.11 presents the evaluation of ecological perspectives of spousal abuse.

3.10 Comparison among the eleven theories and the theoretical model adopted in this study

Based on the review and evaluation of the 11 theories, the researcher chose ecological theories as the theoretical framework for the present study. Table 3.12 summarizes the evaluation of the 11 theories of spousal abuse.

Ecological perspectives provide a comprehensive understanding of spousal abuse. As individuals are embedded in the environment, there must be interaction between individuals and their surrounding environment in influencing their thoughts and behavior. Thus ecological perspective is chosen. The contextual approach of ecological perspectives is also compatible to the purpose of this study. The main goal of this study is to investigate the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse among social work undergraduates. Individuals' conceptions and beliefs about certain issues are usually implicitly formulated through the interactions with their contextual environment. Though they may not be aware of this process, they implicitly adopt diverse perspectives from their significant others, as well as the social and cultural milieu they are living within. Thus ecological perspectives provide a relatively suitable framework in examining diverse contextual factors contribute to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Moreover, as domestic violence is complex and multi-determined (Rosenbaum, Cohen, & Forsstrom-Cohen, 1991), we should adopt a unifying approach in examining factors that cause and maintain its happening (Dwyer et al., 1995).

However, as commented by Wakefield (1996) that ecological perspectives are not a parsimonious theory as it suggested multiple causes to human behavior. Therefore, domain specific theories are needed and incorporated with ecological perspective properly. Based on the review on social-cognitive developmental theories and socio-cultural perspectives, it is found that the socialization of gender

stereotyping and violent culture is important to the perceptions of spousal abuse. Moreover, based on the cultural perspectives, cultural values are important contributor to spousal abuse. Moreover, no previous study had examined the influence of Chinese cultural values on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Furthermore, previous research found that attitudes toward gender are salient factors to the conceptions and belief about spousal abuse. (Detailed literature review is presented in the following chapter). Therefore, the researcher of this study proposes an ecological framework with three levels of individual and contextual factors in relating to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. The three levels of factors include 1) individual, 2) interpersonal, and 3) cultural. In the individual level, attitudes toward gender are examined. In the interpersonal level, the socialization influences of gender stereotyping and violence approval from parents are examined. In the cultural level, the endorsement of Chinese cultural values is examined. The details of this ecological model and the proposed relationships among variables are presented in Chapter 5.

In this study, gender is regarded as a basic analytical variable which determines the socialization process of individuals, especially on gender stereotyping. Males and females are socially and culturally constructed (Lober, 1994). Gender is a human production that depends on every men and women constantly “doing gender” (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Thus gender is not merely an empirical fact attached to people or even symbols, but it is an analytical tool (Scott, 1988). Gender is regarded as an analytic factor in influencing individuals’ conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. The conceptions, beliefs and the ecological model of spousal abuse are compared between male and female participants in this study.

Table 3.1 Evaluation of biological perspectives of spousal abuse

Criteria	Comments	Justifications
1	Comprehensiveness	Poor It explains spousal abuse in a narrow sense by focusing on male's aggression. The perspectives only focus on wife abuse and physical abuse.
2	Precision	Fair It basically contains clearly defined concepts but "evolutionary needs" requires more elaboration.
3	Parsimony	Good The theory is simple and applies few concepts in explaining human violent behavior.
4	Internal consistency	Fair Contradictions are presented. It is because not all men are being violent under the suggested biological conditions.
5	Consideration of contextual factors	Poor It does not take psychological, socio-cultural and environmental context into consideration.
6	Testability	Fair Some of the concepts can be measured while some are very difficult to be tested in human beings and generate ethical problems.
7	Empirical validity	Fair It cannot generate precise and accurate predictions as contradictions are presented.
8	Heuristic value	Fair It does not provide new approach in explaining males' violence instead it just provides information about the biological correlates of violent behavior.
9	Applied value	Poor It does not help to improve spousal abuse but provides excuses for male abusers to be violent.

Table 3.2 Evaluation of Freudian and neo-Freudian perspectives of spousal abuse

Criteria	Comments	Justifications
1	Comprehensiveness	Poor It explains spousal abuse in a narrow sense, which only focuses on wife abuse based on the instinctual drives.
2	Precision	Poor Concepts are abstract and not clearly defined.
3	Parsimony	Good The theory and the related perspectives are simple and apply few concepts in explaining human violent behavior.
4	Internal consistency	Poor Contradictions are presented. The explanation of human violent behavior is a circular explanation.
5	Consideration of contextual factors	Poor Except neo-Freudian, it does not take social, cultural and other environmental context into account.
6	Testability	Poor Many concepts have never been tested empirically.
7	Empirical validity	Fair It cannot generate precise and accurate predictions as contradictions are presented.
8	Heuristic value	Fair It does not provide new approach in explaining males' violence instead it just associates instinctual drives to human violent behavior.
9	Applied value	Poor It does not help to improve spousal abuse based on its pessimistic view (except viewpoints from Fromm) in regarding human aggression as natural.

Table 3.3 Evaluation of personality and psychological disturbances perspectives of spousal abuse

Criteria	Comments	Justifications
1	Comprehensiveness	Poor It explains spousal abuse in a narrow sense, which only explains wife abuse and physical abuse.
2	Precision	Fair Some of the concepts are vague.
3	Parsimony	Good The theory is simple and applies few concepts in explaining human violent behavior.
4	Internal consistency	Fair Contradictions are presented. Counterevidence showed that men without the prescribed personality traits also being violent to their spouses. Only a small proportion of individuals with mental illness and substance abuse are violent.
5	Consideration of contextual factors	Poor It does not take socio-cultural and environmental context into consideration.
6	Testability	Good Concepts can be measured and tested.
7	Empirical validity	Fair It cannot generate precise and accurate predictions as contradictions are presented.
8	Heuristic value	Fair It does not provide new approach in explaining males' violence instead it just goes into a circular explanation. Pathological factors provide excuses for perpetrators to be violent.
9	Applied value	Fair It heightens notice on violent behavior among groups with so-called "violent personality", mental illness and substance abuse.

Table 3.4 Evaluation of behavioral and cognitive-behavioral perspectives of spousal abuse

Criteria	Comments	Justifications
1	Comprehensiveness	Fair It explains spousal abuse in a broad sense by suggesting theoretically human's abusive behavior can be acquired through learning.
2	Precision	Good It basically contains clearly defined and operationalized concepts.
3	Parsimony	Good The theory is simple and applies few concepts in explaining human violent behavior.
4	Internal consistency	Good The theory is internally consistent.
5	Consideration of contextual factors	Poor It does not seriously consider the social-cultural and environmental factors in affecting human behavior.
6	Testability	Good Concepts can be measured and tested empirically.
7	Empirical validity	Good It can generate precise and accurate predictions.
8	Heuristic value	Good It provides new approach in explaining males' violence and stimulates other related research.
9	Applied value	Good It helps to improve spousal abuse by suggesting that violent behavior can be unlearned and replaced by other appropriate behavior. These form the foundation of batterers' programs.

Table 3.5 Evaluation of cognitive perspectives of spousal abuse

Criteria	Comments	Justifications
1 Comprehensiveness	Fair	It explains spousal abuse in a relatively broad sense by elaborating the information processes and unique individuals' construct in interpreting and responding to spousal abuse. However, it does not explain much on husband abuse.
2 Precision	Fair	Some concepts are vague, such as the different collection of personal construct.
3 Parsimony	Good	The theory is simple and applies few concepts in explaining human violent behavior.
4 Internal consistency	Good	The theory is internally consistent.
5 Consideration of contextual factors	Poor	It does not seriously consider the social, cultural and environmental factors as it basically focuses on individuals' internal cognitive processes.
6 Testability	Good	Concepts can be measured and tested empirically.
7 Empirical validity	Fair	It can generate precise and accurate predictions but stronger support is needed based on longitudinal research.
8 Heuristic value	Good	It provides new approach in explaining males' violence and stimulates other related research.
9 Applied value	Good	It helps to improve spousal abuse by suggesting treatments for violence.

Table 3.6 Evaluation of social-cognitive developmental theories of spousal abuse

Criteria	Comments	Justifications
1 Comprehensiveness	Fair	It explains spousal abuse in a relatively broad sense but it does not explain husband abuse.
2 Precision	Fair	It contains clearly defined concepts.
3 Parsimony	Good	The theory is simple.
4 Internal consistency	Good	The theory is internally consistent.
5 Consideration of contextual factors	Fair	It considers factors related to spousal abuse that are transmitted through socialization.
6 Testability	Fair	Most of the concepts can be tested but may require longitudinal study to obtain a stronger support of the theory.
7 Empirical validity	Fair	It cannot generate precise and accurate predictions as individuals' responses to the environment may also affect their behavior.
8 Heuristic value	Good	It stimulates research to examine the external influences on individuals' perceptions of spousal abuse
9 Applied value	Good	It suggests different approaches in combating spousal abuse, such as modifying the socialization of gender scripts to more egalitarian.

Table 3.7 Evaluation of family perspectives of spousal abuse

Criteria	Comments	Justifications
1 Comprehensiveness	Fair	It explains spousal abuse in a relatively broad sense by addressing the interaction patterns among family members, family characteristics, and intergenerational transmission of violence as the contributing factors of spousal abuse. However, they do not explain much about husband abuse.
2 Precision	Good	It has clearly defined concepts.
3 Parsimony	Fair	It suggests multiple factors, interaction among family members in explaining spousal abuse.
4 Internal consistency	Good	The theory is internally consistent.
5 Consideration of contextual factors	Poor	Though it regards family as an open system, it basically focuses on the internal processes within the family in causing family violence.
6 Testability	Fair	Some of the concepts can be tested empirically.
7 Empirical validity	Poor	Not much empirical data showed family process variables to family violence.
8 Heuristic value	Good	It stimulates research in examining family especially family-of-origins in contributing to family violence.
9 Applied value	Good	Systems theory is used in family therapy in treating family violence.

Table 3.8 Evaluation of socio-cultural perspectives of spousal abuse

Criteria	Comments	Justifications
1 Comprehensiveness	Fair	It explains spousal abuse in a relatively broad sense but it does not explain husband abuse and regards males as the dominant perpetrators.
2 Precision	Fair	Some of the concepts are difficult to be operationalized.
3 Parsimony	Fair	The theory suggests multiple socio-cultural factors contribute to spousal abuse.
4 Internal consistency	Good	The theory is internally consistent.
5 Consideration of contextual factors	Good	The theory takes socio-cultural background into account.
6 Testability	Fair	Some of the concepts can be empirically tested.
7 Empirical validity	Fair	It cannot generate precise and accurate predictions as counterevidence are found.
8 Heuristic value	Good	It stimulates a lot of research in examining the contribution of socio-cultural background in spousal abuse.
9 Applied value	Fair	It suggests new approach in preventing spousal abuse, such as providing relief to low socio-economic class, modify individuals' perceptions of acceptance of violence and gender roles.

Table 3.9 Evaluation of feminist perspectives of spousal abuse

Criteria	Comments	Justifications	
1	Comprehensiveness	Poor	It explains spousal abuse in a narrow sense and it only focuses on wife abuse based on the males' dominance over females advocated in patriarchal culture. It does not explain husband abuse.
2	Precision	Fair	Different branches of theories in explaining spousal abuse.
3	Parsimony	Fair	The theory suggests multiple factors.
4	Internal consistency	Fair	Contradictions are presented. It is because females can also be as violent as males.
5	Consideration of contextual factors	Fair	It basically focuses on patriarchy (a macro level of analysis) but neglects the psychological and social factors.
6	Testability	Fair	Concepts like sexual slavery and sexual terrorism are difficult to be operationalized.
7	Empirical validity	Fair	It cannot generate precise and accurate predictions as contradictions are presented.
8	Heuristic value	Fair	It stimulates research in understanding wife abuse by addressing the gender inequality in relating to wife abuse.
9	Applied value	Good	Feminist movements contribute to heighten gender sensitivity and awareness in women abuse, which support legislations of laws and increase assistance to female victims in wife abuse.

Table 3.10 Evaluation of cultural perspectives of spousal abuse

Criteria	Comments	Justifications	
1	Comprehensiveness	Poor	It explains spousal abuse in a narrow sense as it only focuses on wife abuse based on the cultural values which support wife abuse. It does not explain women's violence against husband and children.
2	Precision	Fair	Concepts need more clarifications, such as the meaning of violence culture.
3	Parsimony	Poor	The theory suggests multiple factors.
4	Internal consistency	Fair	Contradictions are presented. It cannot explain female use of violence.
5	Consideration of contextual factors	Good	It takes cultural context into consideration.
6	Testability	Fair	Concepts are seldom tested empirically.
7	Empirical validity	Poor	Little empirical support for the proposition that individuals are violent under violent culture.
8	Heuristic value	Good	It stimulates research in understanding spousal abuse by addressing the cultural background.
9	Applied value	Fair	It contributes less in combating spousal abuse as there is little empirical support for its proposition and suggestions for stopping spousal abuse.

Table 3.11 Evaluation of ecological perspectives of spousal abuse

Criteria	Comments	Justifications
1	Comprehensiveness	Good It explains spousal abuse in a broad sense, including wife abuse and husband abuse when accompany with proper domain specific theories.
2	Precision	Good Concepts on systems and components of systems are clearly defined.
3	Parsimony	Fair The theory reminds there are multiple causes of human behavior and social phenomena.
4	Internal consistency	Good It does not have any contradictions.
5	Consideration of contextual factors	Good It considers all the individual, socio-cultural and historical factors related to spousal abuse.
6	Testability	Good Most of the concepts can be empirically tested.
7	Empirical validity	Good It can generate accurate predictions with proper application of domain specific theories.
8	Heuristic value	Good It stimulates research in understanding different forms of abuse in family setting.
9	Applied value	Good It has great implication in practice and policy by addressing all the related factors in individual, social, and cultural context in contributing to spousal abuse, multiple-level intervention can be formulated. It also reminds to take notice and cater for the special needs of victims from different groups.

Table 3.12 Summary of the evaluation of the eleven theories of spousal abuse

Criteria	Biological	Freudian and Neo-Freudian	Personality and psychological disturbances	Behavioral and cognitive- behavioral	Cognitive developmental theories	Social-cognitive	Family	Socio-cultural	Feminist	Cultural	Ecological
Comprehensiveness	Poor	Poor	Poor	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Poor	Poor	Good
Precision	Fair	Poor	Fair	Good	Fair	Fair	Good	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good
Parsimony	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Poor	Fair
Internal consistency	Fair	Poor	Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Fair	Good
Consideration of contextual factors	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Fair	Fair	Poor	Good	Fair	Good	Good
Testability	Fair	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good
Empirical validity	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good	Fair	Fair	Poor	Fair	Fair	Poor	Good
Heuristic value	Fair	Fair	Fair	Good	Good	Good	Good	Good	Fair	Good	Good
Applied value	Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Good	Fair	Good	Fair	Good	Fair	Good

CHAPTER 4: LITERATURE REVIEW ON CONCEPTIONS AND BELIEFS

ABOUT SPOUSAL ABUSE

The main content of this chapter is a literature review on the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse and their related psychosocial factors. The conceptions of spousal abuse and their psychosocial correlates are first reviewed (Section 4.1), followed by beliefs about spousal abuse and their psychosocial correlates (Section 4.2). Sections 4.3 and 4.4 will discuss the socialization process in Chinese culture as well as their relationships with spousal abuse. Section 4.5 discusses the mission of social work and the importance of social workers to have adequate knowledge about spousal abuse. Highlights of previous research on social workers' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, as well as conceptual and methodological limitations of previous studies and advancements of the present study are also presented. Finally, Section 4.6 discusses the significance of this study.

4.1 Literature review on conceptions of spousal abuse

4.1.1 Findings on conceptions of spousal abuse

Previous studies predominantly adopted existing measurement scales, which are summarized in Section 2.2.2 of Chapter 2 in examining individuals' conceptions of spousal abuse. Based on those measurement scales, researchers investigated the frequency of abuse experienced by female victims (clinical sample) and female participants in the general public, while male participants were recently examined in Chan's study (2005). Some researchers (Choi & Edleson, 1996; Ehrensaft & Vivian, 1999; Tam & Tang, 2005; Yick, 2000) extracted abusive behavioral manifestations directly from these scales and asked respondents whether they would classify them as spousal abuse. However, researches that examined people's own conceptions of

spousal abuse are rare, most of them focused on people's beliefs about spousal abuse.

Choi and Edleson (1996) tested with Singaporean respondents on the actions that constitute wife assault. Eight physical abuse indicators from the Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS; Straus, 1979) were examined in the study. It was found that respondents considered overt forms of physical aggression, such as "uses a weapon against his wife" and "hits his wife with fists" rather than indirect forms of aggression such as "smashing objects" as wife abuse. This indicates that "physical aggression" is an important element in conceptualizing spousal abuse. Ehrensaft and Vivian (1999) showed that male college students were less likely to think control, coercion, and dominance as behavioral manifestations of psychological violence as compared with their female counterparts. Yick (2000) also found Chinese American males and females held similar conceptions of spousal abuse in terms of physical and sexual aggression but not in psychological abuse, which is always in covert and indirect forms.

Tam and Tang (2005) compared the conceptions of wife abuse between Chinese police officers and social workers based on the behavioral manifestations from the revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2; Straus & Hamby, 1996). The behavioral manifestations consisted of psychological abuse (e.g. insulting or swearing at wife), physical abuse (e.g. kicking, biting, or hitting wife with a fist), sexual abuse (e.g. insisting on sex despite wife's unwillingness), as well as neglect and isolation (e.g. refusing wife to visit relatives). The researchers reported two dimensions on the conceptions of wife abuse, which were "narrow" versus "broad" conceptions of abuse. This bi-dimension of conceptions of abuse is classified by respondents based on the degree of seriousness of the violent acts and the degree of visibility of hurts inflicted upon victims. "Narrow" conceptions only cover serious violent acts that cause visible hurts on the victims and/ or make threats to victims' lives. "Broad" conceptions cover

not only serious forms of physical violent acts but also minor physical violence to harmful sexual and psychological abuse.

It is believed that people with narrow conceptions of abuse tend to consider a narrow coverage of abusive behavior. These people only regard severe physical abuse, which usually leave victims tangible hurts or injury as abusive. They are insensitive to minor physical and psychological abuse, as they do not leave victims with tangible hurts. Research found that violent spouses have very narrow conceptions of violence and are less capable in recognizing violent behavior (Chamberland, Fortin, Thugeon, & Laporte, 2007). People with broad conceptions of abuse recognize that physical abuse includes a wide range of abusive behaviors, minor to severe physical abuse, sexual and psychological abuse, such as verbal abuse, neglect, and control. The discovering of these two dimensions is important and contributes to our understanding of spousal abuse. Our society should never tolerate any form of abuse in interpersonal relationships. Herzog suggested (2004) that certain behavior if not being regarded as abusive may be regarded as acceptable and be condoned. Therefore people with narrow conceptions of spousal abuse mean they are insensitive to minor and invisible forms of abuse, such as psychological abuse. When minor violent behaviors are not considered as spousal abuse, the permissiveness of these behaviors between spouses increases (Lewis et al., 2005), as outsiders do not think they are serious and warrant concern and intervention. Moreover, researchers believed that minor forms of abuse could be accumulated and escalated to severe forms of abuse. Narrow conceptions of spousal abuse may make it more difficult for victims, perpetrators, and witnesses to identify abuse as wrong and could prevent community members from intervening. Thus if social work undergraduates and other professionals have narrow conceptions of spousal abuse, they tend to neglect the victims suffering from psychological abuse, such as prolonged isolation, neglect, and incessant verbal assault.

People with broad conceptions of abuse mean they are more sensitive to abuse than those with narrow conceptions. This facilitates their detection to different forms of abuse ranged from physical, sexual to psychological; and different degrees of seriousness ranged from minor to severe. This also facilitates screening of abused victims. Moreover, they may be more open to social and legal efforts in stopping spousal abuse if they conceptualize it broadly (Carlson & Worden, 2005). Therefore, it is predicted that people with broad conceptions of spousal abuse tend to have higher initiative in supporting community education programs and reforms in laws on spousal abuse.

Apart from using behavioral manifestations from existing measurement scales of violence and abuse, researchers tried to explore conceptions of spousal abuse by using qualitative methods. Bent-Goodley (2004) conducted three focus groups discussions with 15 African American women. They were asked to response to an open-ended question “What are your perceptions about domestic violence?” Participants indicated that “beating” and “abuse” were two different concepts and should be differentiated. They perceived “abuse” as less serious like pushing, shoving, and slapping, and they would not report these as spousal abuse. However, “beating” was an escalated form of “abuse” and its seriousness could cause broken bones and admission into hospital. This shows that these African American women had narrow conceptions and denied pushing, shoving, and slapping as spousal abuse. Therefore, Bent-Goodley suggested that social workers should understand how some African American women would actually differentiate “beating” and “abuse” and they should be cautious when investigating the true experiences of these groups of victims.

Lewis, West, Bautista, Greenberg, and Done-Perez (2005) also conducted four focus groups discussions with 35 Latino community members in the United States and interviews with service providers. They found that spousal abuse was conceptualized

in terms of different forms, including physical, emotional, financial, and sexual abuse. They also found a new conception of spousal abuse, which was named as “unequal burden” from members of Latino community. This meant when “men expect that women should shoulder a disproportionate amount of responsibility for the home and family” (p. 75) was a form of abuse. Moreover, Latino community members tended to have less comprehensive conceptions of abuse than service providers. However, service providers including those from local justice, education, social services, and health care agencies tended to have more comprehensive conceptions of abuse as they simultaneously named financial and sexual abuse as spousal abuse. The dimensions of less versus more comprehensive on conceptions of abuse are similar to those of broad versus narrow conceptions in Tam and Tang’s study (2005).

There is a recent public opinion survey on spousal abuse conducted in the United States by Carlson and Worden (2005). They found an almost unanimous agreement that “punching”, “forcing a partner to have sex”, and “slapping” constitute spousal abuse. However, this study did not examine sexual and psychological abuse.

To conclude, the conceptions of spousal abuse basically cover physical, sexual, and psychological dimensions. However, through quantitative research, it was found that participants tended to conceptualize spousal abuse primarily with reference to overt and direct forms of physical abuse while less mention to covert and indirect forms of psychological abuse. Moreover, it was found that conceptions of spousal abuse could follow the dimensions of narrow versus broad coverage of behavioral manifestations. This dimension is important to our understanding on conceptions of spousal abuse among different groups of participants.

Qualitative research methods are newly adopted in research on conceptions of spousal abuse. As opposed to quantitative research methods which capture the general picture of an issue and examine “who” and “how”, qualitative research methods go

into the details and examine “what” and “why”. Different conceptions on “beating” and “abuse” among African American women were found in Bent-Goodley’s (2004) study. New conceptions were found in others, such as Lewis et al.’s study (2005). To gain a more complete picture on the conceptions of spousal abuse, both research methods will be incorporated into this thesis as the two methods examine different parts of the issue. Since the conceptions of spousal abuse can never be solely constructed by the present researcher, a qualitative research method (focus groups) is used to examine the conceptions of spousal abuse in Phase I Study. A quantitative research method (questionnaire survey) is used to examine the patterns of endorsement on conceptions of spousal abuse among a representative group of participants in Phase II Study. Details on research methodology are presented in Chapter 6.

4.1.2 Summary on existing findings on conceptions of spousal abuse

Studies on conceptions of spousal abuse under reviewed are primarily focused on wife abuse. This prime focus on wife abuse in previous research may be related to the efforts that feminists made to heighten public awareness of violence against women, which led to extensive coverage of media on this topic and increased legal protection of women from abusive men. In responding to the conceptions of spousal abuse, people tend to consider the seriousness and visibility of hurt caused by violence and abuse. Moreover, researchers reported a bi-dimension of conceptions of spousal abuse in broad versus narrow, or less versus more comprehensive.

4.1.3 Psychosocial correlates of conceptions of spousal abuse

An ecological framework is adopted in this study to examine the psychosocial

correlates of conceptions of spousal abuse, which was briefly introduced in Chapter 3. The psychosocial correlates that found to be related to the conceptions of spousal abuse are classified according to three levels (individual, interpersonal, and cultural) in the proposed ecological framework.

4.1.3.1 Psychosocial correlates at the individual level: Demographic characteristics

Demographic characteristics (age, education, gender, and occupation) were found to be related to respondents' conceptions of spousal abuse.

In Carlson and Worden's study (2005), age was found to be correlated with respondents' conceptions of spousal abuse. It was found that older respondents were less likely to consider husband slapping his wife as wife abuse. They were also less likely to believe wife abuse is unlawful. Similarly, in Tam and Tang's study (2005), older police officers were more likely to have narrower conceptions of wife abuse as compared with their younger counterparts. This showed that respondents' age was related to the conceptions of spousal abuse. Older people tend to have narrower conceptions of spousal abuse as opposed to the younger generation. Other than respondents' age, their educational level was also related to the conceptions of spousal abuse. In Tam and Tang's study (2005), it was found that respondents with lower educational achievement were having narrower conceptions of wife abuse.

Moreover, gender is another correlate of conceptions of spousal abuse. Yick and Agbayani (2001) found that females compared with male respondents conceptualized wife abuse more broadly, and have a higher tendency to include nonphysical abuse. Also, Miller and Bukva (2001) showed that female respondents rated physical aggression as more serious when compared with male respondents. However, as these studies predominantly focused on wife abuse, the effect of gender in conceptualizing

husband abuse and how the conceptions differ from wife abuse were not known.

Another factor related to the conceptualization of spousal abuse, was participants' occupational backgrounds. Police officers as compared with social workers were found to have narrower conceptions of wife abuse in Tam and Tang's study (2005). Although there were predominantly more male police officers and more female social workers in the sample, the effect of respondents' gender was found to be unrelated to their conceptions of spousal abuse. This showed that occupational background was related to professionals' conceptions of spousal abuse.

4.1.3.2 Psychosocial correlates at the individual level: Attitudes toward gender

Another noticeable factor that influenced respondents' conceptions is their attitudes toward gender. In Yick's study (2000), Chinese American who had more egalitarian attitudes toward gender were more likely to conceptualize physical, sexual, and psychological abuse as spousal abuse when compared with their traditional counterparts. In Tam and Tang's study (2005), social workers who had egalitarian attitudes toward gender tended to have broader conceptions of physical abuse. However, police officers with traditional attitudes toward gender tended to have narrower conceptions of psychological abuse.

4.1.3.3 Psychosocial correlates at the interpersonal level: Social norms in regarding males as legitimate perpetrators and females as legitimate victims in spousal abuse

Perpetrators' gender was found to be related to respondents' conceptions of spousal abuse. In Carlson and Worden's study (2005), respondents were more inclined to label men's physical violence, including punching, slapping, forcing a partner to

have sex as spousal abuse, and perceived them as unlawful when compared with women's physical violence. In other words, respondents tended to label behavior as spousal abuse and perceive them as unlawful in wife abuse rather than husband abuse. This may be related to participants' identification with social norms that regard women as legitimate victims and men as legitimate perpetrators in spousal abuse through their socialization process. As mentioned in Chapter 2, individuals construct their conceptions based on their individual beliefs system, social and cultural background. Socialization process is the environmental context that influences the conceptions of spousal abuse. Therefore, the identification with social norms could be regarded as part of the interpersonal level within the ecological framework. However, there are no existing studies examined the influences of socialization on conceptions of spousal abuse

To sum up, respondents' conceptions of spousal abuse were correlated with individual demographic characteristics, including age, education, gender, occupation, and attitudes toward gender. Furthermore, identification with social norms on perpetrators' and victims' gender was another psychosocial factor correlated with respondents' conceptions of spousal abuse. Socialization of gender scripting and gender stereotyping, which suggest masculine and dominant men over feminine and submissive women indirectly support the social norm in legitimating men as perpetrators while women as victims in spousal abuse. Thus the influences of socialization on gender stereotyping can be developed as a potential psychosocial correlate that contributes to the conceptions of spousal abuse. Details of the socialization process and its relationships to the conceptions of spousal abuse are discussed in Section 4.3.

4.1.4 Summary on knowledge gaps and unanswered questions in the conceptions of spousal abuse

First, no comprehensive understanding on the conceptions of spousal abuse was found as the conceptions of husband abuse were unclear. Carlson and Worden (2005) revealed that people had higher uncertainty in determining women's use of violence against their male partners. This showed that people's conceptions of husband abuse were unclear when compared with their conceptions of wife abuse. Second, the differences and similarities of conceptions between wife abuse and husband abuse are not known.

Third, the degree of overlapping on the conceptions of spousal abuse among legal, academic experts, and lay perspectives was not examined. As discussed in Section 2.2.3 of Chapter 2, the scope of legal conceptions of spousal abuse is commented as non-extensive, while those of academic experts' are relatively broadly defined. However, we lack the information on the conceptions of spousal abuse from the lay perspective. The lay perspective represents the laymen's understanding toward spousal abuse, this information shows the degree of acceptance of violence within intimate relationships among laymen and helps in formulating and evaluating existing community educational programs on spousal abuse.

Fourth, based on the summary on psychosocial correlates of spousal abuse, individual factors, such as demographic characteristics and attitudes toward gender were examined in previous studies. However, only a few of similar studies were conducted among Chinese samples. Furthermore, we do not have much information on the ecological factors related to people's conceptions of spousal abuse. Only one psychosocial correlate (the social norms regarding males as legitimate perpetrators and females as legitimate victims) can be roughly classified as a factor at the

interpersonal level within the ecological framework.

Moreover, we do not know about the psychosocial correlates at the cultural level in relation to the conceptions of spousal abuse. Thus the influences of significant others, such as parents through the socialization process, and the effect of identification with Chinese traditional and modern culture on conceptions of spousal abuse are worth examining. Details on influences of socialization process and Chinese culture are discussed in Section 4.3 and 4.4.

4.2 Literature review on beliefs about spousal abuse

According to Reber (1985), beliefs are “acceptance of some cognitive propositions, statements, or doctrine” (p.88). These acceptances are without immediate personal knowledge or absolute certainty. Thus individuals can have a huge number of beliefs, which can be true or false, logical or illogical, desirable or undesirable (Rokeach, 1973). Beliefs are organized into systems with describable and measurable structures that have observable behavioral outcomes (Rokeach, 1969).

Previous studies examined people’s beliefs about spousal abuse in a scattered way. Based on the review on these studies, five biased beliefs can be extracted from the literature. Similar to the conceptions of spousal abuse, previous studies primarily focused on wife abuse, the first four beliefs are predominately about wife abuse.

4.2.1 Beliefs about spousal abuse

1. Privacy belief: “Wife abuse is a private family matter and outside intervention is not suitable.”

This belief reflects that people tend to think wife abuse as a family dispute. It is a private matter (Gilmartin, 1990; Meng, 1999) which outside intervention is not suitable (Pierce & Harris, 1993). Home (1994) discovered that certain numbers of

police officers regarded wife abuse as merely a “domestic dispute” not requiring their intervention.

This belief may be related to the prevalent notion that the family is a private institution (Fagan, 1993), and all issues within it are private. Furthermore, people basically endorse the idea of keeping family unity and it is inappropriate to interfere with others’ family problems. Thus intervention from bystanders, judicial system, and police is not suitable. Bethke and DeJoy (1993) revealed that participants were more likely to recommend counseling than termination for partners in a marital relationship. In Chinese culture, Shek (1998) found that 80 percent of the participants in his study believed family problems were “personal” matters and seeking outside help was shameful, and would therefore not do so. This made family problems become more private. However, these research findings are over ten years ago. Nowadays, spousal abuse is serious, it is not sure whether individuals still regard spousal abuse as a private family matter.

2. No big deal belief: “Wife abuse is not a crime.” Or “Wife abuse is not a big deal”

Hindelang (1976) suggested that victims often did not consider certain violent incidents among family members as a crime. Stark and McEvoy (1970) found that 25 percent of males and 20 percent of females in their sample approved of husbands slapping their wives. Straus (1978) stated that violence was permitted in families more than in other groups, and that the “marriage license is a hitting license.” It is because husband slapping his wife is just normal and permitted, it is not a serious problem but just a trivial matter, which is not liable to legal prosecution. Saunders and Size (1986) showed that some police officers agreed that dealing with couple fights were “not dealing with crime.” Tang (2003) also revealed that some police officers might view husband scolding his wife as a non-serious matter. Miller and Bukva (2001) found

that male students thought violence in intimate relationship was less serious when compared with their female counterparts. Yick (2000) revealed that Chinese Americans felt 'wife abuse is a crime', but consistent with the privacy belief, they also perceived that 'family matters are private'. Therefore, non-intervention is the strategy people adopted when knowing about spousal abuse.

3. Misbehavior belief: "If the wife does not behave well, she should be punished."

It is found that husband being physically violent against his wife is accepted under certain circumstances. Greenbelt (1983) found that self-defense, retaliation, and the spouse's known or suspected sexual infidelity were circumstances that use of physical force was appropriate even though participants basically perceived hitting one's spouse was inappropriate. Greenbelt (1985) also showed that if the wife threatened husband with a knife, physically abused their child, or was caught in bed with another man, husband beating his wife was seen as less wrong than under other conditions. Saunders and Size (1986) revealed that police officers tended to show more approval to violence as a reaction to marital infidelity as compared with victims and shelter counselor-advocates. Half of the respondents from Yick and Agbayani's study (1997) also reported that violence against wife is justified in certain situations, such as learning of wife's extramarital affairs. Choi and Edleson (1996) showed that it was justifiable for the husband to use force when his wife violated her roles as a "good mother" and/or as a "loyal wife." Police and family crisis centers' reports also reflected that some wives were beaten because they were too bossy, too provocative, too late coming home, or too sloppy (Pierce & Harris, 1993).

These beliefs are consistent with Chinese traditional culture, in particular the family discipline (*Jia Fa*, 家法), which is discussed in Section 4.5. Under Chinese

culture, women as wives are never allowed and accepted to cause “face loses” to their husbands. Women being too bossy and too provocative are regarded as being disrespectful to their husbands. Women who are sexually disloyal to their husbands are actually committing a fatal fault especially in relation to Chinese traditional culture. In ancient Chinese society, woman who committed sexual infidelity would be divorced by her husband according to the seven valid reasons for divorce (*qi chu ji tiao*, 七出之條). She would experience social stigma as an immoral woman (*yin fu*, 淫婦) and would be killed by being packed in a pig cage and sunk into the river (*jin zhu long*, 浸豬籠). Sexual infidelity destroys a woman loyalty and chastity, as well as causing “face loses” to her husband. This is why an immoral woman can end up in being killed in ancient Chinese society. In general, woman who being deviant and fail to accomplish expected female roles is subject to punishment and this is viewed as legitimate and normal in Chinese traditional practices.

4. Provocation belief: “Wives are deserved to be beaten if they have provoked the husbands”

Researchers found if perpetrators were being provoked, they were evaluated as having more right to use force, and the entire incident was perceived as less serious. In the study conducted by Harris and Cook (1994), batterers were considered as less responsible when they were provoked. However, women victims were considered more responsible when they provoked the batterers than those who did not. This was consistent with Kristiansen and Ginlietti’s (1990) findings that women who provoked the batterer were perceived as less sympathetic than those who did not.

5. *Reasonable justification belief: "It is reasonable for partner to use violence against his/her partner when he/she is under stress."*

Research showed that it was reasonable to use violence against one's partner if he or she was under stress, especially when the perpetrators were female. Feather (1996) found that the violence committed by the wife was rated as less serious and deserved fewer penalties when she was under stress than when she acted after deliberation. However, participants just rated similarly in the seriousness and penalty to husband who committed the violent incident either under stress or deliberation.

4.2.2 Psychosocial correlates of beliefs about spousal abuse

The psychosocial correlates of beliefs about spousal abuse can roughly be categorized into individual, interpersonal, and cultural factors in the proposed ecological framework.

4.2.2.1 Psychosocial correlates at the individual level: Gender of the respondents

Respondents' gender was a psychosocial factor at the individual level that related to the beliefs about spousal abuse. Cook and Harris (1995) found that male as compared with female respondents were more likely to approve husbands having more right to use force no matter who (husband or wife) had initiated the violence. Moreover, male participants tended to view the presented spousal abuse incidents as more humorous than female participants. In general, male participants tended not to regard spousal abuse as a serious matter. Bryant and Spencer (2003) found that male students were more likely to attribute blame to the victims for wife abuse than female students. Similar findings also revealed in previous studies that male students were more likely to make harsher judgments on victims in wife abuse than female students.

Seelau, Seelau, and Poorman (2003) showed that female participants were more likely than male participants to believe both female and male victims. They also tended to show more empathy to victims. Sugarman and Cohn (1986) found that female participants assigned more responsibility to male perpetrators than male participants. These findings all reveal that female respondents tend to be sympathetic to female victims while male respondents tend to take side to male perpetrators. Feather (1996) suggested that this might be related to in-group or same gender favoritism. As females were always the victims in most of the spousal abuse incidents, thus female participants tended to identify with the victim roles and be empathic to female victims.

4.2.2.2 Psychosocial correlate at the individual level: Attitudes toward gender

Individuals' attitudes toward gender are the second psychosocial correlate at the individual level relates to people's beliefs about spousal abuse. Greenbelt (1985) found that respondents who identified with traditional sex-roles orientation showed higher degree of approval and greater tolerance to husbands' physical force than those with egalitarian orientations. Crossman, Stith, and Bender (1990) revealed that higher identification with egalitarian attitudes toward gender was related to lower approval of severe marital violence. Willis, Halinan, and Melby (1996) also found that people with traditional orientations to gender tended to show favorable bias toward man, such as providing a shorter sentence to male batterers and regard the spousal abuse incident as less abusive.

4.2.2.3 Psychosocial correlates at the interpersonal level: Social norm proposing the strategy of not to intervene in spousal abuse cases

There is a common strategy of not intervening in spousal abuse cases. It is because these contexts are highly intimate and private; individuals tend not to intervene in such private family matter (Pierce & Harris, 1990). Shotland and Straw (1976) found that bystanders were more likely to intervene in a fight between strangers than in the one between married partners. Moreover, spousal abuse is perceived as a private affair between intimate couples, which is not a crime. It is found that the seriousness of spousal abuse is often minimized when people find the offender is known or married to the victim (Fernstermaker, 1989; Rossi, Waite, Bose, & Baerk, 1974), and they tended to be more accepting and less critical toward spousal abuse (Dent & Arias, 1990). Fyfe, Klinger, and Flavin (1997) showed that some police officers tended to be more lenient to wife abusers than other violent offenders when the victims and the abusers were in close intimate relationship. These findings support the “privacy belief” and the “no big deal belief” presented in Section 4.2.1.

4.2.2.4 Psychosocial correlates at the interpersonal level: Social norms regarding females as legitimate victims and males as legitimate perpetrators in spousal abuse

Social norm in regarding females as legitimate victims and males as legitimate perpetrators is the psychosocial correlate related to both the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Seelau, Seelau, and Poorman (2003) showed that college students viewed spousal abuse incidents as more serious when the victims were women. As mentioned in the reasonable justification belief, Feather (1996) showed that violence committed by wife was rated as less serious and deserved fewer penalties. Feather proposed that participants might think the violent act committed by

women under deliberation 'was a rational strategy to defend themselves against their husbands' continuing abuse, while the deliberate violent acts of husbands were cold-blooded attacks. These perceptions are related to the endorsement of gender stereotypes that people usually think men are dominant and violent while women are submissive and weak. They also perceive that only husbands are the perpetrators and only women are the victims in spousal abuse cases.

4.2.2.5 Psychosocial correlates at the cultural level: Identification with cultural values

People who highly identify with Chinese traditional culture are less likely to regard spousal abuse as a problem that requires concern. Yick (2000) found that Chinese American who adhered to traditional Chinese culture, such as keeping family unity and reputation, were less likely to consider intervention in spousal abuse cases. This finding directly supports the "privacy belief" and the "no big deal belief", as well as indirectly supports the "misbehavior belief" about spousal abuse summarized in Section 4.2.1. Further discussion on relations between Chinese culture and beliefs about spousal abuse is presented in Section 4.4.1.

4.2.3 Summary on existing findings on beliefs about spousal abuse

Previous studies showed that people tended to regard spousal abuse as a private family matter where it is unsuitable for outsiders to intervene. Some also felt that spousal abuse was not a crime and husbands have the right to punish his wife if she failed to perform the expected role norms as "a loyal wife" and/or "a good mother". It was also believed that victims deserved to be beaten if they provoked the perpetrators. Moreover, it was reasonable for partner to use violence against his or her partner if he or she was under stress or deliberation. It is concluded that the mentioned beliefs are all biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

According to previous findings, attitudes toward gender, victims' and perpetrators' gender are related to the beliefs about spousal abuse. Apart from these psychosocial correlates, socialization of gender stereotyping and endorsement of cultural values (Chinese culture) are considered as related psychosocial correlates of beliefs about spousal abuse.

4.2.4 Summary on knowledge gaps and unanswered questions of beliefs about spousal abuse

First, the beliefs about husband abuse and differences in beliefs between husband abuse and wife abuse are unknown. Second, based on previous studies, beliefs about spousal abuse are related to factors at the individual level (participants' gender and their attitudes toward gender). Some psychosocial correlates could be roughly classified as factors at interpersonal and cultural levels of the proposed ecological model in the present study. The contextual factors (socialization and culture) are important to the formation of beliefs about spousal abuse. Thus, examining these contextual factors is worthwhile and necessary.

4.3 Socialization process related to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

As discussed in Chapter 3, Section 3.3.5 and 3.5, socialization and socio-cultural values on gender stereotyping and violent culture are related to spousal abuse. The researcher of this study suggests that influences of socialization on gender stereotyping and violent culture are related to individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Individuals' parents are regarded as their major socialization agents. The influences of socialization are regarded as psychosocial correlates at interpersonal level of the ecological framework in predicting individuals' conceptions

and beliefs about spousal abuse.

It was found that socialization of gender script and gender stereotyping had developmental influences on wife abuse, in which major socialization agents reiterated and supported the main theme that men were expected to be superior in various relationships and might use physical aggression to maintain their power (Barns, Cascade, & Meyer, 1994). Thus, through the socialization of gender stereotyping, individuals learn gender stereotypes that men are dominant over women and can use any means such as aggression to wield power and control over women. These gender stereotypes directly support the social norms that men are the legitimate perpetrators and women are the legitimate victims in spousal abuse. These social norms are found to be correlated with narrow conceptions and biased beliefs about wife abuse as mentioned in Section 4.1.3.3 and 4.2.2.4. Moreover, these gender stereotypes reiterate men wield power and control over women, especially within domestic context as normal and acceptable. This indirectly supports the social norm that non-intervention into spousal abuse is appropriate, thus leading the “privacy belief” toward spousal abuse as mentioned in Section 4.2.1.

It is important to examine socialization of gender stereotyping. It is because in order to eliminate spousal abuse, we should advocate gender awareness, gender equality, and mutual respect between genders (Women’s Commission, 2006). However, gender stereotyping actually goes against these advocacies. Thus we have to examine how individuals are socialized to the endorsement of gender stereotyping and formulate strategies to change these thoughts. By doing this, we can change the rooted values toward gender, in which these values indirectly support spousal abuse.

In addition to socialization of gender stereotyping, attitudes on violence approval from individuals’ parents are also important to individuals’ conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Parents may endorse violent culture from their socio-cultural

background and they may pass their beliefs about violence to their children. Moreover, individuals may imitate and legitimize violence within intimate relationship through a social learning process by witnessing parental abuse and/or experiencing child abuse. It is proposed in this study that the influences of socialization from parents on violence approval are related to social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

However, this study will not examine individuals' direct experiences of abuse during childhood, as the retrospective reports on childhood experience may involve biased and reconstructed memory. Kalmuss (1984) stated that parental aggression and child abuse are socially disapproved behavior. Individuals may feel shameful to report their experiences of being abused or having witnessed parental violence, which may also cause them to reconstruct their experiences. In order to avoid getting reconstructed and biased data through this retrospective method, this study examines respondents' perceptions on their parents' gender stereotyping and violence approval, as well as their identification with parents' attitudes. It is hypothesized that if they are highly socialized to endorse gender stereotypes, such as male supremacy over female, they would have narrower conceptions and biased beliefs about spousal abuse. Moreover, if they are highly socialized to accept violence as a way to solve problems within interpersonal relationships, they would have narrower conceptions and biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

4.4 Chinese culture in relation to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

4.4.1 Conceptions of spousal abuse under Chinese culture

In Chinese culture, wife abuse is condoned. It is because the status of men and women are unequal under Confucianism (Yuen, 2000; Zhang, 2002). Inside a family,

elder men are superior over young men, followed by women and children. This is the traditional Chinese value that “orderliness or respect for seniority” (*change you up*, 長幼有序). Thus the status of women is always inferior to men. Women should absolutely respect and follow husbands’ lead. They are subordinates to their husbands and can never be the head of the family (Shek & Lai, 2000). Women are viewed as property of men, and do not have legal rights at home nor in their highly patriarchal and hierarchical Chinese society (Yu, 2005).

In addition, Confucian teaching on gender roles expectations also keeps women in a submissive status. Women are subject to “three obedience and four virtues” (三從四德) (Chan, 2000; Tang, 1994; Xu, 1997). According to the Chinese classic literature on filial piety “*xiao jing*” (孝經), three obedience mean woman should follow the lead of her father before marriage, follow her husband after marriage, and follow her son after the death of her husband; and the four virtues mean women should be 1) loyal and respectful to their husband, 2) careful in speech, 3) in proper demeanor, and 4) good in needlework. Furthermore, women are confined to the seven valid reasons for divorce (*qi chu ji tiao*, 七出之條). These seven valid reasons are ordered as 1) barrenness, 2) adultery, 3) disrespect to parents-in-law, 4) wicked tongue, 5) theft (means keeping family money secretly), 6) jealousy, and 7) heinous disease (Quo, 2002). These rules and expectations really dictate women’s low status throughout their lives.

Woman as a wife should be a good keeper in handling all internal affairs within the family, a good wife in Chinese culture is addressed as “one’s excellent wife” (*xian nei zhu*, 賢內助). The image of woman as a good and refined woman (*xian fu*, 賢婦) is also portrayed and reinforced in traditional Chinese folk tales, such as “*Liao shay zhi yes*” (聊齋誌異). A good and refined woman should have the following virtues, 1) respect to elder generation, 2) loyal and obey husband’s order, 3) maintain a

harmonious relationship with husband, 4) love and take great care of children.

Moreover, she should be talented and able in maintaining her family's internal affairs (Lau, 2005). An excellent wife is very important to one's family. Sun (2002) proposed that,

"An understanding wife and loving mother is good and blessed to her husband and sons; a ferocious wife leads to failure and calamity to husband. (賢婦令夫貴，惡婦令夫敗。)" (p. 192)

If a woman fails to perform the above roles expectations, they are punished by family discipline called "jia fa" (家法) in Chinese, and violence can be one of the means to exercise discipline. It is stated in the family discipline that men have the legitimacy to handle external affairs while women take the responsibility to the internal affairs of the family (*nan zhu wai, nu zhu nei*, 男主外，女主內) (Xu, 1996). In Ngan's family discipline, women are expected to handle domestic chores, take care of elders, husband, and children, but they are not allowed to be involved in the decision making of the family and political affairs (Ku & Pui, 1994, as cited in Shek & Lai, 2000).

"The main role of women is to manage the household. They are only to be responsible for the household chores. They are not allowed to make decisions in the family and not to intervene in national politics. (婦主中饋，惟事酒食衣服之禮耳，國不可使預政，家不可使公幹)" (Yan Shi Jia Xun, 顏氏家訓, Cheng, 1998, p.192)

In Yuen's family discipline, women are regarded as troublemakers through gossiping around. Thus it is stated as a family rule that never listen to women sayings as their comments are naïve and unfair (Xu, 1996, p. 53).

"Women are no need to intervene in external affairs. (婦人不必預外事):

Women's words are unfair. (婦女之言寡恩義)" (Yuan Shi Shi Fan, p.18)

Family discipline keeps women refined in certain expected roles with refined demeanor. If they fail to perform those expected roles well or they behave against those expectations, they are subject to family discipline which ranges from scolding and beating by mother-in-law and husband, as well as the seven valid reasons for divorce. Even though harmony is stressed under Chinese culture, violence is condoned within a family in order to keep its order. There are popular sayings suggesting that women should be treated badly and beating is allowed when they misbehave. These popular sayings include, "don't feed women well and full (唔好俾飽飯女人食)" and "when women failed to obey men, they needed to be beaten (女人唔聽話要打)". Therefore beating wife is viewed as reasonably normal and acceptable in the domestic context under Chinese culture. Thus the conceptions of wife abuse in Chinese culture may be quite narrow, which only includes severe physical aggression and injury.

Men dominate over women in all domains under Chinese culture. The dominating power of men over women is clearly stated in Family Discipline (Jai Fan, Sima Guang, 家範, 司馬光, 1999).

"Husband is the heaven, the sun and Yang; wife is the earth, the moon and Yin. Heaven is honorable and heads over the earth, the earth is obsequious to the heaven. (夫天也, 妻地也; 夫日也, 妻月也; 夫陽也, 妻陰也; 天尊而處上, 地卑而處下。)" (p.262)

Thus it is believed that men can never be abused by their female partners, as they are always superior and physically stronger. Men are assigned to be the providers and protectors of the family, thus they have to be physically strong. They are leaders and breadwinners of the family, they have absolute and supreme power to manage the

whole family (Shek & Lai, 2000). As they are the head of family, they have the right to use any means, including violence to keep the family in order. If any member of the family challenges their status as the head of the family, they are subjected to family discipline. Only weak men fail to manage their family well and without order. They are belittled and labeled as “coward” (nuo fu, 懦夫), who are useless and gutless to be real men. Therefore, the terms “husband abuse” and “abused husband” may never exist in Chinese tradition and the conceptions of husband abuse may be unclear.

4.4.2 Relationships between Chinese traditional culture and beliefs about spousal abuse

Chinese traditional culture supports the ideas that spousal abuse is a private family matter and outside intervention is inappropriate. There are many popular sayings illustrate this point, such as: “Each family has its own difficulties” (家家有本難唸的經), “It is not easy to judge family matters” (清官難審家庭事); “A family never knows about other families” (一家唔知一家事), and “It is better to teach couples to beat their children than teaching them to divorce” (寧教人打仔, 莫教人分妻). Moreover, Chinese people have a high tendency of not judging spousal abuse and thinking it is just a trivial matter, as they believe that “Fights between couple can be easily settled” (床頭打架床尾和). Moreover, Chinese are socialized to avoid disclosing personal problems or private concerns to outsiders, such as social service agencies and other public institutions (Ryan, 1985).

Hong and Hong (1991) proposed that resistance to external interventions into individual family in Chinese society may be related to their belief in familism, which suggests that family is more important than individual. It is vital to maintain family success, unity, continuity, and reputation even if at the expense of individual welfare. Nguyen (2005) also stated that “family’s name and reputation are of utmost importance to the majority of Asian. Honor and glory for the family are highly prized,

while shameful issues are hidden” (p.1). Chinese people believe that “shameful issues of the family should never be disclosed” (家醜不出外傳). Some of the female victims in Hong Kong have endured prolonged periods of abuse for over nine years just because of these traditional beliefs (Harmony House Annual Report, 2003-2004). However, with the transformation from traditional to modern society and the widespread of spousal abuse in Hong Kong nowadays, it is an unknown whether people still regard spousal abuse as a private family matter.

Though gender equality is promoted and traditional thoughts on gender are weakening, Chinese culture still places patriarchal expectations on women. As mentioned above, women are required to be good and refined and to perform well in their expected roles confined by the domestic domain. If they violate these expectations, they are subject to punishment, which is being beaten by their husbands. However, it is not sure whether these expectations also apply to men. It is another unknown that whether people condone husband abuse when men fail to accomplish their expected gender roles.

4.4.3 Traditional values meet with modern values

The above discussion is mainly based on Chinese traditional values, it is not clear whether these values can be applied to Hong Kong situations as she was a former British colony (1842-1997) influenced by Western culture. Moreover, traditional Chinese culture is changing as China is under a period of social transformation in which traditional and modern ideas are confronting with each other and mixing together (Zhang, Zheng, & Wang, 2003). The current trend shows that women are expanding their roles and attending an elevated status (Lau, 2005). Women nowadays tend not to perform roles required in Chinese traditional culture.

Quo (2002) analyzed that modern marriage laws had been modernized according

to the changes in the function of marriage. In the old days, the main function of marriage was to procreate next generations, thus a wife with no son could be divorced by her husband according to the seven valid reasons for divorce. Nevertheless, the main function of marriage is for maintaining intimate relationship between couples nowadays. Thus couple, either husband or wife can ask for divorce if their intimate relationship is destroyed. Such changes in marriage laws reflect China is approaching modernization and gender equality gradually.

Modern values emphasize egalitarian ideas, individual development and actualization, open-mindedness, as well as gender equality (Yang, 1989). Modern values place less stress on "roles" as compared with traditional values (Farh, Leong, Law, 1998). Chia, Chong, and Cheng (1986) found that Taiwanese women held more modern values and more egalitarian marriage role attitudes. Zhang, Zheng, and Wang (2003) found that adolescents from town, who were also more educated, were more modern as compared with adolescents in rural China. Moreover, males were more traditional than females. This showed that modernity was correlated with individuals' gender and education level.

Though it seems that modernity and traditionality are two bipolar positions of the continuum of a value system, they are two different and independent constructs. Yang (1988) suggested a "revised convergence hypothesis" that traditional culture follows an evolutionary transformation under modernization. That means, traditional cultures that are adaptive to the modernized society will persist while those not adaptive will distinguish. Yang (1994) further proposed that modernity can never replace traditionality. Furthermore, Tu (2000) suggested "multiple modernities", where modernization occurs differently around the world and results with local indigenous modern culture. By regarding traditionality and modernity as two independent constructs, Pek and Leong (2003) found that Chinese traditionality was correlated

with sexist attitudes toward women, but Chinese modernity was unrelated to sexism.

However, modernization process and improvement in gender equality do not mean that women and men are really on equal footing in Chinese society. Among a few studies on attitudes toward women conducted in China, Chia, Allred, and Jerzak (1997) analyzed findings from the Chinese All Women's Federation on 23,000 Chinese' attitudes toward women. It was reported that women in China in 1990 still held lower status, had fewer job opportunities and job advancement as compared with men. Only half of the participants thought husband and wife should have equal opportunity in making decisions within the family. The status of men was superior over women at home, at work, and in social realms, though their status was roughly the same among political, economic, and legal realms. Women in China in 1990 were more traditionally oriented than men. In a recent study on comparing traditionality and modernity among college students in Beijing and Hong Kong, Xu and Cao (2000) revealed that female college students in Hong Kong were more traditionally oriented as compared with their Beijing counterparts. Female college students in Beijing were more open-minded to new ideas and values. This showed that traditional values still exist in women's minds even though Hong Kong is regarded as a westernized and modernized society.

Shek (2006b) summarized that the opening policy adopted in China had brought significant influences in Chinese families. The influx of Western family values gradually replaced Chinese traditional values. Traditional gender roles are also gradually replaced by egalitarian gender roles. Although the development of gender equality in Chinese society is consistent with its modernization development, traditional values on gender still remain. The beliefs in modern and traditional values must give rise to conflicting attitudes toward gender. Thus it is believed that the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse should have some connections with both

traditional and modern Chinese values.

4.4.3.1 Implications of Chinese cultural values on the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

As mentioned in Section 4.2.2.5 and 4.4.1, the degree of identification with Chinese culture can be regarded as the psychosocial correlate that contributes to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. The potential research question can be derived by regarding Chinese traditions and Chinese modernity as the psychosocial correlates of the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. It is hypothesized that participants who identify with traditional Chinese values tend to support gender inequality and thus have narrow conceptions of wife abuse. It is because traditional values suggest male supremacy over female, thus it is legitimate for men to use violence against women and leads to narrow conceptions of wife abuse. However, their conceptions to husband abuse are undetermined. On one hand, they may have broad conceptions of husband abuse as they believe that women are subordinate to men who are not allowed to be disrespectful to men, thus women being violent against men is never allowed leading to broad conceptions of husband abuse. On the other, they may have narrow conceptions of husband abuse as they believe that men should be physically strong and superior over women who can withstand any forms of violence and abuse. They tend to regard minor forms of abuse as trivial, leading to narrow conceptions of husband abuse.

Moreover, individuals who identify with Chinese traditional values tend to endorse biased beliefs about spousal abuse. However, participants who identify with modern Chinese cultural values tend to support gender egalitarianism and thus having broad conceptions of spousal abuse and tend not to endorse biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

4.5 Social work and spousal abuse

Spousal abuse is a growing social problem worldwide, social work professionals are one of the service professionals confronting this social issue. This section discusses the mission of social work and the importance of social workers to have adequate knowledge about spousal abuse. The last sub-section reviews research on social workers' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

4.5.1 Mission of social work

According to the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), the definition of social work is,

“(a) profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilizing theories of human behavior and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work. (www.ifsw.org)”

The main mission of social work is to sufficiently address and resolve social problems especially those among the poor and the sick. Social workers show concern to the causes, solutions, and the impacts of social problems. They not only work with individuals, but also families, groups, organizations and communities. Spousal abuse is a growing social issue, social workers certainly need to take responses and actions to tackle it.

4.5.2 Social work profession and spousal abuse

Spousal abuse is a growing social issue, it is vital to examine whether social workers can sufficiently address it. Possessing broad conceptions and non-biased

beliefs about spousal abuse are two important components that social workers should have in addressing spousal abuse. The first important step to tackle spousal abuse is naming. Certainly spousal abuse is not new to social workers but individual social workers may have different conceptions of spousal abuse. They may recognize different behavioral manifestations as spousal abuse, varying from narrow to broad dimensions. As discussed in Section 4.1, the dimensions of narrow against broad conceptions of spousal abuse affect individuals' recognition and actions to spousal abuse. Individuals with narrow conceptions of abuse tend to simply recognize serious physical abuse as spousal abuse, but tend to neglect mild physical abuse and psychological abuse. If social workers have narrow conceptions of spousal abuse, they may neglect minor physical abuse, such as slapping; and psychological abuse, such as verbal abuse. Indeed, minor physical and psychological abuse can be accumulated and escalated to serious physical abuse. The recognition of minor physical abuse and psychological abuse is also important. Early intervention can help to prevent serious spousal abuse.

Apart from conceptions, beliefs about spousal abuse can also affect social workers' responses and actions to spousal abuse. Some social workers may regard spousal abuse as private family disputes and should be solved within the family. Some social workers may underestimate the existence of husband abuse simply because of the common belief that men are strong and can never be abused by women. Social workers who possess such biased beliefs tend to neglect the happening of spousal abuse and thus their responses and actions are hindered. Non-intervention would intensify the vulnerability and isolate the victims within the domestic realm (Kelly, 2003).

In fact, social workers not only take responsibility to intervene in spousal abuse, they also need to prevent its happening and educate their clients and the general

public about the matter. Social workers are responsible for the prevention of spousal abuse and they should actively take part in prevention strategies. Therefore, broadening their conceptions, heightening their awareness, and cleaning up their biased beliefs are the first important steps in changing social workers' approach to spousal abuse. However, there are few researches in examining social work professionals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. This study addresses this neglected area and hope the results will provide insights in improving training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum.

4.5.3 Highlights on previous research on social workers' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

Based on previous research, social workers were commented as underestimating the seriousness of spousal abuse, and lacking information about resources to assist the battered women (Base & Rice, 1979; Imbrogno & Imbrogno, 2000). Some social workers were found to have traditional beliefs about gender relation and structure of society (Shepard, 1991), to exhibit a tendency to blame the abused wives (Davis & Hagen, 1992), and to endorse pessimistic views about stopping the cycle of violence (Davis, 1984). Though comments on social workers in handling spousal abuse were not that positive, only a handful of studies were done to examine their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Such inadequacy in research may be related to the general perception that the roles of social workers are similar to nurturing caretakers who are concerned about people's rights and equality, as well as provide supportive services to those who need assistance, especially the poor and the sick (Dziegieleński & Swartz, 1997; Home, 1994). Researchers might assume social workers are knowledgeable about spousal abuse who can handle the cases well, thus fewer of them showed interest in social workers' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

Moreover, domestic violence has been incorporated in social work curriculum since 1980s' (Knight, 1991); researchers might assume that social workers are knowledgeable about spousal abuse.

Furthermore, previous research always compared attitudes and beliefs about spousal abuse between social workers and police officers. It was found that social workers endorsed more positive attitudes and beliefs about spousal abuse when compared with police officers. Thus it might draw researchers' attention to examine more on police officers and fewer researches were done on social workers.

As mentioned in Section 4.1.1, social workers were found to have relatively broader conceptions of spousal abuse than police officers in Tam and Tang's study (2005). They were also found to have egalitarian gender roles attitudes as compared with police officers, and these attitudes were related to their broader conceptions of physical forms of wife abuse. Moreover, male social workers tended to have broader conceptions of psychological abuse than female social workers.

Home (1994) examined the differences between 235 police officers and 188 social workers in Canada. It was found that both professionals assigned man to be more responsible in wife abuse cases, but social workers were less inclined to assign blame to the women victims and the socioeconomic situations. Moreover, they rated the situations as more dangerous when compared with police officers. Within the social workers group, male social workers attributed more responsibility to the women than did female social workers. Moreover, they also rated the violent situations as less dangerous than female social workers.

Although social workers have broader conceptions and fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse when compared with police officers, they still possess certain stereotypes about victims in spousal abuse. Ross and Glisson (1991) did a study with 149 social workers and found that they had a higher tendency to stereotype female

victims in high violence situations than in low violence situations, with both situations were presented in case vignette format. They stereotyped women victims either as dependent, argumentative, an incompetent mother, masculine, provocative, domineering, or masochistic. Though they were more likely to mention relocation to abused victims in high violence situation, they were less likely to mention relocation to married clients. This showed that social workers might have different attitudes and treatments based on the marital status of the victims. Another major finding was that male social workers had a higher tendency to recommend counseling instead of relocation for the abused women than their female counterparts. These showed that social workers tended to resolve spousal abuse within the family and keep family unity even though abuse is happening.

As mentioned in Section 4.2.1, social norms suggested that disputes within families are private matters, which should be resolved within a family and outsiders should never intervene. Social workers might endorse these social norms through socialization process.

Recently, definitions and beliefs about wife abuse were examined with 544 social work students in Israel (Haj-Yahia & Schiff, 2007). They acknowledged actions of physical abuse and sexual abuse as wife abuse, but only half of them considered the action of psychological abuse (smashes things) as wife abuse. This indicated that they have clear understanding of physical wife abuse but vague conceptions of psychological wife abuse. Moreover, they tended not to justify wife abuse and believe that battered women were not benefit from beating. Identification with conservative cultural values and rigid gender roles were the salient predictors of their definitions of wife abuse. Negative attitudes toward women and rigid gender roles were the salient predictors of their beliefs about wife abuse. This study revealed that social work students in Israel were greatly affected by the patriarchal cultural values on their

definitions and beliefs about wife abuse. The researchers suggested that positive and empathetic approach toward abused women should be intensively educated in social work training.

This study contributes to point out the importance of cultural values in people's conceptualization of wife abuse. It is also the first study on social work students' definitions and beliefs about wife abuse in the Middle-East context. However, this study only focused on the examination of wife abuse but neglected the problem of husband abuse. Such single focus may be related to its highly patriarchal cultural background. Under such background, the status of women is still inferior when compared with women in Western countries, therefore husband abuse may be considered as impossible in their country. Second, the behavioral manifestations of wife abuse were adopted from existing studies, with only six items on physical abuse, one on sexual abuse, and one on psychological abuse. It is relatively less comprehensive in examining participants' definitions of wife abuse. Furthermore, the conceptions from social work students' (lay) perspective were neglected. Third, the study adopted convenience sampling that lowers its generalizability of the results. Fourth, this study did not compare the differences between male and female samples. Indeed, the identification to patriarchal culture may be relatively different between male and female, thus their conceptualization of wife abuse may also be affected. However, this study neglected this comparison.

To sum up, social workers were found to have better knowledge about spousal abuse when compared with police officers. However, they were found to stereotype victims and have different attitudes and treatments based on the nature of violence (mild or serious) and the marital status of the victims (married or cohabited with the abusers). Gender of the social workers had an effect on their perceptions of spousal abuse, female social workers rated the violent situations as more dangerous and

assigned fewer responsibilities to women victims while male social workers rated the violent situations as less dangerous and assigned more responsibility to women victims in wife abuse incidents. These findings are basically based on Western studies. Studies on social workers' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse in Chinese cultural context are rare, thus conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse in Chinese society are worth exploring.

4.5.3.1 Conceptual and methodological advancement of this study

Review on previous research on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse is summarized and presented above. It is found that there are several conceptual and methodological weaknesses in previous studies. This section discusses these weaknesses and presents the advancements of this study. There are four conceptual weaknesses and three methodological weaknesses found in previous studies.

4.5.3.1a Conceptual weakness 1: Neglect conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the lay perspective

Few previous studies have examined the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the lay perspective. As discussed in Chapter 2, Section 2.3, some researchers believed that most people, including laymen and academic experts have lay theory about human behavior and social phenomena. Individuals also have their own conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Examination of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the lay perspective indeed enhances our understanding of spousal abuse. This helps to identify wrong and biased conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse endorsed by laymen. In return, this helps to evaluate existing and develop new community education of spousal abuse. Moreover, as discussed in Section 2.3.2 of Chapter 2, legal, academic experts, and lay conceptions

are inter-related. The examination of conceptions of spousal abuse from laymen also helps to contribute thoughts to academic experts. However, previous studies always focused on developing academic experts' conceptions of spousal abuse and failed to notice the importance of exploring conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the lay perspective.

4.5.3.1b Conceptual weakness 2: The neglect of husband abuse

Previous studies on spousal abuse primarily focused on wife abuse, which tended to neglect the happening of husband abuse. Historically, women have been the victims of spousal abuse most often. However, shelters for abused women, police force, and family counselors all reported receiving calls from men requesting protection from their partners (Harmony House Annual Report, 2002-2003; Shupe, Stacey, & Hazelwood, 1987). Adams and Freeman (2002) discovered that 80 percent of 225 military and civilian domestic violence professionals indicated that they had encountered women who had initiated physical violence even when their partners had not been abusive. Moreover 59 percent reported that women initiated physical violence was just as serious as men initiated violence. Though these recent data confirm the earlier rates of husband abuse, it has not achieved the attention accorded with wife abuse (Straus & Gelles, 1986).

The single focus on wife abuse in research not only generates but also reinforces the assumption that females are the victims while males are the abusers in spousal abuse. This gives no advantage to both victims and abusers of either gender in spousal abuse cases. People may continue viewing female as legitimate victims in spousal abuse and they may ignore or refuse to help male victims. As they do not recognize males as victims of spousal abuse, they tend to trivialize husband abuse cases. In fact, very few studies have sought to understand what motivates women to use violence

(Adams & Freeman, 2002), but most researchers assume women are getting revenge on their abusive partners.

The legitimatization of females as victims and males as perpetrators in spousal abuse actually follows the feminist perspectives that men wield power and control over women in the patriarchal society. However, this study challenged these feminist perspectives. Due to the modernization of our society, the status of women has been greatly elevated. Women can pursue their own career and be financially independent from men. Therefore, the traditional concept that men wield power and control over women may no longer hold for women in the modern era. Studies proved that women can also be as violent as men and not only in the case of using violence to protect themselves, thus husband abuse is not an impossible issue. It is better for us to admit the existence of husband abuse, to examine what constitute its forms, and how they differ from those of wife abuse.

4.5.3.1c Conceptual weakness 3: Predominant examination on individual factors in relation to conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

Previous research mainly focused on examining individual factors in relation to conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. They showed that demographic characteristics, including age, education, gender, occupation, and personal factor, such as attitudes toward gender, were correlated with the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse (summarized in Section 4.1.3 and 4.2.2). A number of factors, such as environmental factors (endorsement of social norms and traditional values), are related to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, but they were not directly examined in previous research. This shows the lack of investigation in environmental factors in relation to individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. As individuals are nested within their living environment, they are indeed affecting and

interacting with their environment.

Thus previous researches overlooked the influences of environmental factors in affecting people's conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. In fact, other than personal factors, individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse might also be affected by the values from family, society, and culture. These are institutions of socialization in shaping individuals' beliefs, though some of these influences may be implicit and indirect.

It is because the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse should be the products of interactions between individual, interpersonal, and cultural values. Moreover, previous studies usually adopted either individual level (attitudes toward women and propensity to use violence) or super-macro level (patriarchal ideology suggested by feminists) in examining individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. This study adopts an approach that can have a balance between these two extremes, which examine individual, interpersonal, and cultural levels of correlates of the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

4.5.3.1d Conceptual weakness 4: The lack of a comprehensive theoretical model in examining the formation of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

Previous research not only predominantly focused on personal factors in relation to individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, but also failed to build a theoretical model that integrate personal and environmental factors in relation to individuals' conceptions and beliefs. A theoretical model is needed to help us organize related factors and their relationships in explaining certain social phenomena. With regard to spousal abuse, we need a theoretical model that can incorporate both individual and environmental factors in examining people's conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. This theoretical model should be comprehensive enough in

capturing the wide phenomena of spousal abuse. That means it can explain wife abuse and husband abuse as well as their subtypes (physical, psychological, and sexual). Based on the discussion in Chapter 3, ecological model is a relatively ideal model as compared with other conceptual models. It provides comprehensive explanations and takes the contextual and historical factors into account. Moreover, this theoretical model provides multiple factors in explaining individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. The examination of these factors in return helps us to combat spousal abuse not only from the individual level but also from familial, social, and cultural levels. Multiple intervention could be generated based the ecological model, thus we can be more holistic in understanding and combating spousal abuse.

4.5.3.2a Methodological weakness 1: The primarily application of quantitative method in examining individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

Previous research usually applied quantitative research methods, such as questionnaire surveys and utilized existing scientific scales in testing individuals' conceptions of spousal abuse. The utilization of existing scales in testing conceptions of spousal abuse only helps to validate existing behavioral manifestations, but the scope of it will never be enriched. Research using qualitative research methods such as focus groups help to generate new behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse. For example, Lewis et al. (2005) showed that an unequal burden of home and family work expected by men over women was considered as abuse by women in the Latino community. Qualitative research methods have their advantages in their rich, full contextual descriptions of meanings and understanding of social phenomena and human behavior. These allow and ensure participants' contribution in the formation of meaning and interpretation. The adoption of qualitative method helps to gather conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the participants' viewpoints. The

strengths of qualitative research and the research method of this study are further discussed in Chapter 6.

4.5.3.2b Methodological weakness 2: The predominance of Western studies

Most of the researches were conducted in Western societies and most of the scientific conceptions of spousal abuse were developed and examined by Western societies. Literature does not appear to contain a unified theory of spousal abuse that specifically takes Chinese culture into account. Without the careful examination of Chinese cultural influences, research findings on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from Western studies are questionable as they may not reflect the genuine experience in Hong Kong. Therefore, a comprehensive study in conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse is needed in Chinese cultural groups.

Meanwhile, some of the researches were conducted with small samples, such as Yick (2000) and Tam and Tang's studies (2003). Convenience sampling was adopted in Tam and Tang's (2003) study. Therefore, the generalization of these findings is also questionable.

4.5.3.2c Methodological weakness 3: Few studies examined social workers and social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

There are few studies that examined social workers and social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse in both Western and Chinese societies. Moreover, a few of the studies adopted random sampling in recruiting participants. Though the number of both wife abuse and husband abuse cases elevate quickly, only Tam and Tang's study (2005) examined social workers' conceptions of wife abuse and a few of studies looked into social workers' beliefs about spousal abuse. Social workers are professionals who have the foremost chance

to provide assistance to spousal abuse victims. It is vital that we understand their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. If certain wrong and biased conceptions and beliefs are identified, training should be set to modify their understanding accordingly. This in turn helps to increase the sensitivity about spousal abuse among social workers and improve their services to victims and perpetrators in spousal abuse cases. Furthermore, it is suggested that social workers should pair up with police officers in attending potential domestic violence cases in the future. Therefore, it is an important step to know the sensitivity of social work undergraduates in recognizing spousal abuse, their beliefs about spousal abuse, and factors affecting their formations of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

4.5.3.3a Conceptual advancement

In response to the neglect of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the lay perspectives, this study examined conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the lay perspective. Moreover, the conceptions of spousal abuse among lay, legal, and academic experts' perspectives are compared.

In response to the neglect of husband abuse in previous studies, this study helps to enhance understanding by 1) examining conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse and 2) comparing the similarities and differences on conceptions and beliefs between wife abuse and husband abuse.

In response to the third and fourth conceptual weaknesses in previous studies, this study helps to enhance understanding by investigating the influences of environmental factors, including the socialization of gender stereotyping and violence approval from participants' parents, as well as identification with Chinese traditional and modern cultural values in formulating their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Moreover, this study also assists in building an ecological model with three

levels, including individual, interpersonal, and cultural in relation to the formation of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

4.5.3.3b Methodological advancement

With reference to the first methodological weakness, the present study executed mixed research methods by combining qualitative (focus groups) and quantitative (questionnaire survey) methods. Whereas focus groups assisted to find out participants' ideas on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, questionnaire survey helped to validate those conceptions and beliefs in a representative sample of social work undergraduates. The use of mixed research methods enhances our understanding on spousal abuse in a more comprehensive way.

With regard to the second methodological weakness, this study was conducted in Chinese society and sampled Chinese social work undergraduates. Moreover, it investigated Chinese traditional and modern values based on measurements developed by Chinese academic experts. This study enhances our understanding on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse under the Chinese cultural context. Moreover, this study adopted a random sampling method and selected over 300 social work undergraduates as participants.

In response to the lack of study on social workers' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, this study sampled social work undergraduates in local institutions and explored the correlations among individual, interpersonal, and cultural factors in formulating their conceptions and beliefs. This study also adopted a random sampling method in recruiting participants to enhance the representation of the sample. All of these contribute to the improvement in social work training and education on spousal abuse. Table 4.1 summarizes the conceptual and methodological advancement of this study.

4.6 Significance of this study

4.6.1 Academic significance

This study enhances our understanding on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. First, by examining the lay conceptions and beliefs about wife abuse, it enriches the existing scopes of it. Second, it is the first study to examine lay conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse in Chinese society. Meanwhile, these have never been examined in the Western countries before. Third, by comparing differences between conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, this study not only provides descriptive data on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, but also provides comparative data in the conceptual differences between wife abuse and husband abuse. Fourth, it compares the complexity and coherence of conceptions of spousal abuse among lay, legal, and academic experts, which incorporate conceptions from different domains. It is a great leap forward in understanding conceptions of spousal abuse.

4.6.2 Theoretical significance

This study is the first to adopt an ecological model in examining individual and environmental factors in affecting lay conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Previous studies usually stressed on individual factors but overlooked the influences of interpersonal and cultural factors in constructing individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. This study tries to improve this lack by investigating participants' perceived influences of socialization on gender stereotyping and violence approval from their parents, as well as their identification with Chinese traditional and modern cultural values in relations to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. This contributes to the development of theoretical models by incorporating both individual and environmental factors related to conceptions and beliefs about spousal

abuse.








4.6.3 Educational significance

The results of this study help to outline the patterns of social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, which indirectly reflect the intensity of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work education. Unless social work undergraduates are provided with training on basic knowledge regarding prevalence, indicators, and common beliefs about spousal abuse, they may lack the ability to recognize cases of spousal abuse. Thus the results of this study facilitate improvement in training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work education.

4.6.4 Practical and professional significance

By revealing lay conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, this study indirectly facilitates the reforming of policy and services of spousal abuse. People's responses and actions to spousal abuse are always affected by their lay understanding. If individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are identified, certain wrong and biased understandings about spousal abuse can be modified. Furthermore, the patterns of lay conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse help to facilitate improvement in community education programs on spousal abuse. These findings facilitate to attain the goals on promoting community awareness and prevention strategies in order to combat spousal abuse. Findings from this study also stimulate professionals' self-reflections on their understanding and beliefs about spousal abuse, which ultimately helps to improve their services to victims and perpetrators of spousal abuse.

Table 4.1 The conceptual and methodological advancement of this study

Weaknesses of previous research on spousal abuse	Advancement in this study
<i>On conceptual level</i>	
* Neglect of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the lay perspective	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ Examined conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the lay perspective ※ Compared conceptions of spousal abuse from the legal, academic experts' and lay perspectives (Enhanced understanding)
* Neglect of husband abuse	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ Examined conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse (Enhanced understanding) ※ Compared their similarities and differences with wife abuse (Enhanced understanding)
* Predominance studies of individual correlates of spousal abuse	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ Investigated the effects of extra-personal factors (Interpersonal level: parents' socialization of gender stereotyping and violence approval; Cultural level: Chinese traditional and modern cultural values) (Enhanced understanding)
* Lack of a comprehensive theoretical model in the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ Adopted a three-level ecological model, including individual, interpersonal, and cultural levels in examining factors related to individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse (Theoretical model building)
<i>On methodological level</i>	
* Predominant used of quantitative research method limits understanding to the scope of conceptions of spousal abuse	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ Utilized mixed research methods to enhance our understanding on the scope of conceptions and beliefs about both wife abuse and husband abuse (Enriched research design)
* Predominant Western studies with Western values and some of the studies had small sample size	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ This study sampled Chinese participants in Chinese society. ※ Chinese cultural values (Traditionality-Modernity) were measured based on scales developed by Chinese academic experts (Enhanced understanding on Chinese culture in relation to spousal abuse) ※ This study randomly selected over 300 social work undergraduates as participants. (Enhanced methodological rigor)
* Lack of comprehensive study on social workers and social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ※ This study sampled social work undergraduates and examined their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, and the related cultural, interpersonal, and individual factors. (Implications to social work training on spousal abuse)

CHAPTER 5: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY AND EXPOSITION OF THE PROBLEMS

This chapter presents the conceptual model, research questions and hypotheses in detail. The chapter first presents and discusses the ecological model, followed by the research questions and the corresponding hypotheses.

5.1 The ecological model adopted in this study

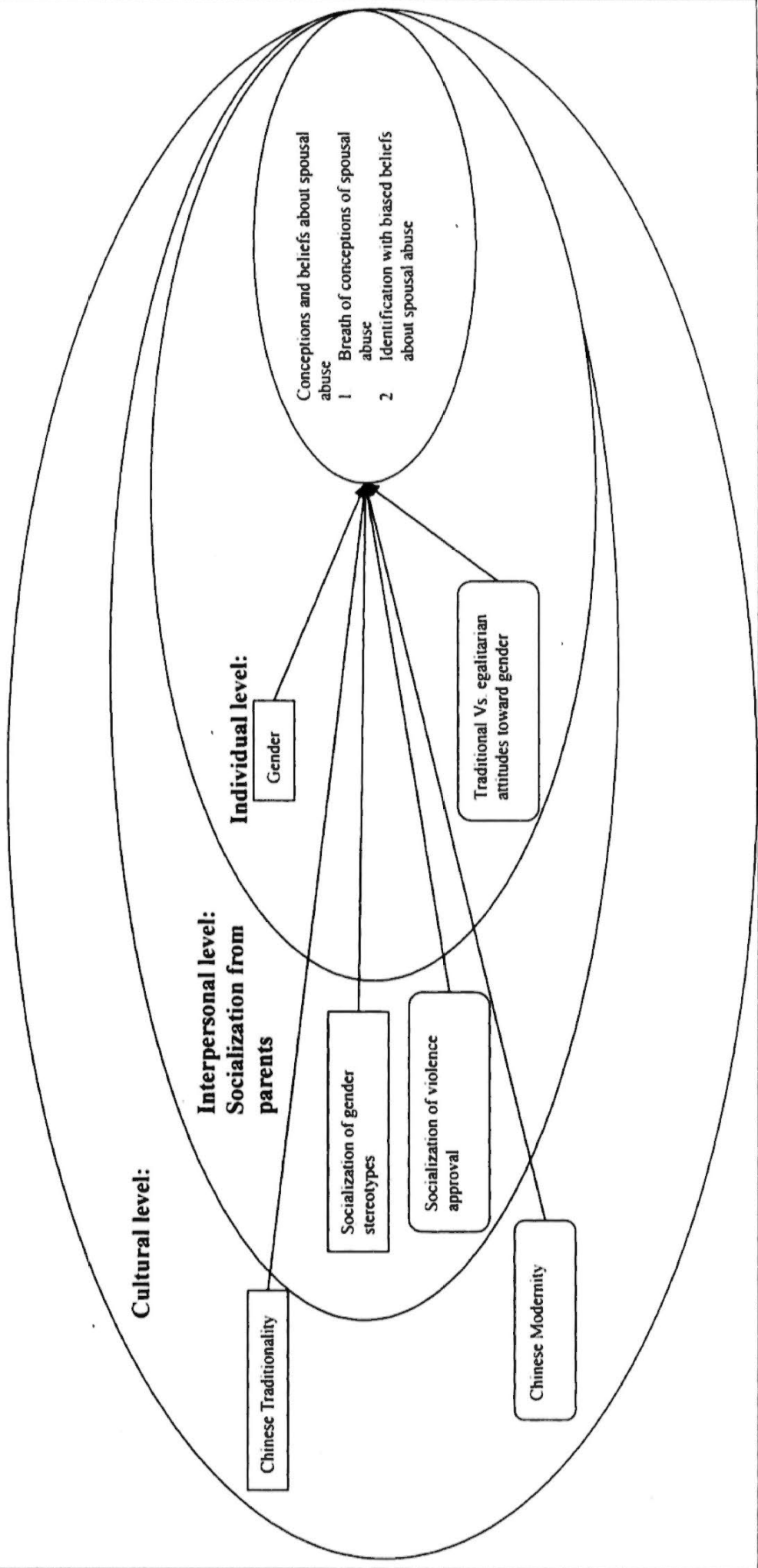
Based on the theories of spousal abuse summarized and discussed in Chapter 3, ecological model is evaluated as the most ideal model adopted in examining individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse in this study. In addition, domain specific theories and related variables are summarized based on literature review and presented in Chapter 4. With regard to such discussion, an ecological model with three levels (individual, interpersonal, and cultural) of individual and environmental factors is proposed in relating to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

A model is an approximation of reality while a theoretical model consists of various theories and hypotheses for scientists to understand and interpret the world (Sidebotham, 2001). Theoretical model generates predictions and scientists compare their observation from the reality with those predictions. Even though theoretical model is just an approximation of reality, it still offers useful understanding and interpretational grounds for scientists. The theoretical model of this study is constructed based on ecological perspectives, which regard the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse as "complex outcomes of person-environment transactions at multiple systems levels" (Greene & McGuire, 1998, p.9). Figure 5.1 illustrates the three nested levels of psychosocial correlates contribute to social work

undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Details of the psychosocial correlates organized at each level are discussed in the next section.

Figure 5.1: An ecological model of psychosocial correlates at three levels contributing

to social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse



5.2 The three-level ecological model in understanding conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse (with reference to Figure 5.1 on previous page)

5.2.1 Individual level: Individuals' gender and their attitudes toward gender

Participant's gender and their attitudes toward gender are proposed at the individual level. Based on literature review in Chapter 4, it was found that participants' gender is a significant psychosocial correlate of the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. In the studies of wife abuse, female participants tended to have broader conceptions and rated wife abuse as more serious when compared with their male counterparts. This may be related to the same sex favoritism and females' higher tendency to identify themselves with victim roles, thus female participants tended to be empathic to female victims (Refer to Section 4.1.3.1 and 4.2.2.1 of Chapter 4).

Apart from participants' gender, their attitudes toward gender are also found to be related to their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, which is summarized and discussed in Section 4.1.3.2 and 4.2.2.2 of Chapter 4. However, previous research mainly focused on wife abuse. The effects of individuals' gender and attitudes toward gender on conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse have been inadequately examined in the literature. In order to clarify the effects of gender and attitudes toward gender on the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, participants' gender and their attitudes toward gender are put at the individual level of the proposed ecological model.

5.2.2 Interpersonal level: Socialization influences from parents on the endorsement of gender stereotypes and violence approval

Socialization is a significant process of transmission of gender stereotypes and

violence approval, which is discussed in Section 3.3.5 of Chapter 3. In this interpersonal level, individuals' parents are proposed to be the major sources of socialization influences on individuals' endorsement of gender stereotypes and violence approval. Their endorsement of gender stereotypes and violence approval from their parents may in return affect their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

The influences of socialization from parents are examined by inquiring participants' perception of their parents' endorsement of gender stereotypes and violence approval. Moreover, they are asked to indicate their agreement with their parents' attitudes. Perceptual data instead of retrospective data is used in examining parents' socialization influences. This can avoid biased reports due to false and reconstructed memory in recalling parents' endorsement of gender stereotypes and violence approval.

5.2.3. Cultural level: Chinese Traditionality and Chinese Modernity

Based on review in Chinese culture discussed in Section 4.4 of Chapter 4, it is showed that Chinese culture has certain influences on the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, especially wife abuse. This level of analysis proposes that Chinese traditional and modern cultural values influence individuals' attitudes toward gender as well as their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Traditionality and modernity are two independent constructs, in which people can simultaneously endorse both of them but in different magnitude among different domains (Yang, 1989). It is believed that individuals who endorse high degree of Chinese traditional culture tend to support male supremacy over female and thus have narrow conceptions of wife abuse, as well as biased beliefs about spousal abuse. However, individuals who endorse high degree of Chinese modern culture tend to support

gender egalitarianism and thus have broad conceptions and tend not to support the biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

5.3 Central research questions of the present study

Based on the preceding discussion, the following research questions were examined in this study. The main goal of this study is to examine the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse and the psychosocial correlates adopted within an ecological model among social work undergraduates in Hong Kong. There are two broad research questions: 1) What are the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse among social work undergraduates in Hong Kong? 2) What are the psychosocial correlates at the individual, interpersonal, and cultural levels that contribute to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?

The thirteen specific research questions developed based on the central research questions are listed below. The first three questions are related to the first broad research question. Question 4 to Question 12 are related to the second broad research question. Question 4 to Question 10 examine the direct relationships among the psychosocial correlates and conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Question 11 examines the salient predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse and Question 12 examines the differences among the predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse between male and female samples. In order to understand the perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in the social work curriculum and their relationships with social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, Question 13 was formulated.

Research questions:

- 1) What are the conceptions of spousal abuse among social work undergraduates in Hong Kong? Are they different from the legal and academic experts' conceptions?

Findings for this question are descriptive and there is no hypothesis testing for this research question. These descriptive findings are based on the Phase I Study (Focus groups). Moreover, the comparison of lay conceptions with legal and academic experts' conceptions are examined.

- 2) What are the beliefs about spousal abuse among social work undergraduates in Hong Kong?

Findings for this question are descriptive and there is no hypothesis testing for this research question. These descriptive findings are based on the Phase I Study (Focus groups). Besides, the endorsement of these beliefs by a representative sample of social work undergraduates is examined in the Phase II Study (Questionnaire survey).

- 3) Do social work undergraduates have different conceptions between wife abuse and husband abuse?

The hypothesis was tested in the Phase II Study (Questionnaire survey).

Hypothesis 1:

Because of the wider media and academic research coverage on wife abuse, social work undergraduates would have broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse. (Refer to Section 4.1.3 of Chapter 4)

- 4) Are the conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse related to social work undergraduates' gender?

Hypothesis 2:

Based on the hypothesis of same sex favoritism, conceptions of spousal abuse are related to both victims' and participants' gender. Female social work undergraduates would have broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse. On the other hand, male social work undergraduates would have broader conceptions of husband abuse than wife abuse. (Refer to Section 4.1.3.1 of Chapter 4)

- 5) Are the beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse related to social work undergraduates' gender?

Hypothesis 3:

Based on the hypothesis of same sex favoritism, beliefs about spousal abuse are related to both victims' and participants' gender. Female social work undergraduates would endorse fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse than husband abuse. On the other hand, male social work undergraduates would endorse fewer biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse. (Refer to Section 4.2.2.1 of Chapter 4)

6) Are participants' attitudes toward gender related to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?

Hypothesis 4a:

Participants who have a higher level of egalitarian attitudes toward gender would have broader conceptions of spousal abuse. This means that there is a positive relationship between endorsement of egalitarian attitudes toward gender and conceptions of spousal abuse. (Refer to Section 4.1.3.2 of Chapter 4)

Hypothesis 4b:

Participants who have a higher level of egalitarian attitudes toward gender would endorse fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. This means that there is a negative relationship between endorsement of egalitarian attitudes toward gender and biased beliefs about spousal abuse. (Refer to Section 4.2.2.2 of Chapter 4)

7) Is participants' socialization of gender stereotypes related to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?

Hypothesis 5a:

Participants who are highly socialized to gender stereotypes would have narrower conceptions of spousal abuse. This means there is a negative relationship between endorsement of gender stereotypes and conceptions of spousal abuse. (Refer to Section 3.3.5 of Chapter 3; Section 4.1.3.3 of Chapter 4)

Hypothesis 5b:

Participants who are highly socialized to gender stereotypes would endorse more biased beliefs about spousal abuse. This means there is a positive relationship between endorsement of gender stereotypes and biased beliefs about spousal abuse. (Refer to Section 3.3.5 of Chapter 3; Section 4.2.2.3 and 4.2.2.4 of Chapter 4)

8) Is participants' socialization to violence approval related to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?

Hypothesis 6a:

Participants who are highly socialized to violence approval would have narrower conceptions of spousal abuse. This means there is a negative relationship between endorsement of violence approval and conceptions of spousal abuse. (Refer to Section 3.3.5 and 3.5 of Chapter 3)

Hypothesis 6b:

Participants who are highly socialized to violence approval would have more biased beliefs about spousal abuse. This means there is a positive relationship between endorsement of violence approval and biased beliefs about spousal abuse. (Refer to Section 3.3.5 and 3.5 of Chapter 3)

9) Is participants' endorsement of Chinese traditionality related to their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?

Hypothesis 7a:

Participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese traditionality would have narrower conceptions of spousal abuse. This means there is a negative relationship between endorsement of Chinese traditionality and conceptions of spousal abuse. (Refer to Section 3.7 of Chapter 3 and Section 4.4.1 of Chapter 4)

Hypothesis 7b:

Participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese traditionality would have more biased beliefs about spousal abuse. This means there is a positive relationship between endorsement of Chinese traditionality and biased beliefs about spousal abuse. (Refer to Section 3.7 of Chapter 3; Section 4.2.2.5 and 4.4.2 of Chapter 4)

10) Is participants' endorsement of Chinese modernity related to their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?

Hypothesis 8a:

Participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese modernity would have broader conceptions of spousal abuse. This means there is a positive relationship between endorsement of Chinese modernity and conceptions of spousal abuse. (Refer to Section 3.7 of Chapter 3; Section 4.4.1 of Chapter 4)

Hypothesis 8b:

Participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese modernity would endorse fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. This means there is a negative relationship between endorsement of Chinese modernity and biased beliefs about spousal abuse. (Refer to Section 3.7 of Chapter 3; Section 4.4.2 of Chapter 4)

11) What are the salient predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse amongst the psychosocial correlates organized in the proposed ecological model?

With reference to the ecological model, the general prediction is that psychosocial correlates amongst the individual, interpersonal, and cultural levels would predict the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Hierarchical regression analyses are performed to examine the relative contribution of the different psychosocial correlates.

12) Are there any gender differences in the predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?

As previous studies showed that individuals have different definitions and beliefs about spousal abuse based on their gender and victims' gender, the hierarchical regression models of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse may also be different among male and female samples. Hierarchical regression analyses are performed separately for male and female samples in order to examine whether there are differences in the regression models of the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse based on victims' and participants' gender. (Refer to Section 4.1.3.1, 4.1.3.3, 4.2.2.1, and 4.2.2.4 of Chapter 4)

13) What are social work undergraduates' perceptions of coverage of spousal abuse in social work training?

Questions about training on knowledge of spousal abuse in the social work curriculum are examined in Phase II Study (Questionnaire survey). Descriptive data are presented and discussed. Correlations among perceptions of training, conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are examined.

CHAPTER 6: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research methodology of this study. The research paradigm of this study is presented first. Then a brief discussion on three different research approaches, including quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods is presented, followed by the research design of this study. Detailed descriptions in the procedures of the two-phase study are presented in the final section.

6.1 Research paradigm

A clearly defined research paradigm is important to a research. It is because it helps to clarify researchers' own worldviews and the relationship between researchers and participants. Methodology can only be decided when ontology and epistemology are clearly clarified.

This study adopted post-positivism as the research paradigm. Post-positivism is a modified version of positivism (Guba, 1990). It adopts critical realism in viewing reality. Post-positivists think that reality exists but cannot be fully comprehended. Besides, post-positivists accept there cannot be full objectivity, but they regard it as a regulatory ideal. They use "critical tradition" (ensure study is consistent with existing scholarly tradition) and "critical community" (the use of peer reviews) to maintain objectivity. Contrast to positivists, they propose doing research in more natural settings and using more qualitative methods.

The researcher of this study believes that socialization of gender stereotypes and violence approval, as well as identification with Chinese cultural values are major contextual factors related to individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. By adopting an ecological model, it is hoped that the reality of spousal abuse can be further (but never fully) discovered by comparing the hypotheses generated from the model with research data collected from participants. Moreover, a qualitative research

method (focus groups) is used to understand social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

6.2 Research methods

There are two major types of research methods, quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative research method is the dominant type in examining individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse in previous studies, while qualitative research method is being more widely adopted recently. The characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses of both research methods are briefly summarized as follows.

6.2.1 Quantitative method

The aim of quantitative method is to find out correlation, explanation, generalization, and prediction of phenomena through precise and rigor statistical measurement. It stresses the measurement and the analysis of causal relationships between variables (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Researchers set variables and hypotheses based on previous theories. It follows the hypothetico-deductivism logic, which looks for disconfirmation between empirical data and hypotheses (Neuman & Kreuger, 2003). Quantitative method contributes to knowledge building through accumulation of empirical findings in validating and verifying existing theories.

The general characteristics of quantitative approach are its objectivity and rigor measurement methods. The research designs include experiments, standardized observations, close-ended interviews, and surveys, which are largely fixed and conducted with standardized and uniform procedures. This practice of research is believed to be value-free and context-free (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000). Moreover, large sample size and random sampling are required in order to obtain statistical significance and generalization of findings. Statistical analysis is performed after data

collection. Data are coded and tested with various statistical models. Data analyses are in both descriptive and inferential statistics. Hypotheses are retained or rejected based on the statistical analysis.

Quantitative method stresses parsimony and precision as their strengths. As data are measured and tested in scales, it allow replication of study over various situations, thus results are more reliable (Gray, Williamsom, Karp, & Dalphin, 2007). Furthermore, generalization can be made based on replication of studies (Holliday, 2002). Nevertheless, its weaknesses are its oversimplification of reality, adoption of reductionist and mechanistic views over human behavior. Moreover, human behaviour and social phenomena can never be fully described when they are reduced to variables (Pieper, 1985). The mechanistic, law-like nature in natural science may not be applied to dynamic social phenomena and human behavior.

Moreover, context is always ignored when discovery of casual laws of human behaviour are emphasized. Thus, it fails to capture the whole picture of a complex social phenomenon. Though quantitative approach emphasizes generalization of research findings, it is always difficult to generalize the results to individual cases under different contexts. Quantitative method also limits the range and research questions to only concepts that are quantifiable. This approach neglects to understand the meanings and purposes perceived by the social agents (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). The etic theory may be irrelevant to the emic views of the participants (Guba & Lincoln, 1998).

The hypothetico-deductive logic of quantitative research fails to acknowledge the role of historical, social, and cultural factors in knowledge formation. Based on the deductive logics; quantitative method does not provide sufficient space for theory development. Researchers tend to verify the findings from hypotheses rather than

seeking new and unexpected findings.

6.2.2 Qualitative Method

Researchers who adopt qualitative methods have different epistemological positions, but they all concern about “meanings” (Willig, 2001). Qualitative method aims at exploring, enhancing understanding, and interpreting the “meanings” of social phenomena among respondents (Gray et al., 2007). Qualitative method rejects the utility of quantifying human behavior. It contributes to knowledge building through discovering theories and explanations by richer, in-depth, and contextual descriptions of social phenomena and human behavior. It follows the inductive logics (Neuman & Kreuger, 2003), which means developing theories from specific observations.

It emphasizes naturalistic inquiries, which seeks to learn about the social world without rigid direction of enquiry, simplified, acontextual, and prior definitions. The goal of qualitative researcher is to find out first-hand, unique, idiosyncratic stories among the respondents, so they tend to have prolonged involvement with the respondents’ environment.

The research designs of qualitative research include case studies, semi-structured interviews, participant observations, focus groups, diaries, textual studies, repertory grids, and grounded theory (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). As it quests for deeper understanding of respondents, it focuses on small number of cases. Contrast to quantitative data, qualitative data can be any kind of non-numerical data.

The strengths of qualitative methods are the rich, full contextual descriptions of meanings and understanding of social phenomena and human behaviour. They are process-orientated, which emphasize the interactions between researchers and respondents in giving meanings to particular phenomenon. This allows and ensures respondents’ contribution in meanings making and interpreting. It discovers meanings

from the “emic” (insider) point of views. Qualitative method is particularly suitable for issue that is ill defined and with inadequate theoretical support (Pieper, 1985).

However, qualitative method is commented as largely based on the personal experiences from the respondents. Data are comparable to personal opinions as individuals can have different meanings and reasoning towards one single experience. It is always difficult to generalize the results. Thus a stable understanding of social phenomena and human behaviour is hard to obtain. Qualitative findings are nonreplicable as they based on the unique and personal experience. Thus they are not subjected to disconfirmation and not credible (Cavell & Snyder, 1991). Due to their non-replicable and non-generalizable nature, qualitative findings provide little reassurance to researchers (Sells, Smith, & Sprenkle, 1995). They are just some localized and contextualized findings. The validity and reliability of qualitative data are always questionable (Moon, Dillon, & Sprenkle, 1991). They lack firm support, like statistical methods, to ensure their qualities (Reichardt & Rallis, 1994).

Within post-positivistic paradigm, quantitative method is always the dominant research method, while qualitative method is also adopted which help to provide supplementary research data. Post-positivists predominantly focus on hypotheses verification through quantitative method with its precise and rigor statistical measurements. However, qualitative method can discover lived experience through the eyes of participants (Padgett, 1998) and enable understandings of people’s experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Parker & Addison, 1989). Therefore, post-positivist also proposes using more qualitative methods. Post-positivism is a paradigm that fits both qualitative and quantitative methods.

6.2.3 Mixed methods

Mixed methods mean combining both quantitative and qualitative methods

within a research. Greene, Caracelli, and Graham (1989) and Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) stated five purposes of mixed methods. First is triangulation, which means the seeking of convergence results. It is assumed that the weakness of each method will be compensated by the strengths of other methods. Thus, researchers can have more confidence of the results. There are four types of triangulation, including data triangulation (the use of various data sources in one study); investigator triangulation (the use of peer reviews); theory triangulation (the use of multiple perspectives to interpret the results); methodological triangulation (the use of multiple methods in studying a research problem) (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Second purpose is to enrich information from different perspectives about a particular phenomenon. Multiple data from multiple sources complement each other. Thus the overlapping and different facets of a phenomenon may emerge.

Third purpose is to initiate contradictions and fresh perspectives. Results from different studies can be tremendously different, which may be contradicting with each other. By adopting mixed methods, researchers can understand more and clarify misunderstandings when different sources of data present different facets of one single phenomenon. Fourth purpose is to develop measurement scales. Qualitative and quantitative approaches indeed work within the cycle of inductive and deductive logic of reasoning. Results from qualitative approach facilitate the formulation of items of measurement scales, which can be further tested by using quantitative methods. The last purpose is to expand the scope and breadth of studies. More diverse results are found based on multiple methods, which help to provide findings for more research purposes.

Creswell (1995) and Clark and Creswell (2008) had proposed four types of mixed method approaches based on the sequence and the status of the approaches

used in the research. The first two types are based on the sequence of conducting research approaches. First is sequential study or two-phase study, in which a qualitative phase of study is conducted first then a quantitative phase follows, or vice versa. These two phases of study are separate. This separation enables researcher to systematically present the paradigm assumptions behind each phase, but it may be difficult to distinguish the connection between the two phases. Second is parallel or simultaneous study in which the researcher conducts the qualitative and quantitative phases at the same time.

The third and fourth types are classified based on the status of the research approaches. In equivalent status designs, the researcher conducts the study by using both the quantitative and qualitative approaches equally in understanding the phenomenon under study. In dominant-less dominant studies, the researcher conducts the study by combining one dominant research approach with a small component of other approach. Apart from these four types, Tashakori and Teddlie (2003) added a fifth type, in which different types of methods are used at different levels of data aggregation.

Morgan (2007) proposed a “pragmatic approach” as a new guiding paradigm and basic for mixed methods. He commented that previous categorization of paradigms put too much emphasis on the top-down hierarchy of ontology and epistemology over methodology. The pragmatic approach redirects our focus on methodology as well as bridges the nature of knowledge (epistemological concerns) and methods (technical concerns). He further proposed that qualitative and quantitative approaches can be integrated and they are not oppositions against each other. Although both approaches have their distinctive characteristics (induction-deduction; subjective-objective; contextual-general), it does not mean that these characteristics work exclusively in the process of generating knowledge. Instead, they work in a back and forth manner when

researchers formulate the research questions and analyze the research data. Thus integrating qualitative and quantitative approaches can be an appropriate method in examining our reality provided that the “useful points of connection” (p.71) are presented. The researcher of this study examined the range of behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse from participants’ viewpoints through qualitative approach. These qualitative findings were then tested through a quantitative approach to see if they are generally adopted by a representative sample of participants in conceptualizing spousal abuse.

6.3 Research design of this study

The research design of this study was qualitative less dominant and quantitative dominant sequential research. The first phase of this study aimed to generate conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from a social work undergraduates sample. The second phase of this study was a large sample questionnaire survey, which aimed to answer the research questions and tested the hypotheses stated in Chapter 5.

6.3.1 Phase I Study: Focus groups

Phase I study: Focus groups was less dominant as the whole study focused on examining the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse and their psychosocial correlates among social work undergraduates in Hong Kong. Qualitative method helped to generate first-hand, in-depth, new, and even unexpected conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the participants’ viewpoints. It is mentioned in Chapter 2 that the conceptions of spousal abuse are vaguely defined within different domains. Moreover, there is little knowledge on conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse. The purpose of this phase of study is to examine the conceptions and

beliefs about spousal abuse from social work undergraduates' viewpoints before they are being tested with a representative sample in the questionnaire survey. If only questionnaire survey is conducted, the researcher could only generate conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse based on previous studies. However, the items generated may be meaningless and incomprehensible to social work undergraduates. In order to avoid this problem and to obtain more objective conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, involving participants' opinions through conducting focus groups is worthwhile and necessary.

Based on Morgan (1997), focus groups can serve three different functions. First, it serves as a self-contained method, which is a primary means of gathering data in a single study. Second, it serves as supplementary data in a primarily quantitative study, such as generating items for questionnaire survey. Moreover, it can also serve as follow-up data to assist the primary method. Third it can be used in multi-method study, in which data are gathered through focus groups and other qualitative methods. Focus groups applied in this study serves the second purpose.

Focus groups were chosen as research method because it has the following strengths over other methods. First, it could directly target the topic of interest. Second, conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are unobservable; focus groups have the strengths in gathering this kind of data. Third, focus groups are relatively efficient as compared with conducting individual interviews. According to Berg (2001), focus groups could be "defined as an interview style designed for small groups." Fourth, replication is quick and easy when same set of guiding questions is used. Fifth, focus groups provide less artificial settings when compared with individual interview (Willig, 2001). Individuals might reveal their opinions more in group discussion than in formal interview setting.

The limitations of adopting qualitative research method are its poor reliability

and validity, thus its generalization power is lowered. Discussion on the generalization power of the qualitative findings of the focus groups is presented in Chapter 9. The generated conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse were examined in questionnaire survey in order to investigate whether they were also endorsed by a representative group of social work undergraduates in Hong Kong. The results of the questionnaire survey are presented in Chapter 8 and 9.

6.3.2 Phase II Study: Questionnaire survey

Quantitative research method (questionnaire survey) was conducted in Phase II Study. This dominant part of the study assisted to find out the patterns and endorsements of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, as well as the psychosocial correlates among a representative sample of social work undergraduates in Hong Kong. Quantitative method provides rigor and parsimonious statistical data on the general patterns of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. It also reveals relationships among variables.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods indeed combined the strengths of both methods. The use of qualitative research in Phase I Study provided first-hand and in-depth understanding on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the social work undergraduates' perspectives. This compensated for the weakness of previous studies on their predominant use of academic experts' perspectives in understanding spousal abuse. This enriches the existing understanding of spousal abuse by providing their conceptions and beliefs from the lay perspectives.

6.4 Procedures of Phase I Study: Focus groups

This section presents the procedures in conducting the focus groups, including

the sample of focus groups, the recruitment of participants, as well as guidelines and procedures for conducting the focus groups. The profiles of participants and the results are presented in Chapter 7.

6.4.1 The sample of focus groups

According to Morgan (1997), the rule of thumb is 6-10 participants for each focus group and 3-5 groups for one single study. The researcher of this study planned to recruit 4-5 groups with 8-10 participants in each group. The researcher of this study was also the moderator of the groups. Social work undergraduates studying in Social Work Bachelor's degree programs in local institutions were the target participants.

6.4.2 Procedures in recruiting participants

There are six universities in Hong Kong providing Social Work Bachelor's degree programs. The representatives of the social work student societies among the six universities were contacted by the researcher on phone. Moreover, the representatives of Hong Kong Federation of Social Work Students (FSWS) were also contacted. They were told about the purpose and procedures of the focus groups. They were requested to send an email about an invitation to join the focus groups to their undergraduates through internal mass email systems. The representatives of the FSWS refused to help while those of students societies among the six universities agreed to do so.

The invitation email was written in Chinese and the content was the purpose and procedures of the focus groups. Target participants were invited to join a two-hour focus group on the topic of spousal abuse. Each of the participants was given eighty Hong Kong dollars as travel and meal expenses for joining the focus group.

Thirty two social work undergraduates replied the researcher personally through

email or by phone and eight others later joined the focus group. These eight participants were referred by those who already joined. Participants were formed into five groups according to their availability in joining the focus groups.

6.4.3 Procedures in conducting the focus groups

The five focus groups were conducted separately in the conference rooms in Social Work Department in The Chinese University of Hong Kong, student halls of City University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Shue Yan University in June and July 2006. The duration of each focus group was about two hours. Participants were requested to sign the consent form before the focus group started.

There were two moderators in each focus group. The chief moderator was the researcher of this study. The assistant moderator was a master student in Social Work who had rich experience in conducting qualitative research, especially in in-depth interview. She was invited to observe and ask clarifications for unclear areas throughout the discussion. She generally felt that most of the participants were active during the discussion process.

The focus groups were mainly conducted by the chief moderator. There were several guiding questions for the focus groups. They were composed of the opening, introductory, key and ending questions. Table 6.1 shows the guiding questions. It was because the study examined the shared conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, same questions were asked during the five focus groups. Fern (2001) suggested that the uniformity of questions might be desirable for research task in uncovering common thoughts. In order to make sure all the participants were taking part in the discussion, turn-taking was encouraged. This meant only one participant spoke at a time, and they were reminded that there were no absolute right or wrong answers. The chief moderator noticed the dominant participants and encouraged reticent

participants to express their views. The atmosphere was positive and encouraging throughout the discussion. Every participant had their chances to express their viewpoints. Table 6.1 also shows the guiding questions in Cantonese and the translations in English. All discussions were carried out in Cantonese, the mother tongue of the participants.

In every focus group discussion, the chief moderator first welcomed all the participants and presented the purpose of the discussion. Participants were asked to discuss their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. The chief moderator also reminded the participants that spousal abuse is one form of domestic violence, other forms include child abuse, elder abuse, and siblings abuse. It was emphasized that the topic of the discussion focused on spousal abuse. Participants expressed that they understood the focal of discussion was abusive behaviors between intimate couples. After this introduction, participants were asked to introduce themselves to each other. This opening question served as a warm-up session for about 15 to 20 minutes in order to integrate participants. Introductory questions were asked and discussed for another 15 minutes before transition to the key questions. The warm-up questions also helped to tune participants' focus and condense their topic of discussion. The rest (about 70 minutes) of the discussion mainly focused on the key questions which were the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. After the discussion on the key questions, the chief moderator summarized and reported the points that had been discussed. Participants were asked if they had any missing viewpoints they would like to add. The assistant moderator also asked questions if she found any areas of discussion needed clarification. The session for the summary and ending questions was about 15 to 20 minutes. In the last session, the chief moderator provided an oral summary of the content that had been discussed. Participants were asked to clarify any unclear areas. This ending session served as a checking process in order to make

sure that their viewpoints were recorded without any distortion of their original meanings. The whole process of every focus group discussion was recorded by two digital recorders. Table 6.1 also shows the time allocation for each part of the discussion.

6.5 Procedures of Phase II Study: Questionnaire survey

This section presents the method of the questionnaire survey, which includes the research participants, sample size determination, sampling method, and instruments adopted in the questionnaire survey. Then the results of the pilot study of the questionnaire survey are presented, followed by the descriptions of procedures of the questionnaire survey.

6.5.1 Participants of the questionnaire survey

The research participants of the questionnaire survey were the undergraduates studying Social Work Bachelor's degree in six local universities. The numbers of social work undergraduates enrolled in each university cross-tabulated with gender and the year of study are presented in Table 6.2. Except Hong Kong Shue Yan University provides a four-year Bachelor's degree program, others provide a three-year program with placements practice in different social service organizations.

6.5.2 Sample size determination

The sample size of this phase of study was determined by the following statistical requirements. First is the statistical power, which is the probability of correctly rejecting a false null hypothesis (Shavelson, 1995). It is the ability of a test to detect the "real" differences (Karemen & Thiemann, 1987). The minimum suggested power for an ordinary study is 80% (Cohen, 1988). Second is effect size,

which means the size of differences found. If the effect size is small, the power will also be small, thus larger sample size is needed to ensure the power. Last but not least, the level of significance, which is the probability of rejecting a true null hypothesis and typically set at .05 or .01. The effect size of this study was considered to be small as variables might be highly correlated and it was set at .15, with its power and significance level set at .8 and .05 respectively. According to the sample size table proposed by Cohen (1988), the minimum sample size for this study should be 343. Moreover, factor analysis would be conducted to analyze the factor structures found in conceptions of spousal abuse, and according to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), a good general rule of thumb for factor analysis is 300 cases. Therefore, the target sample size was 300 to 350 for this study. The total number of social work undergraduates in year 2007 was 908. The target sample size covered 33 percent to 38.5 percent of the population. This showed the sample had a good representation of the population.

6.5.3 Sampling method

A stratified sampling strategy was used to recruit participants. Stratified sampling was used because different numbers of social work undergraduates were studying in six local universities. In order to have a sample that could equally represent social work undergraduates from different universities, the recruitment of participants should be based on proportion to the number of undergraduates in each university divided by their gender and year of study. This also helped to ensure the sample had a good representation of the population.

Hong Kong Federation of Social Work Students (FSWS) was contacted to obtain the list of social work undergraduates in the six universities. The sample size of each university was calculated based on the proportion of gender and year of study with

350 as the target sample size. Table 6.2 also shows the sample number of each university divided by gender and year of study.

There were more female (692) than male (216) undergraduates, in order to have a fair comparison between genders, male undergraduates were over-sampled by 1.5 times. Therefore, the total number of target participants was set at 398.

To ensure the power of the inferential statistic analysis, random sampling was adopted. The researcher first prepared lists with either students' names or students' identity card numbers cross-tabulated by gender and year of study from each university. Random numbers were drawn from Microsoft Office Excel program, the random drawn numbers were then matched with the students' lists. Two universities (HKU and BU) refused to release the students' lists to the researcher. Thus student helpers of these universities were given a list of randomly drawn numbers and they were requested to match those numbers with the students' lists on their own. The number of target participants was calculated based on the proportion of undergraduates divided by their gender and year of study from each university.

Three hundred and ninety-eight target participants were randomly drawn from the list of social work undergraduates in six universities according to the stratified sampling plan. Extra participants were also drawn in order to serve as the reserve in case target participants refused to join. The response rate was 91 percent with 361 completed questionnaires collected.

6.5.4 Instruments

The 16-page research questionnaire with a total of 252 items, organized under eight sections (Appendix III). The questionnaire incorporated four self-constructed instruments, three standardized instruments, and questions on participants' perceptions of adequacy of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in the social work

curriculum, demographic and family characteristics. Table 6.3 shows the structure of the research questionnaire. In most sections, the participants indicated their answers in a 4-point Likert scales.

The four self-constructed instruments were 1) conceptions of spousal abuse, which is developed based on findings from focus groups and in conjunction with items of physical assault subscale of the revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2: Straus & Hamby, 1996); 2) the beliefs about spousal abuse; 3) socialization of gender stereotyping; and 4) socialization of violence approval. The three standardized instruments were the 1) Gender Role Egalitarian Attitudes Test (GREAT; Chang, 1999), which was used to measure participants' attitudes toward gender; 2) Multidimensional Scale of Chinese Individual Traditionality, and 3) Multidimensional Scale of Chinese Individual Modernity (Yang, Yu, & Yep, 1989), which were used to measure participants' endorsements of Chinese Traditionality and Chinese Modernity. Detailed descriptions of each instrument are discussed in the following sub-sections.

6.5.4.1 Measurement of conceptions of spousal abuse

The conceptions of spousal abuse mainly focused on physical and psychological behavioral manifestations of abuse. The physical assault subscale (12 items) from the revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2: Straus & Hamby, 1996) and 12 items based on findings from the focus groups were generated to form the conceptions of physical abuse. Thirty-five items of psychological abuse were generated based on findings from the focus groups. The details of the formulation of these conceptions are discussed in Section 7.3.1 of Chapter 7. They made up the 59-item of behavioral manifestations of physical and psychological abuse. Two identical sets of items were formed to examine participants' conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse. Participants were requested to indicate their agreement about items that constitute

spousal abuse in a 4-point Likert scales ranged from 1 “strongly disagree” to 4 “strongly agree”. A higher score meant participant had broader conceptions of abuse as compared with a lower score. The Cronbach’s alpha (α) of the conceptions of wife abuse in the pilot study was .95 and that of conceptions of husband abuse was .94. This showed satisfactory reliabilities of these two measurement scales. The results of the pilot study are reported in Section 6.6.

6.5.4.2 Measurement of beliefs about spousal abuse

Fourteen items were generated for the beliefs about spousal abuse. They were generated based on previous research and findings from focus groups. The details of the generation of these beliefs are discussed in Section 7.4.1 of Chapter 7. Two identical sets of items were set for wife abuse and husband abuse, this made up a total of 28 items for examining participants’ beliefs about spousal abuse. Participants were requested to indicate their agreements about beliefs in a 4-point Likert scales, ranged from 1 “strongly disagree” to 4 “strongly agree”. As all of the items were biased statements about spousal abuse, a higher score indicated more agreements about biased beliefs as compared with a lower score. The Cronbach’s alpha (α) of the beliefs about wife abuse in the pilot study was .78 and that of the beliefs about husband abuse was .84. This showed acceptable reliabilities of these two measurement scales.

6.5.4.3 Measurement of attitudes toward gender

Participants’ attitudes toward gender were measured by the Gender Role Egalitarian Attitudes Test (GREAT) developed by Chang (1999). It is a 10-item scale with gender roles in two major domains, including work and domestic. There are descriptions of five activities in the work domain and another five descriptions of activities in the domestic domain. The instructions and items are in English. The

researcher first translated them into Chinese and invited another PhD candidate who was studying cross-cultural psychology to do the back translation. The translations of both versions were highly consistent. Participants were requested to indicate their attitudes toward gender by comparing the appropriateness and importance of those activities to men and women. The items were scaled between -4 to 4 on a 9-point Likert scales. The appropriateness and importance were rated by 1 to 4 with 1 as less appropriate and important and 4 as the most appropriate and important. Two composite scores were generated with one for work domain and one for domestic domain. A higher score reflected participant held more gender-stereotyped attitudes than a lower score, a zero score represented a gender egalitarian attitude, and a negative score indicated anti-gender stereotypical attitudes. The original Cronbach's alphas ranged from .71 to .74 (Chang, 1999). The Cronbach's alphas were .70 for the work domain and .78 for the domestic domain in the pilot study. This showed acceptable reliabilities of these two measurement scales.

6.5.4.4 Measurement of socialization of gender stereotyping

Gender stereotyping statements were self-constructed with reference to previous literature and common beliefs in gender roles assignment. Four items were generated based on the beliefs that "men are superior over women" and "men are more important than women." The four generated items were "Having a son is more important than having a daughter", "Boys should have more education as compared with girls", "Girls should do household chores while boys do not need to", "Men are more suitable than women to work in managerial level." Participants were requested to indicate their perceptions on their father and mother's endorsements of these statements in a 4-point Likert scales ranged from 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree". As perceptions on both father and mother's endorsements were examined, this

made up eight items for this measurement. A higher score meant participants perceived their parents were more gender stereotyped as compared with a lower score. Moreover, participants were also asked to indicate their endorsements of their parents' attitudes on a 4-point Likert scales ranged from 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree". A higher score indicated participant was highly socialized with their parents' attitudes on gender stereotyping. The Cronbach's alpha for perceptions of father's gender stereotyping was .83 and that of mother was .80 in the pilot study. This showed satisfactory reliabilities of these two measurement scales.

6.5.4.5 Measurement on socialization of violence approval

A 10-item of Violence Approval subscale from the Personal and Relationship Profile (PRP) adopted in Chan's study (2005) was served as a foundation for the development of items of this measurement. Six items were extracted from this subscale. These items describe situations of whether using violence is appropriate or not. These six items were "A boy who is hit by another one should hit back", "a girl who is hit by another one should hit back", "I can think of a situation when I would approve of a wife slapping a husband's face", "I can think of a situation when I would approve of a husband slapping a wife's face", "It is sometimes necessary for parents to slap a teen who talks back or is getting into trouble", "It is sometimes necessary to discipline a child with corporal punishment." The researcher first translated the items into Chinese and invited a PhD candidate to do the back translation, who also did the back translation of GREAT. The translations of both versions were highly consistent.

Participants were requested to indicate their perceptions on their father's and mother's endorsement of these statements in a 4-point Likert scales ranged from 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree". As perceptions on both father and mother's endorsements were examined, this made up 12 items for this measurement. A higher

score meant participants perceived their parents had higher approval of violence as compared with a lower score. Besides, participants were also asked to indicate their endorsements of their parents' attitudes on a 4-point Likert scales ranged from 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree". A higher score indicated participant was highly socialized with their parents' attitudes on approval of violence. The Cronbach's alpha for the perceptions of father's violence approval was .73 and that for the perceptions of mother was .56 in the pilot study. The reliability for the perceptions of father's violence approval was acceptable while that for the perceptions of mother was relatively unsatisfactory.

6.5.4.6 Measurement of Chinese Traditionality

Multidimensional Scale of Chinese Individual Traditionality developed by Yang, Yu and Yep (1989) was applied to measure participants' endorsements of Chinese Traditionality. This scale consists of five subscales that assess endorsements in 1) Respect for authority, 2) Filial piety and ancestral worship, 3) Conservatism and endurance, 4) Fatalism and defensiveness, and 5) Superiority of male. Only sub-scales 1 and 5 were used in this study because of their relevance to the present study. Sixteen items, eight for Respect for authority and eight for Superiority of male were tested. Participants were requested to indicate their endorsements in a 4-point Likert scales with 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree". The items were in Chinese and the researcher modified some of the wordings in order to fit into the local context without changing the original meaning of the items. The original Cronbach alphas were ranged from .69 to .80. In Zhang et al.'s study (2003) with Chinese sample, Cronbach alpha were ranged from .63 to .82. The Cronbach's alpha for the Respect for authority was .76 and that for the Superiority of male was .83 in the pilot study. This indicated both subscales had acceptable reliabilities.

6.5.4.7 Measurement of Chinese Modernity

Multidimensional Scale of Chinese Individual Modernity developed by Yang, Yu and Yep (1989) was adopted to measure participants' Chinese Modernity. This scale consists of five subscales that assess endorsements in 1) Egalitarianism and openness, 2) Social isolation and self-reliance, 3) Optimism and assertiveness, 4) Affective hedonism, and 5) Gender equality. Only sub-scales 1 and 5 were used in this study because of their relevance to the present study. Sixteen items, eight for Egalitarianism and openness and eight for Gender equality were tested. Participants were requested to indicate their endorsements in a 4-point Likert scales with 1 "strongly disagree" to 4 "strongly agree". The items were in Chinese and the researcher modified some of the wordings in order to fit into the local context without changing the original meaning of the items. The original Cronbach alphas were ranged from .66 to .76. In Zhang et al.'s study (2003) with Chinese sample, Cronbach alpha were ranged from .68 to .83. The Cronbach's alpha for the Egalitarianism and openness was .74 and that for the Gender equality was .86 in the pilot study. This indicated both subscales had acceptable reliabilities.

6.5.4.8 Measurement of participants' perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum

Seven items were set to examine participants' perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum. In these seven items, two items were about adequacy of training on knowledge of spousal abuse, two were about request for increasing training on knowledge of spousal abuse, two were about participants' willingness to handle spousal abuse cases in the future and the last one was about their overall knowledge about spousal abuse. Furthermore, five extra items with fill in the blank format were set to examine participants' history of training on

knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum.

6.5.4.9 Demographic and family characteristics

Participants' age, gender, institutions, year of study were asked. Moreover, their family characteristics, including the happiness of their family life, their parents' marital and job status, recipient of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA) as well as history of parental abuse were examined.

6.5.5 Effect size adopted in the statistical analyses of results from the questionnaire

Effect size is a measure used to indicate the strength of relationship between two variables (Rubin & Babbie, 2007). Several effect size indexes are used in this study.

The effect size for the relationship (correlation) is r (Cohen, 1988, 1992). The small range is to .1; the medium range is to .3; and the large range is to .5.

The effect size for the test of difference is Cohen's d (d) (Cohen, 1988, 1992). The small range is to .2; the medium range is to .5, and the large range is to .8.

The effect size for the test of differences in F value is partial eta squared (partial η^2). The small range is to .01, the medium range is to .04, and the large range is to .1 (Adan, Prat and Sanchez-Turet, 2004).

The effect size indicates the magnitude of the regression coefficients is Cohen's f^2 (f^2). The small range is .02, the medium range is to .15 and the large range is to .35.

The effect size for the magnitude of McNemar and Bowker test is Cramer's V (ϕ_c), which tests the strength of association of the cross tabulations. It ranges from 0 (no association) to 1 (the theoretical maximum possible association).

6.6 Pilot study of the questionnaire survey

Pilot study was conducted in October 2007 after the draft questionnaire was

designed. A pilot study is “a small-scale replica of the main study” (Burton, 2000). The purpose of this pilot study was to examine the clarity of the questionnaire items and the feelings of participants in answering the questions. The researcher would like to find out whether the questionnaire is too lengthy, too difficult to understand, too sensitive and generates hard feelings to the participants. Thirty questionnaires were distributed to social work undergraduates in The Chinese University of Hong Kong by convenience sampling. Twenty-eight completed questionnaires were collected. The response rate was 93%. There were 18 females and 10 males. Participants found the questionnaire understandable, they took about thirty minutes to complete and it did not generate any hard feelings to them. One comment was made about the organization of questions in Section 5 about their parents’ attitudes on gender stereotyping and violence approval. They found it relatively confusing if perceptions of their parents’ attitudes were asked in the sequence of father then followed by mother. They found it difficult to shift from perceiving father’s attitudes to mother’s attitudes. They suggested it would be clearer to put perceptions of father’s attitudes in a whole sub-section then followed by a whole sub-section for perceptions of mother’s attitudes. The researcher agreed to their comments and modified Section 5. Then a final questionnaire was set and surveyed in the main study.

6.6.1 Psychometric properties of assessment tools in the pilot study

Internal consistency was analyzed in order to examine the preliminary psychometric properties of the measurements and support for the hypotheses. The Cronbach’s alpha, the inter-item correlation and the item-total correlation were computed. These reliability indexes are presented in Table 6.4.

In general, the measurements showed acceptable to good reliabilities, except perceptions of mother’s violence approval and perceptions of training on spousal

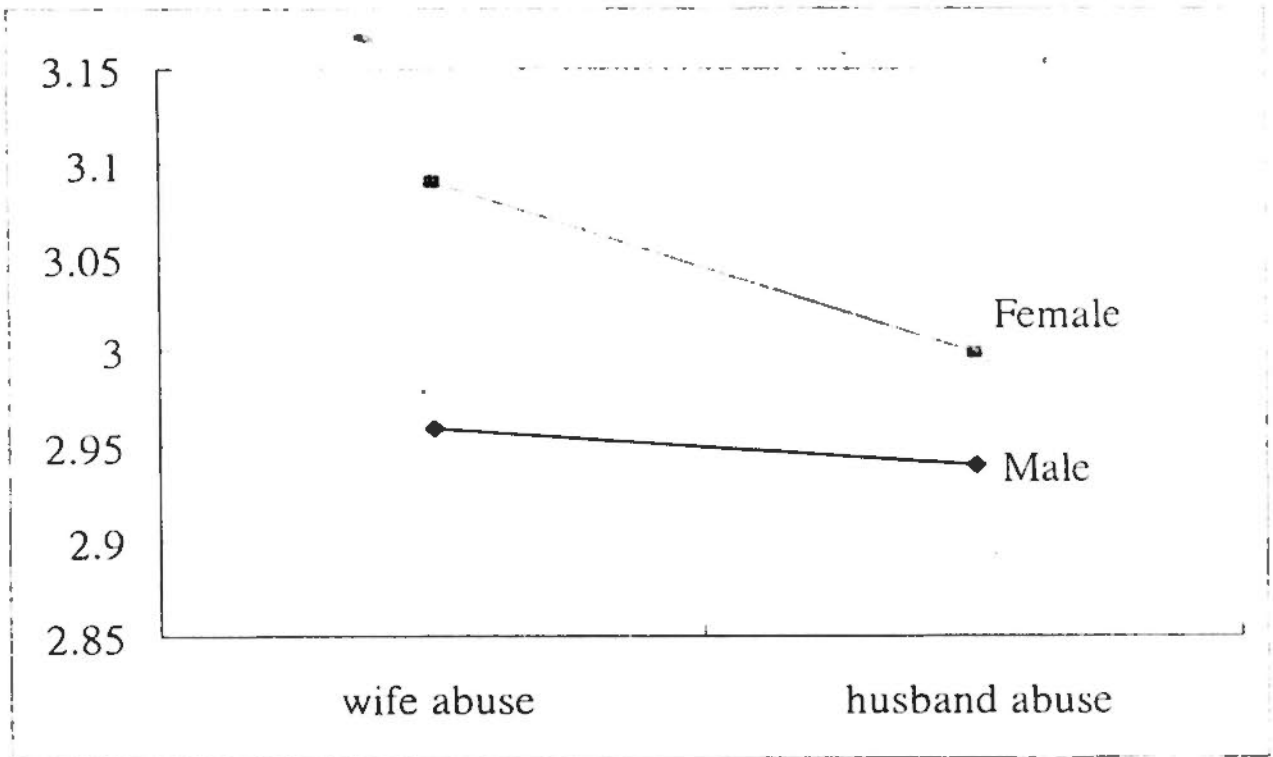
abuse. Some of the items showed small relationship with the whole measurement, but it may be related to the small sample size in the pilot study. Moreover, items generated were based on review of previous research and some were based on findings from focus groups. They possessed good face validity. Therefore, no item was deleted from the draft questionnaire.

6.6.2 Support for the research hypotheses from the preliminary results of pilot study

With reference to Hypothesis 1: Social work undergraduates would have broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse because of wider media and academic research coverage on wife abuse; paired t-tested between participants' conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse were analyzed. It was found that participants had broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, the differences were significant in one tailed t-test ($M_{\text{husband abuse}}(28) = 2.98$; $M_{\text{wife abuse}}(28) = 3.05$, $t = -1.98$ ($df = 27$), $p < .05$). This supported the first hypothesis that participants tended to have broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse.

With reference to Hypothesis 2: based on the hypothesis of same sex favoritism, conceptions of spousal abuse are related to both victims' and participants' gender, within-subjects analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were done. It was found that no significant difference was found based on victims' and participants' gender and no interaction effects between victims' and participants' gender was found in their conceptions of spousal abuse. However, there was a tendency for interaction effects between victims' and participants' gender on their conceptions of spousal abuse as shown in Figure 6.1.

Figure 6.1: The tendency of interaction effects between victims' and participants' gender on their conceptions of spousal abuse



With reference to Hypothesis 3: Based on the hypothesis of same sex favoritism, beliefs about spousal abuse are related to victims' and participants' gender, within-subjects analyses of variance were done. It was found that the main effect of participants' gender was significant ($F=4.2, p <.05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .14$). This meant female participants agreed to fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse when compared with their male counterparts. However, the main effects of victims' gender and the interaction effect of victims' and participants' gender were not significant.

With reference to Hypotheses 4a to 8a: Are the five psychosocial correlates related to the conceptions of spousal abuse, correlation analysis was conducted. The results showed that the conceptions of spousal abuse were negatively related to participants' attitudes toward gender especially those within the domestic domain, the correlation with conceptions of wife abuse was $-.42 (p <.05)$ and that with conceptions of husband abuse was $-.39 (p <.05)$. These followed the prevalent

findings that attitudes toward gender were related to the conceptions of spousal abuse.

With reference to Hypotheses 4b to 8b: Are the five psychosocial correlates related to the beliefs about spousal abuse, correlation analysis was conducted. It was found that the beliefs about spousal abuse were positively related to participants' endorsements of Chinese Traditionality, the correlation with beliefs about wife abuse was .63 ($p < .01$) and that with beliefs about husband abuse was .60 ($p < .01$). These findings support that participants' beliefs about spousal abuse were related to their cultural values. Table 6.5 summarizes the correlations for the hypotheses.

To sum up, the pilot study gave some tentative support to the research hypotheses. Table 6.5 summarizes the correlations amongst the psychosocial correlates and the outcome variables based on the hypotheses of this study. The measurements in the questionnaire were usable with acceptable to good reliabilities. No item was deleted and the research hypotheses were kept based on the preliminary results of this pilot study. The questionnaire was appropriate to be tested further with a larger sample of social work undergraduates.

6.7 Recruitment of participants for Phase II Study

Student helpers who were also social work undergraduates from each university were first recruited from the FSWS. Each helper got a list of randomly drawn target participants, copies of questionnaires and guideline of conducting the questionnaire survey. The researcher of this study conducted a short briefing section with each student helper. The duties of the student helpers were to approach the target participants, invite them to fill in the questionnaire and collect the finished questionnaire. They were required to tell each participant the purpose of the study, remind them to sign the consent form on page two of the questionnaire and the 30-minute duration of completing the questionnaire. Participants were allowed to finish

the questionnaire anywhere they prefer provided that the place was not disturbing. They sent back the finished questionnaire to the student helper within one to two weeks. Student helpers were also asked to check whether there were a lot of missing answers in the questionnaire when they collect it. They had to note down the number of distributed and collected questionnaires so as to facilitate the calculation of response rate.

The questionnaire survey was conducted in November to December 2007. The questionnaire was self-administrative, purpose of the study was stated and the consent form was attached in the first two pages of the questionnaire. The questionnaire took about thirty minutes to complete. Each questionnaire participant was given fifty Hong Kong dollars in order to compensate for the time they used to fill in the questionnaire. Helpers were given twenty Hong Kong dollars for each collected questionnaire so as to compensate for their time and effort used in approaching the target participants.

Three hundred and ninety-eight questionnaires were distributed and 361 valid questionnaires were collected. The response rate was 91 percent which was relatively high. This might be due to the close contact between the student helpers and the target participants. Moreover, the target participants might regard spousal abuse as a social issue and they concerned about it. No target participants refused to participate in the questionnaire survey. Thirty-seven missing questionnaires were lost by student helpers, and some of the participants failed to return the completed questionnaires within the time frame set by the researcher.

Table 6.1: The guiding questions of the focus groups

Instructions given by the chief moderator:

Welcome to our focus group discussion! Today's discussion would last for about two hours. The topic of our discussion is about your conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, including wife abuse and husband abuse. I hope you will not hesitate to express your ideas in responding to our guiding questions. There will be some guiding questions to lead our discussion. I would like to encourage everyone to take part in the discussion actively. Please take turn in expressing your views and there is no absolute right or wrong answers for today's discussion. If you don't have further question, I would like to start now.

(首先好歡迎各位參加今次嘅聚會小組討論。今日嘅討論會進行大約兩小時。今日討論嘅題目係你哋對虐待配偶(包括虐妻-即係老公虐待老婆及虐夫-即係老婆虐待老公)嘅定義及信念。希望你哋可以提出多啲寶貴嘅意見,對我哋討論嘅題目作出回應。我亦希望大家喺討論嘅過程中可以互相尊重彼此嘅意見,因為我哋今日所討論嘅係無絕對正確或絕對錯誤嘅答案。如果各位無問題,我哋開始今日嘅討論。)

Opening questions (15-20 minutes):

1. Can you tell us your name, year of study, and the institution you are from?
2. Can you tell us briefly why you are interested in joining this focus group?

(首先我哋彼此介紹吓,請你話我哋知你叫咩名,讀幾多年班,及來自邊間院校,同埋點解你對呢個咩咩小組討論有興趣呢?)

Introductory questions (15 minutes):

1. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear about the term "spousal abuse?" (當你聽到虐待配偶,你第一時間會諗起啲咩呢?)
-

Key questions (70 minutes):

1. How would you define wife abuse, how would you conceptualize the behavioral manifestations of wife abuse?

(你會點樣界定虐待妻子,有啲咩行爲你認為係虐待妻子嘅行爲?)

2. How would you define husband abuse, how would you conceptualize the behavioral manifestations of husband abuse?

(你會點樣界定虐待丈夫,有啲咩行爲你認為係虐待丈夫嘅行爲?)

3. Are the behavioral manifestations of wife abuse identical to or different from those of husband abuse? (你所認為虐妻和虐夫行爲有咩相同嘅地方,又有咩唔同嘅地方?)

4. Why would you have such conceptions? Are they related to your own experience, such as the information heard from the media, socialized by your parents, and/ or peers? (你點解會有咁嘅概念?你覺得有啲咩嘢因素影響你對虐妻同埋虐夫行爲嘅諗法?例如:你哋
-

傳媒、父母、或朋友聽到呢方面嘅訊息?)

5. What do you think about the causes of abuse, responsibility of the victims and abusers in spousal abuse? (你認為虐待配偶點解會發生? 施虐者和受虐者要負上咩責任?)

6. Are the above viewpoints different between wife abuse and husband abuse?)

(虐妻和虐夫的發生原因和施虐者及受虐者的責任有冇唔同?)

7. What are the factors influencing your views? (你覺得有啲咩因素影響你對虐妻同理虐夫發生原因及責任嘅說法?)

Ending questions: (The chief moderator provided a short oral summary before asking the ending questions.)(15-20 minutes)

1. Is this an adequate summary on what we had been discussed today?

2. Did I correctly describe what was said? Please feel free to clarify any unclear points.

(呢個總結係唔係已足夠概括我哋今日嘅討論? 有無任何唔清楚嘅地方需要修正? 請你哋指出需要修正嘅地方。)

Table 6.2: Total numbers and sample numbers of social work undergraduates among the six universities

University Study year	Total no. of undergraduates			Sample no. with target sample of 350		Final sample size with male undergraduates over-sampled by 1.5 times		
	Female	Male	Total	Female	Male	Female	Male	Total
<i>CUHK</i>								
Year 1	37	6	43	14	2	14	3	17
Year 2	32	8	40	12	3	12	5	17
Year 3	37	5	42	14	2	14	3	17
Year 4	3	0	3	2	--	2	--	2
<i>PolyU</i>								
Year 1	34	10	44	13	4	13	6	19
Year 2	48	4	52	18	2	18	3	21
Year 3	33	8	41	13	3	13	5	18
<i>HKU</i>								
Year 1	26	14	40	10	5	10	8	18
Year 2	30	10	40	12	4	12	6	18
Year 3	29	10	39	11	4	11	6	17
<i>BU</i>								
Year 1	37	8	45	14	3	14	5	19
Year 2	35	7	42	13	3	13	5	18
Year 3	38	7	45	15	3	15	5	20
<i>SYU</i>								
Year 1	37	9	46	14	4	14	6	20
Year 2	44	19	63	17	7	17	11	28
Year 3	29	19	48	11	7	11	11	22
Year 4	31	18	49	12	7	12	11	23
<i>CityU</i>								
Year 1	38	23	61	15	9	15	14	29
Year 2	47	18	65	18	7	18	11	29
Year 3	47	13	60	18	5	18	8	26
Total: 908			Total: 350		Total: 398			

Note: *CUHK*: The Chinese University of Hong Kong

PolyU: The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

HKU: The University of Hong Kong

BU: Hong Kong Baptist University

SYU: Hong Kong Shue Yan University

CityU: City University of Hong Kong

Table 6.3: The structure of the research questionnaire

Section	Variables to be measured	Instruments	Response format	No. of items
1	Conceptions of wife abuse	Self-constructed conceptions of wife abuse based on findings from the focus groups and in conjunction with items of physical subscale from the CTS2	4-point Likert scales	59
2	Attitudes toward gender	GREAT (Chang, 1999)	9-point Likert scales	10
3	Conceptions of husband abuse	Identical items of the conceptions of wife abuse based on findings from the focus groups and in conjunction with items of physical subscale from the CTS2	4-point Likert scales	59
4	Beliefs about spousal abuse	Self-constructed beliefs about spousal abuse based on findings from the focus groups and previous research Two identical sets of items, one for wife abuse and the other for husband abuse	4-point Likert scales	28
5.	Socialization of gender stereotyping and violence approval	Self-constructed items developed based on common beliefs in gender roles assignment and previous research findings Two identical sets of items for testing participants' perceptions of their father's and mother's attitudes	4-point Likert scales	40
6	Chinese Traditionality and Chinese Modernity	Multidimensional Scale of Chinese Individual Traditionality and Multidimensional Scale of Chinese Individual Modernity (Yang, Yu, & Yep, 1989)	4-point Likert scales	32
7	Perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in the social work curriculum	Questions on "adequacy of training of spousal abuse", "request for more training on spousal abuse", "willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future", and training history on spousal abuse	Multiple choices questions and fill in the blanks	12
8	Demographic and family characteristics	Questions on age, gender, institution, year of study, happiness of family life, parents' marital and job status, recipient of Comprehensive Social Security Assistance (CSSA), and history of parental abuse	Multiple choices questions and fill in the blanks	12
Total number of items:				252

Table 6.4: Reliability indexes of the measurements in the pilot study

Measurements	Cronbach's alpha (α)	Mean inter-item correlation	Mean item-total correlation	Range of item-total correlation
Conceptions of spousal abuse				
Wife abuse	.95	.25	.46	.18-.73
Husband abuse	.94	.22	.44	.20-.71
Beliefs about spousal abuse				
Wife abuse	.78	.20	.43	.14-.71
Husband abuse	.84	.28	.42	.16-.67
Attitudes toward gender				
Work domain	.70	.31	.40	.26-.65
Home domain	.78	.42	.42	.22-.77
Socialization of parents' gender stereotypes				
Father's gender stereotypes	.83	.55	.61	.52-.74
Mother's gender stereotypes	.80	.51	.59	.57-.65
Socialization of parents' violence approval				
Father's violence approval	.73	.31	.42	.23-.64
Mother's violence approval	.56	.18	.32	.16-.47
Chinese traditionality				
Respect for authority	.76	.28	.36	.11-.60
Superiority of male	.83	.38	.61	.26-.62
Chinese modernity				
Egalitarianism and openness	.74	.26	.35	.16-.57
Gender equality	.86	.43	.53	.34-.72
Perceptions of training	.58	.25	.29	.20-.38

Table 6.5: Correlations amongst the psychosocial correlates and the outcome variables based on the research hypotheses of this study

Independent variables	Attitudes toward gender in domestic domain	Attitudes toward gender in work domain	Father's gender stereotypes	Father's violence approval	Mother's gender stereotypes	Mother's violence approval	Chinese Traditionality	Respect to Authority	Superiority of Male	Chinese modernity	Egalitarianism and openness	Gender equality
Conceptions												
Wife abuse index	-.*	-	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+	+ ^Δ	- ^Δ	- ^Δ	- ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ
Husband abuse index	-.*	-	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+	+ ^Δ	- ^Δ	- ^Δ	- ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+	+ ^Δ
Physical abuse												
wife abuse	-	-	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+	- ^Δ	- ^Δ	- ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ
husband abuse	-	-	+ ^Δ	+	+ ^Δ	+	- ^Δ	- ^Δ	- ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ
Psychological abuse												
wife abuse	- ^Δ	-	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+	+ ^Δ	- ^Δ	- ^Δ	-	+	+	+
husband abuse	- ^Δ	-	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ	+	+ ^Δ	-	- ^Δ	-	+	+ ^Δ	+ ^Δ
Beliefs												
Wife abuse	+ ^Δ	+	- ^Δ	-	- ^Δ	-	+*	+ ^Δ	+*	- ^Δ	- ^Δ	-*
Husband abuse	+ ^Δ	+	- ^Δ	-	- ^Δ	-	+*	+ ^Δ	+*	- ^Δ	- ^Δ	-*

Note: + denotes positive relationship;

- denotes negative relationship;

* denotes significant correlations found in the pilot study

^Δ denotes correlations in the predicted directions in the pilot study

CHAPTER 7: RESULTS OF FOCUS GROUPS STUDY

This chapter mainly presents the results of Phase I Study: Focus groups. There are four sections in this chapter. The first section presents the profile of the participants. The second section discusses the analytic strategies of the focus groups findings. The third section presents and discusses the findings from the focus groups. The last section discusses the rigor of the focus groups study.

7.1 Profile of the participants

The forty participants were composed of 10 (25%) males and 30 (75%) females. Twenty-one (52.5%) participants came from The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), 10 (25%) came from City University of Hong Kong (CityU), 7 (17.5%) came from Hong Kong Shue Yan University (Shue Yan), and 2 (5%) came from Hong Kong Baptist University (BU). There were 15 (37.5%) year 3, 14 (35%) year 2, 10 (25%) year 1 and one (2.5%) year 4 undergraduates. Table 7.1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the participants of the five focus groups.

Among the five focus groups, the first three groups were composed of participants from the same university, while the last two groups were composed of participants from different universities. The arrangement of such groupings was determined primarily by convenience. Groupings with participants from single university were predictable as they were recruited through individual university mass email system. It was typical that students from one university came as a group in joining the focus group discussion. This was the case of Group 1. They were in the same year of study and came from the same university. The advantage of grouping with participants from one single university was the familiarity among participants. It was because participants were known to each other, they were freer and ease to express their thinking about spousal abuse. The manipulation and interruption by the

moderator could be minimized. They could just discuss as usual like they were discussing their group project. However, the disadvantage of single university grouping was responses generated might be homogeneous as participants were having the same training background. Group 2 and Group 3 were mixed with participants from different years of study. This helped to indirectly reveal the training on knowledge of spousal abuse among different years of social work curriculum. For groupings with participants from different universities, especially Group 5, the advantage would be the heterogeneous responses generated by participants with different training history. This increased the group dynamics. However, as participants were not familiar with each other, more facilitation from the moderator was needed. This might prevent the flow of ideas amongst the participants.

Before the discussion started, participants were asked about their reasons for joining the focus group. The responses could be generally divided into two categories. First, they were interested in focus groups as they learned about focus groups in the lessons of research method. Some of them would like to know more about focus groups and acts as participants. Second, some of them were interested in the topic of spousal abuse. It was because they learned about spousal abuse in their placement in service centers, they wanted to know more about it. Moreover, some of them would like to know other social work undergraduates' perceptions of spousal abuse.

7.2 Analytic strategies

The content of the five focus groups was fully transcribed by four social work undergraduate student assistants. The researcher who was also the chief moderator of the focus groups did the analysis.

Content analysis was applied in analyzing the data. The goal of the analysis was to find out the conceptions (in terms of behavioral manifestations) and beliefs about

spousal abuse discussed by the participants. The researcher first read the full transcription for few times in order to get a general impression of the content. Domains and sub-domains of the content were formed basically according to the guiding questions. After a preliminary coding scheme was formed in the researcher's mind, she started to categorize the data into different domains and sub-domains. The unit of analysis was a meaningful unit rather than a statement. For instance, the statement "Physical abuse obviously means battering, visible wounds and some bruises" was broken into three meaningful responses, including battering, causing wounds, and causing bruises.

The researcher coded the data for two times and re-read the categorization for two more times in order to consolidate the coding and categorization of the data. After the chief moderator finished analyzing the data, two individual checkers were invited to check the categorization. Both of the checkers were women and were about thirty years old, which was same as the chief researcher. The first checker was a registered nurse with a master degree in gerontology. She was working as an officer in daycare centre of elderly. She had more knowledge about abuse, especially elder abuser as compared with the second checker. The researcher regarded her as having professional knowledge about abuse. The second checker was a secondary school teacher with a master degree in linguistics. Her major teaching subject was English. Her undergraduate major was psychology. The researcher regarded her as having layman knowledge about spousal abuse. It is because this research compares the conceptions of abuse from the lay, legal, and academic experts' perspectives, recruiting checkers from both professional and layman perspectives is appropriate.

The first checker basically agreed to the coding and categorization of the data. She expressed the data were coded objectively and agreed to the categorization. She suggested some minor changes in the translations of the transcriptions. This did not

affect the meanings of the responses and the categorization. The second checker expressed the same viewpoints with the first checker. However, she suggested that financial control could be separated from psychological abuse and be regarded as another significant categorization of abuse. The researcher discussed this point with her and found out this may be related to her background in gerontology. Financial abuse is rather significant in elder abuse. Finally, we came to a consensus that financial abuse could still be classified into psychological abuse.

Both checkers and the researcher re-coded the behavioral manifestations of physical, psychological, and sexual abuse. Each of them re-coded three sets of same raw responses with 20 randomized responses on physical, psychological, and sexual abuse. The intra-rater reliability for physical abuse was 100%, psychological abuse was 95%, and sexual abuse was 100%. The inter-rater reliability of checker 1 with the researcher for physical abuse was 100%, psychological abuse was 85%, and sexual abuse was 90%. The inter-rater reliability of checker 2 with researcher for physical abuse was 100%, psychological abuse was 90% and sexual abuse was 100%. Peer checking is one of the important steps to enhance the rigor of a qualitative research as suggested in Shek, Tang, and Han's (2005) study. The discussion of the rigor of this focus groups study is presented in detail in Section 7.5.

7.3 Findings of the focus groups

The purpose of the focus groups was to examine the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse from the social work undergraduates' viewpoints. These findings facilitate the formulation of items in the measurements of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse in the questionnaire survey. The findings are presented in two parts. The first section focused on the conceptions of spousal abuse and the implications on development of items for questionnaire survey. The second part

focused on the beliefs about spousal abuse and the implications on development of items for questionnaire survey.

7.3.1 Conceptions of spousal abuse and implications for development of items for the questionnaire survey

Participants were asked to discuss the behavioral manifestations they considered as spousal abuse. Their responses were coded and analyzed as meaningful units and categorized into tentative domains and sub-domains. A total of 260 raw responses were condensed from the discussion of the participants in the five focus groups. Each participant gave an average of 6.5 responses.

Based on the review on legal and academic experts' conceptions in Chapter 2, spousal abuse could be generally categorized into physical, psychological and sexual abusive acts exerted from spouse to his/her partner (Domestic Violence Ordinance, Hong Kong Law, 189; Straus, 1979; Shepard & Campbell, 1992; Marshall, 1992; Straus & Hamby, 1996; Schornstein, 1997; Levesque, 2001). The data indicated that participants in the focus groups also adopted these three general categorizations in conceptualizing spousal abuse. During each focus group, participants typically started with discussing behavioral manifestations of physical abuse, followed by psychological abuse and sexual abuse. Therefore, participants' responses on the behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse were also coded and analyzed according to these three general domains. Based on the discussion and analysis, the conceptual definition of spousal abuse adopted in this study was defined as "any behavior in physical, psychological and/ or sexual forms exerted by spouse that could cause physical and/or psychological pain or damage to his/her partner."

7.3.1.1 Conceptions of spousal abuse: Physical abuse

Among the 260 raw responses on conceptions of spousal abuse, 91 were classified as physical abuse, which could be further divided into four sub-domains. These four sub-domains were 1) physical assaults and injury through direct body contact, 2) physical assaults by weapons or other objects, 3) physical control involving forces, and 4) actions that damage partner's physical well-being. The researcher categorized these four sub-domains based on the following three criteria, including the execution of overt physical assaults either 1) through direct body contact or 2) using weapons or 3) forces for the purpose of control, which may cause physical injury and/ or damage to partner's physical well-being.

The first sub-domain of physical abuse is "physical assaults and injury through direct body contact." This means physical violent acts are performed by the spouse to his/ her partner with direct body contact. The actions might cause physical wounds and bruises to the partner. This sub-domain was the most discussed form of physical abuse, with 28 out of 91 raw responses. Participants mentioned eight behavioral manifestations, which include battering, grabbing, biting, twisting hair, pushing, striking and kicking, slapping, and pinching. Furthermore, participants also mentioned physical injury including wounds, bruises and bleeding caused by direct physical assaults.

The second sub-domain of physical abuse is "physical assaults by weapons or other objects." This sub-domain is rather similar to the first sub-domain, but spouse uses weapons or any other objects to cause physical hurts on his/her partner. Twenty-seven out of 91 raw responses were classified into this sub-domain. The behavioral manifestations of this sub-domain include hitting with weapons, chair or other hard objects, splashing hot water on partner, using iron to scald partner, using electric shock against partner, slamming partner against the wall, using cigarettes to

scald partner, attempting to throw something against partner that could hurt, and using scissors to castrate male partner, cutting partner's hair by force, and splashing urine on partner.

The third sub-domain is "physical control involving force". This means spouse uses violence to control his/ her partner in performing some harmful acts. Nineteen out of 91 raw responses were classified into this sub-domain. The behavioral manifestations of this sub-domain include forcing partner to do something he/she is not willing to do, such as drinking urine, eating some harmful food, not allowing partner to eat with force, detaining partner with force and forcing partner to do all the household chores. All these behavior would be harmful to partner's physical health states.

The last and the least discussed sub-domain of physical abuse is "covert actions that harm partner's well-being." This means spouse performs certain actions which may or may not be noticed directly but would definitely cause damage to partner's physical health states. Seventeen out of 91 raw responses were classified into this sub-domain. The behavioral manifestations of this sub-domain include cooking unhealthy food for partner, cooking food that partner is allergic to, intending to place things at home that partner is allergic to, doing something that hurt partner's physical well-being (such as non-stop smoking at home and switching on the TV with extremely high volume), injecting some drugs into partner's body, making partner take sleeping pills without notice, not allowing partner to sleep by making noise continuously, and not allowing partner to sleep by switching on the electric fan facing partner. These behaviors though would not cause visible injury on partner's body, they would be harmful to victims' physical health states. Table 7.2 summarizes the behavioral manifestations of physical abuse suggested and discussed in the focus groups.

It is observed that the first and the second sub-domains of physical abuse involve mainly overt forms of physical violent acts with the purpose of assaulting partner. The third and the fourth sub-domains involve mainly covert physical violent acts with the purpose of controlling and damaging partner's physical well-being.

Based on the analysis of the findings, the conceptual definition of physical abuse would be defined as "overt physical assaults", including any behavior involving physical assaults and injury through direct body contact and/or by weapons or other objects; as well as "covert physical assaults" that involves the use of physical force in controlling partner, and actions that damage partner's physical well-being.

7.3.1.2 Conceptions of spousal abuse: Psychological abuse

Over half of the (139) raw responses were classified into the domain of psychological abuse. These 139 raw responses were further categorized into seven sub-domains, including psychological control, threatening, neglecting, verbal abuse, insulting, stalking, and others as uncategorized forms of psychological abuse.

Participants suggested that 1) psychological abuse does not involve the use of physical force and without direct body contact, 2) Partners are hurt psychologically, such as damage to their self-image and self-esteem, elevated stress level and impaired emotional states because of psychological abuse, 3) Psychological damage could be long-lasting and take a longer time to recover as compared with physical hurts in physical abuse.

The first sub-domain of psychological abuse is "psychological control." This means spouse control his/ her partner's finance and personal freedom without physical force. There were 38 raw responses and they were further classified into controlling partner's social network, financial control, not allowing partner to meet with children, invading partner's privacy, not allowing partner to work, keeping

partner's traveling documents, isolating partner from his/ her relatives, and not allowing partner to do something he/ she likes to do without the exertion of forces.

The behavioral manifestations classified as "psychological control" are relatively similar to those classified as "physical control." However, there are two different features that the researcher used to differentiate them. The first feature is "proactive aggression or passive aggression." Physical control behavior involves proactive aggression, such as forcing partner to do something that he/ she is unwilling to do. In this case, physical forces like pushing, grabbing might be used in forcing the partner thus physical hurts might be resulted in the process. However, psychological control would be a form of passive aggression, such as not allowing partner to do something he/she likes to do without the exertion of force. Force might not be involved in such cases. The second feature is "overt control or subtle control." Physical abuse involves higher degree of control in personal freedom, for instance detaining partner which involves force is classified as physical control while not allowing partner to work is classified as psychological control. The researcher interpreted that detaining partner involves higher degree of control in personal freedom and force might be applied. However, not allowing partner to work might not mean detaining partner, thus the control of personal freedom is relatively lower.

Financial control means keeping all the income of partners but only return a small lump sum for partners' daily expenses is regarded as psychological control. Participants in general considered this as spousal abuse. However, they commented that most of the husbands do not consider this as spousal abuse. It is because this is a regular practice within family. It is normal for husband to contribute his monthly income to the family and let his wife manage it. They suggested that most of the husbands might regard this practice as normal and have lower awareness of this, thus they might not consider it as spousal abuse.

The second sub-domain of psychological abuse is “threatening.” This means spouse performed actions which generate threatened feelings to his/her partner. Twenty-six out of 139 raw responses were classified into this sub-domain. Most participants mentioned a local TV program which had scenarios on wife being threatened by her husband when they discussed the behavioral manifestations of threatening. These behavioral manifestations include hiding weapons/ things (newspaper clippings about spousal abuse, putting a pair of scissors near the bed) at home to create a frightening environment, threatening to stop financial support for the family, threatening partner with sharp objects/weapons, threatening to push partner downstairs, threatening to kill partner and/or the whole family, and threatening to beat up partner. Participants, especially males stressed that putting a pair of scissors near the bed was a serious form of threat, in particular to husbands.

The third sub-domain of psychological abuse is “neglect.” This means spouse purposefully perform some actions to ignore the physical existence and the needs of his/ her partner. There were 25 raw responses and they were further condensed into neglecting partner’s sexual needs or other resources, neglecting partner for a long time, asking other family members to ignore/neglect partner. Participants in Group 3 had a long discussion on whether neglecting partner’s sexual needs should be regarded as spousal abuse. Some of them suggested that sexual need is very personal, so individuals have various degree of sexual need. Some suggested that some wives neglect husband’s sexual need as a mean to insult husbands for not giving enough money to support the family. Therefore participants in Group 3 could not come to a consensus to regard neglecting partner’s sexual need as psychological abuse, while participants in other groups regarded this as psychological abuse.

The fourth sub-domain of psychological abuse is “verbal abuse.” This means spouse scold and humiliate his/her partner verbally. There were 21 raw responses and

they were further condensed into scolding partner, yelling and shouting at partner, scolding partner in the public area, nagging, scolding partner in front of children, scolding partner with foul language, as well as scolding partner without any reasons. Participants further emphasized “nagging” as a typical form of husband abuse.

The fifth sub-domain of psychological abuse is “insulting.” This means spouse performed actions that offend his/her partner. There were 17 raw responses and they were condensed into five behavioral manifestations, including teasing partner as no use/ not capable to earn money, damaging partner’s self-image and reputation in his/her community, comparing own partner with others, and rebuking partner.

The sixth sub-domain of psychological abuse is “stalking.” This means spouse purposefully perform some actions to annoy his/ her partner. There were seven raw responses and they were condensed into non-stop phone calling partner’s friends, non-stop phone calling partner, checking partner, following ex-partner, and asking detective to follow partner.

The last sub-domain is “others” which is composed of several unclassified forms of psychological abuse, including unreasonable request, blowing off unhappiness to partner, peeping partner, and accusing partner to have extra marital affairs with others, and name calling partner. Table 7.3 summarizes the behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse suggested and discussed during the focus groups.

Based on the analysis of the findings, the conceptual definition of psychological abuse was defined as any forms of overt or covert behavior leading to mental suffering, including control, verbal abuse, threat, neglect, insult, and stalking which cause invisible psychological harm to the spouse.

7.3.1.3 Conceptions of spousal abuse: Sexual abuse

The conceptual definition of sexual abuse is defined as partner being forced to be

involved in sex or perform or engage in undesirable sexual acts. The responses were categorized based on this definition. There were few responses on sexual abuse, the researcher did not sub-categorize them.

Only 30 out of 260 raw responses were categorized as sexual abuse among the five focus groups. These responses were sub-categorized into six types of sexual abuse, including using violence in sex, forcing partner to have sexual activities, forcing partner to do something which is related to sex that he/she is unwilling to do (watching pornographic movie, wearing uniform to seduce partner, watching partner having sex with other), exchanging partner with others to have sex, excessive sexual demand, and marital rape. Table 7.4 summarizes the behavioral manifestations of sexual abuse suggested and discussed during the focus groups.

7.3.1.4 General discussion of the conceptions of spousal abuse from the focus groups findings

Several major findings were observed throughout the discussions. First, nearly all participants directly mentioned physical abuse when they were asked to define spousal abuse. Second, most of them directly conceptualized physical abuse as battering or hitting by using any hard objects. Some participants conceptualized the behavioral manifestations of physical abuse based on information from the media. They also suggested that abusers tended to use multiple forms of physical abuse in one incident. One participant in Group 1 even proposed that “there are many different forms and strategies in causing physical abuse nowadays and it is difficult to imagine and conceptualize.”

Participants tended to regard overt forms of physical aggression as spousal abuse. This is consistent with Choi and Edleson (1996) and Yick’s (2000) findings summarized in Chapter 4. Normally people in general tend to consider overt physical

forms of abuse rather than covert psychological forms of abuse as spousal abuse.

The discussion on the conceptions of psychological abuse was relatively longer as compared with discussion on physical and sexual abuse. The discussion was more elaborate and extensive. This maybe related to the difficulty in conceptualizing psychological abuse. The conceptions of psychological abuse were commented as more subjective and difficult to be measured as compared with physical abuse (Kwong et al., 2003). As participants were ambiguous in identifying psychological abuse thus they had longer discussion before they could come to consensus.

The discussions on sexual abuse were the fewest, only Group 1 had a relatively extensive discussion on it when compared with other groups. Sexual abuse might be a taboo in Chinese society and it is not supposed to be discussed openly. Even though it is not a new concept as it is defined in both legal and experts' perspectives as spousal abuse. Moreover, some participants suggested that people might ignore sexual abuse as they regarded sexual activities as a normal and private issue for married couples. Besides, it seems that people typically believe that sexual abuse should be solely exerted from the male partners to the female partners. Furthermore, it is because couples might have their own standard towards sexual activities. Therefore, the behavioral manifestations of sexual abuse would not be tested in the questionnaire survey.

7.3.2 Comparison among legal, academic experts' and social work undergraduates' conceptions of spousal abuse and implications for the questionnaire survey

In addition to find out the conceptions of spousal abuse from the social work undergraduates' viewpoints, this research also aims at examining the differences in conceptions of spousal abuse among legal, academic experts and social work undergraduates. Therefore, the behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse among

legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates' perspectives were compared.

7.3.2.1 Conceptions of spousal abuse from the legal perspectives

Based on the review in Chapter 2, section 2.2.1, the behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse conceptualized from the legal perspectives were based on the criminal laws in combating violent crime (Chapter 2, Table 2.5) and the civil law "Domestic Violence Ordinance." Moreover, the "Multi-disciplinary Guidelines on the Handling of Battered Spouse Cases" designed by the Social Welfare Department (1996) could also serve as references for the conceptions of spousal abuse from the legal perspectives. The behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse under legal perspectives are summarized in Table 7.5.

7.3.2.2 Conceptions of spousal abuse from the academic experts' perspectives

The conceptions of spousal abuse from the academic experts' perspectives were based on the revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2: Straus & Hamby, 1996). There are five subscales of conceptions of spousal abuse. These five subscales are 1) negotiation (believing can work out the problem with partner), 2) psychological aggression (from insulting partner to destroying something belonging to partner), 3) physical assault (from throwing something that could hurt to choking partner), 4) physical injury (from feeling physical pain the next day because of fight with partner before to having a broken bone from a fight with partner, and 5) sexual coercion (from making partner have sex without a condom to using threats to make partner have oral or anal sex). These behavioral manifestations were adopted in Chan's (2005) study which was conducted to examine spousal abuse in Hong Kong. Table 7.6 summarizes the conceptions of spousal abuse based on the revised Conflict Tactics

7.3.2.3 Social work undergraduates' conceptions of physical abuse

The behavioral manifestations of physical abuse discussed in the focus groups were relatively similar to those conceptualized from the legal and academic experts' perspectives. Participants suggested different behaviors in causing physical pain and hurts to the victims. Although some of the behavioral manifestations mentioned by the participants were not stated explicitly in the legal and academic experts' perspectives, they still fulfill the criteria in causing physical pain and hurts to the victims. Thus they were also regarded as spousal abuse in the legal and academic experts' perspectives. It was concluded that the conceptions of physical abuse are relatively similar among the legal, academic experts' and social work undergraduates' perspectives. The conceptions from legal and academic experts are more conceptual while those of social work undergraduates are more behavioral.

The behavioral manifestations in the sub-domains of physical assaults and injury through direct body contact and by weapons or other objects were nearly identical with those in legal and academic experts' conceptions. Although slamming partner against the wall and using scissors to castrate male partner are not explicitly conceptualized in legal perspectives, they are illegal acts under the Offences Against the Person Ordinance (Hong Kong Law, Chapter 212, as presented in Chapter 2, Table 2.5). Moreover, spitting on partner is regarded as physical abuse in the legal perspectives, which is a similar form of abuse as compared with splashing urine on partner suggested by social work undergraduates in the focus groups.

The fourth sub-domain (covert actions that damage partner's well-being) consisted of relatively unique behavioral manifestations of physical abuse as compared with legal and academic experts' conceptions. These behavioral

manifestations are relatively unobservable and cause no visible wounds to the victims. In the legal perspectives, observable physical wounds are regarded as evidence in indicating the happening of abuse. Thus these behavioral manifestations are not stated explicitly in the laws. However, it does not mean that these behavioral manifestations are not unlawful actions. The covert actions that harm partner's well-being might also be regarded as spousal abuse in both legal and academic experts' perspectives.

Table 7.7 shows the behavioral checklist in comparing conceptions of physical abuse defined from legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates' perspectives. The symbol Tick (✓) indicates the behavioral manifestations among legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates are identical or with similar meanings. The symbol Tick with an asterisk (✓*) indicates the behavioral manifestations that were not explicitly defined under the specific conception(s) but by definition they can be incorporated in the conception of spousal abuse. The symbol Cross (×) indicates the behavioral manifestations of abuse they were not mentioned by the participants in the focus groups.

It is observed that the behavioral manifestations categorized into "overt physical assaults" overlapped a lot with those in the legal and academic experts' perspectives. There are identical behavioral manifestations among legal, academic experts' and social work undergraduates' perspectives, such as battering, pushing, striking and kicking, pinching, slapping, hitting with something that could hurt, using knife or gun on partner, splashing hot water on partner and burning. However, no participants had mentioned about "choking". There are also behavioral manifestations discussed in focus groups which would be considered as spousal abuse in legal and academic experts' perspectives, for instance biting, grabbing, using electric shock against partner, cutting partner's hair with force, splashing urine on partner, throwing things against partner that could hurt, spitting and clubbing partner.

The researcher observed that the “physical assault subscales” in the CTS2 (Table 7.6) could represent the behavioral manifestations classified as “overt physical assaults.” Therefore, the researcher adopted the “physical assault subscales” of CTS2 (12 items) to represent the “overt physical assaults” analyzed from the focus groups.

The behavioral manifestations classified as “covert physical assaults” were relatively extensive and uniquely conceptualized by the participants in the focus groups. Most of the behavioral manifestations were not mentioned in the legal and academic experts’ conceptions. As the purpose of this study is to find out conceptions of spousal abuse from the social work undergraduates’ viewpoints, the researcher also adopted these behavioral manifestations as items of conceptions of physical abuse in the questionnaire survey.

Therefore, the 12 items under the “physical assault subscales” of CTS2 (Item No. 1-12 in Table 7.8) and another 12 items classified under covert physical assaults based on findings from the focus groups (Item No. 13-24 in Table 7.8) form the questionnaire items of conceptions of physical abuse. Table 7.8 shows the questionnaire items of conceptions of physical abuse. Two identical inventories were set to test the conceptions of physical abuse of wife abuse and husband abuse. Appendix II shows the Chinese version of the conceptions of physical abuse.

7.3.2.4 Social work undergraduates’ conceptions of psychological abuse

Compared with physical abuse, participants in the focus groups spent more time in discussing the behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse. The behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse were more extensive and elaborate as compared with those conceptualized from the legal and academic experts’ perspectives. Those in the legal and academic experts’ perspectives were relatively conceptual. Usually it covers certain behavioral manifestations in one single

definition, for instance “controlling, confining and depriving material, financial, personal resources and social activities.” This behavioral manifestation covers financial control, controlling partner’s social network and depriving partner’s resources as defined by the social work undergraduates in the focus groups.

The behavioral manifestations discussed in the focus groups indeed serve to elaborate and extend the conceptions of psychological abuse conceptualized from the legal and academic experts’ perspectives. For instance, verbal abuse was extended to five more behavioral manifestations in the focus groups discussions. Moreover, participants also pointed out some abusive behaviors were exclusively for husband abuse, such as “nagging” and threat generated by “placing a pair of scissors near the bed”.

Furthermore, participants also mentioned stalking as spousal abuse. Stalking is considered as spousal abuse in the legal perspective. Although stalking is not conceptualized as spousal abuse in the revised CTS and Chan’s study, stalking is regarded as a form of domestic violence and frequently happened in post-relationship (Parti, 2002). It could be concluded that the behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse discussed in the focus groups are more extensive.

Table 7.9 shows the behavioral checklist in comparing conceptions of psychological abuse defined from the legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates’ perspectives. The symbol Tick (✓) indicates the behavioral manifestations among legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates that are identical or with similar meanings. The symbol Tick with an asterisk (✓*) indicates the behavioral manifestations that were not explicitly defined under the specific conception(s) but by definition that can be incorporated in the conception of spousal abuse. The symbol Cross (x) indicates the behavioral manifestations of abuse that were not mentioned by the participants in the focus groups.

It was because the behavioral manifestations analyzed based on findings from the focus groups were not explicitly stated in the legal perspectives and more elaborate when compared with the academic experts' conceptions of psychological abuse. The researcher adopted all (35 items), except the behavioral manifestations classified as "others" as the items of psychological abuse in the questionnaire.

The behavioral manifestations classified as "others" were some minor responses in the focus groups. Moreover, items such as "blow off unhappiness to partner", "unreasonable request" and "name calling partner" did not specify the action of abuse. Therefore these five behavioral manifestations classified as "others" were excluded in the questionnaire survey.

Table 7.10 shows the questionnaire items of conceptions of psychological abuse. Two identical inventories were generated in order to compare participants' endorsements of psychological abuse in wife abuse and husband abuse. The Chinese version of the conceptions of psychological abuse is in Appendix III.

7.4 Beliefs about spousal abuse

Apart from the conceptions of spousal abuse, this study also aims at finding out the beliefs about spousal abuse among social work undergraduates. The items on beliefs about spousal abuse were generated based on the findings from focus groups and review of previous literature. Findings on beliefs about spousal abuse from the focus groups and the formulation of the questionnaire items are discussed in the following sections.

7.4.1 Beliefs about spousal abuse: Findings from the focus groups

The beliefs about spousal abuse could be categorized into two broad domains, including 1) factors contributing to spousal abuse, and 2) similarities and differences between wife abuse and husband abuse.

7.4.1.1 Factors contributing to spousal abuse

Participants were asked to discuss the contributing factors of spousal abuse. The unit of analysis is a meaningful unit rather than a statement. A total of 218 raw responses were condensed from the discussion based on 40 participants (10 males and 30 females) among the five focus groups. Each participant gave an average of 5.5 responses. The suggested contributing factors of spousal abuse could be categorized into four sub-domains after continuous refinement during the process of data analysis. Moreover, these four domains of factor could be classified according to the levels or systems within an ecological framework. The four sub-domains include 1) personal factors, such as violent personality and stress (individual level/microsystem of the ecological model, 2) developmental factors (interpersonal level/mesosystem of the ecological model, 3) socio-economic factors (exosystem of the ecological model), and 4) cultural factors (cultural level/macrosystem of the ecological model). Table 7.11 summarizes the contributing factors of spousal abuse suggested by the participants.

7.4.1.1a Personal factors: Violent personality (individual level/microsystem of the ecological model)

The first sub-domain of the contributing factor of spousal abuse proposed by the participants is personal factors and there were 46 raw responses. The definition of personal factors is the personality and problem-solving skills. Participants suggested that people who have violent personality might have higher tendency to be violent in spousal relationship.

Participants suggested that some people who are violent might be easily provoked by external factors and tend to be violent in solving problems and conflicts. Some people might not have proper communication skills, who do not know how to respect, listen and communicate with others properly. They could not control their

emotion effectively and might release their unhappiness to their partners through abuse. They might habitually be violent in solving problems. Participants considered these as the negative characters in individuals' personality that might contribute to the happening of spousal abuse.

In addition to personality, participants put forward that some personal factors exclusively contribute to husband abuse. Husband abuse might happen because wives are strong who want to control their weak husbands. Moreover, they felt that some wives would like to control the finance of their husbands in order not make keeping mistress possible. Moreover, some wives would like to control their husbands in order to make their husbands treat them better.

7.4.1.1b Personal factors: External stress and poor coping skills (individual level/microsystem of the ecological model)

Another personal factor that contributes to spousal abuse is stress. Stress is defined as different life stressors and the ways people cope with it. Stressful life is related to the happening of spousal abuse. Participants advocated that people in Hong Kong suffer from a lot of stress in their daily life. Stress might be from their work, financial difficulties, and being poor. Furthermore, participants proposed that husbands might have fewer channels to release their stress as they might be unwilling to share their personal problems with others. They might apply some improper ways in releasing their stress. Some of them might choose drinking alcohol which increases their chance of being violent when they are drunk. Some of them might directly blow off their unhappiness to their partners under stressful situations. Thus stress could be one of the contributing factors of spousal abuse, which increases the chance of spousal abuse and other forms of domestic violence, such as child abuse and elder abuse.

7.4.1.1c Developmental factors (interpersonal level/mesosystem of the ecological model)

The second sub-domain of contributing factor of spousal abuse proposed by participants was developmental factors and there were 27 raw responses. This factor is defined as individual learns to play either the abuser or victim role in spousal abuse by witnessing parental violence during childhood. Participants put forward that family has a great influence on individuals' personal growth. Individuals usually observe parents as their role models. They tend to identify with the abuser or the victim roles by witnessing parents' abusive behavior against each other. Therefore, a boy witnessed his father beat up his mother might have a higher tendency to play the abuser role and have a higher tendency to be violent in solving conflicts with his partner. However, a girl witnessed her mother being beaten by her father might have a high tendency to play the victim role and accept abuse from her partner. Though some of the participants mentioned that boys may rebel against their fathers and disagree to use of violence and girls may tend to become violent and abusive, they believed that boys have a higher tendency to identify with fathers and girls identify with mothers. Thus boys have a higher tendency to identify with the abuser role and girls identify with the victim role. Moreover, individuals might learn abuse through media's huge coverage and detailed reports on spousal abuse. They just copy what has been reported in the media. This point is in line with the copy cat effect of social trend mentioned above.

7.4.1.1d Socio-economic factors (exosystem of the ecological model)

Socio-economic factors were the most widely discussed contributing factor of spousal abuse, with 64 raw responses. The definition of socio-economic factors is the social and environmental factors that are prone to spousal abuse. There are four

socio-economic factors, including economic conditions, crowded living environment in Hong Kong, copy cat effect of social trend, and the advocacy of gender equality. Participants believed that these social and economic factors could elevate the chances of spousal abuse.

Participants suggested that economic conditions might be one of the factors contributing to spousal abuse. Economic difficulties, such as unemployment, underemployment, and the possession of negative-equity properties may lead to spousal abuse. This increases the chance of conflicts between couples and also the chance of spousal abuse as they may regard abuse as a way to channel their unhappiness because of economic difficulties. For those low income families, they might experience even more conflicts because of the allocation of limited resources within the family.

The crowded living environment is another contributing factor to spousal abuse, which is a unique situation in Hong Kong. The crowded living environment results in limited personal space. Couples are forced to be together even when they are having an argument and thus they are prone to channel their anger through violence. Families, especially new immigrants from mainland China, usually have small social network. They have fewer and even no social resources when they experience spousal abuse. Therefore, some of the victims might tolerate abuse by their partner.

Social trend portrayed by the media is another factor contributing to spousal abuse. Spousal abuse is usually reported extensively in the media, this triggers the copy cat effect. People might try to copy the violent behavior reported in the media and regard them as effective ways in solving conflicts between couples. Moreover, participants also suggested that our society seems to accept certain level of violence and abuse between couples.

The advocacy of gender equality in Hong Kong also contributes to spousal abuse.

Men might regard the rise of women power and status as a challenge to their traditional superior status. This situation easily triggers conflicts between couples and they might be abusive and violent when confronting with each other. Moreover, more men are unemployed under economic downturn, they financially depend on their wives. This confronts the power they formerly possessed and they tend to abuse against their wives so as to regain their power.

7.4.1.1e Cultural factors (cultural level/macrosystem of the ecological model)

The last sub-domain of contributing factor of spousal abuse is cultural factors and this was based on the endorsement of patriarchal Chinese values. The patriarchal Chinese culture confines the roles of men and women that men are in the public sphere while women are in the private sphere, in which men are superior and women are inferior. A total of 62 raw responses on cultural factors were extracted from the data. There are three major themes under cultural factors that contribute to spousal abuse.

First, the patriarchal Chinese culture set the division of gender roles and power which support the happening of spousal abuse, in particular wife abuse. Under patriarchal Chinese culture, men were supposed to be the breadwinners of the family. They had the earning power and were the head of the family. Women were the caretakers of the family, who were physically and financially dependent on men. As harmony is highly emphasized in Chinese society, men and women usually stick to their prescribed gender roles. Thus women are the typical dependent within the family. Furthermore, society also supports the gender division of labor by providing less chance and support of education and career development for women, thus further establishes the dependent roles of women in traditional Chinese society. Women are confined to be the homemakers and caretakers of the young and elder members in the

family. Men did not recognize women's contribution to the family and regarded women to have no contribution. Thus women were inferior in the family. This increased their chances of being abused by their husbands. Moreover, because they were the dependants in the family, they had no bargaining power to leave and were confined to stay with their abusive partners. Participants stressed that the one who does not have earning power in the family tends to be victims in the abuse case. Participants also emphasized that abusers must have something, such as physical strength and economic power over the victims. Because of such power differential between men and women within the family, this increased women's chance of being abused. As mentioned in Section 3.7 of Chapter 3 that violence is maintained and supported as a norm for males, thus husband using violence to control his wife is regarded as normal. Participants further suggested that spousal abuse is usually one-way, that means the spouse who possesses greater power may be violent against his/her weaker partner.

Second, in patriarchal Chinese society, men were the head of the household. this gave men a false impression that they could control all the family members. As discussed in Section 3.7 of Chapter 3, women should obey their husbands under Confucian teaching. Husbands had the rights to scold and discipline their family members in whatever means they like, including being violent. This indeed paved the way for wife abuse. However, since women status has elevated nowadays, this situation may shift from wife abuse to husband abuse. Stier and Lewin-Epstein (2000) showed that women's participation in the workforce increased women's power of negotiation with their male partners. It is because women have more earning power who can be economically independent of their male partners. During the period of economic downturn, men might lose their job and depend on their wives instead. Because of the power transference from men to women, men might be abused by their

wives.

Third, participants suggested that the patriarchal values are rather deeply rooted in people's mind. They discussed that though women are working and earning money for the family nowadays, they are still the caretakers of the family. As the contribution of homemakers is not recognized by our society, women are still inferior in the family as compared with men. Furthermore, women also internalize the role of caretakers and are always the first one to give up their paid jobs and turn to full-time caretakers when their families need it. This substantiated women's inferior status is one of the reasons for them that prone to be the victims in spousal abuse incident.

To conclude, the factors contributing to spousal abuse could be categorized according to the various systems within an ecological model. This indicated that factors contributing to spousal abuse could be both internal/personal and external/environmental.

7.4.1.2 Similarities and differences between beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse

Apart from the contributing factors of spousal abuse, participants were also asked to discuss the similarities and differences between wife abuse and husband abuse. There were 27 and 325 raw responses on the similarities and differences between wife abuse and husband abuse respectively. Table 7.12 summarizes the similarities and differences between wife abuse and husband abuse discussed among the focus groups.

7.4.1.2a Similarities between wife abuse and husband abuse

There were 27 out of 352 raw responses on similarities between wife abuse and husband abuse. Participants generally felt that there were no differences between wife

abuse and husband abuse. That meant same definitions and behavioral manifestations were applied to wife abuse and husband abuse. It is because both men and women have the same ability in exercising physical and psychological abuse. Although husbands are physically stronger who might use physical violence against wives, wives in return could exercise psychological abuse against their husbands. Moreover, both wife abuse and husband abuse cause physical hurt and psychological stress to the victims. In both cases the marital relationship and other family members, like children are affected.

Furthermore, participants proposed that both abusers and victims in spousal abuse shared the responsibility. They guessed that they may have poor communication and these results in spousal abuse. Moreover, the abusers of both wife abuse and husband abuse should receive same punishment. The punishment should not be based on the gender of the abusers instead it should be set according to the seriousness of the abuse.

7.4.1.2b Differences in beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse

Some participants suggested that wife abuse and husband abuse are the same in their nature, but most of them and the general public show different perceptions and concern on wife abuse and husband abuse cases. The differences between wife abuse and husband abuse can be categorized into three sub-domains, different frequencies, forms and motivations between wife abuse and husband abuse (113 raw responses), individual wife and husband might have different understanding and level of sensitivity towards the conceptions of spousal abuse (51 raw responses), different social perceptions and responses towards wife abuse and husband abuse (161 raw responses).

7.4.1.2c Different frequencies, forms and motivations between wife abuse and husband abuse

Participants identified that the frequencies and forms of wife abuse and husband abuse are different. They suggested that in general there are more reported wife abuse cases than husband abuse cases. Though reported cases of husband abuse are fewer, they estimated that the number of husband abuse incidents is increasing. Participants explained that even men suffer from husband abuse, they seldom seek help. It is because men concern about face and they tend to cover their experience of being abused. Thus the number of reported husband abuse cases remains small.

Furthermore, participants suggested that different forms of abuse happen in wife abuse and husband abuse cases. They speculated that more wives suffer from physical abuse, while more husbands suffer from psychological abuse. Husbands are more likely to be violent against their wives, while wives tend to abuse their counterpart psychologically, such as nagging and financial control against their husbands. Moreover, the frequencies of abuse in wife abuse and husband abuse cases are different. Participants put forward that physical abuse in wife abuse cases usually happen sporadically but with a pattern of reoccurrence. Psychological abuse in husband abuse cases typically happen in a long term. It is because physical abuse is easier to be judged as an offence when compared with psychological abuse. Thus the number of wife abuse cases is greater than that of husband abuse. Participants suggested that if husbands also report psychological abuse they experienced, the number of wife abuse and husband abuse cases would be rather similar.

The reason for men being more violent in wife abuse cases is mainly due to their physical strength. Participants thought that men are physically stronger than women, they are more capable than women in exerting physical abuse. Women are physically weaker and they do not have the power to fight against men. Men could defense

themselves from the physical abuse of wives, while wives are less capable in defending themselves from physical abuse of their husbands. Therefore, it is not typical for wives to fight back and physically abuse against their husbands. It is normal that there is more wife abuse than husband abuse cases. Nevertheless, participants said that both men and women have the ability to exercise psychological abuse. It was also suggested that women tend to use psychological abuse in husband abuse cases.

Participants also proposed that men have fewer channels to release their stress and they are unwilling to share their problems with others. Moreover, under patriarchal values, husbands are justified to release their unhappiness to their wives by whatever means. Thus, men tend to be the abusers in spousal abuse cases. However, there were more channels for women to release their stress and they are more willing to share with others, such as friends and relatives. Thus the chance of women releasing their unhappiness and stress to husbands is lower and so it results in fewer husband abuse cases.

Lastly, participants suggested that there are different motivations between male abusers and female abusers in spousal abuse. Man would like to control his wife and being violent is one of the means. Moreover, men tend to use violence to solve problems directly. However, women might suffer from long term abuse by their husbands, and they abused their husbands to get revenge when they could stand for no more. Therefore, women are forced to be violent. Participants suggested that men always exert violence directly as a mean to express their emotion or to solve problems. However, there might be some reasons for husband abuse, such as the women have some psychological problems or feel distressed because of husband's wrong-doings, for instance keeping mistress. Usually, the physical violence exerted by women is in one single incident, while violence used by men happen in a regular pattern.

7.4.1.2d Individual wife and husband might have different understanding and level of sensitivity toward the conceptions of spousal abuse

The second sub-domain of differences between wife abuse and husband abuse is different understanding and level of sensitivity towards conceptions of spousal abuse among wives and husbands. Participants thought that wives and husbands might have different feelings and responses towards certain forms of abuse. For instance, wives might regard saying foul language to partner as psychological abuse, but husbands regard it as relatively normal. Participants discussed that women are sentimental and are more sensitive and suffer more from both physical and psychological abuse. However, husbands are physically stronger than wives, they have a higher tendency to endure wives' physical and psychological abuse. Moreover, husbands tend not to use the term "abuse" to describe their wives' behavior. Some male participants suggested that husbands tend to consider it as "being headed by their wives" instead of being abused. Husbands might also believe that financial control exercised by their wives is normal as they have the responsibility to financially support the family. They also accept wives' nagging and scolding as typical ways for women to express their feelings. Participants suggested husbands might get used to them and did not regard them as psychological abuse. Husbands might only consider insulting words as hurt because they concerned about their self-image and self-esteem.

Although women might be sentimental and regard some minor forms of psychological abuse as spousal abuse, participants speculated that some women of the older generation had lower awareness of psychological abuse. It is because of patriarchal values, women from the older generation tended to internalize their inferior status and consider control by their husbands as normal and acceptable.

7.4.1.2e Different social perceptions and responses towards wife abuse and husband abuse

The last sub-domain of differences is the different social perceptions and responses towards wife abuse and husband abuse. Participants generally showed that they feel curious and strange when hear about news of husband abuse. Because of the deeply rooted gender stereotypical thoughts, they believed that men are strong and should have the ability to defend themselves when they experience abuse from their wives. It is impossible for husbands to be abused by their wives. Husband abuse indeed breaks this tradition. They considered the abused husband as a coward and a person weaker than the abused wife. They also felt curious about the female abusers and would like to know more about the ways of abuse exercised by the wife in the incident.

People in general also have different perceptions towards wife abuse and husband abuse. Participants proposed that our society has a higher tendency to directly consider wives as the victims while husbands as the abusers in spousal abuse cases. It is again because of the deeply rooted patriarchal values that men are strong and should not be abused. It was supposed that women are weak and should be protected. Moreover, women are obedient as they are constrained by the traditional Chinese teaching that women should follow their husbands. People could not believe that women could be abusive and go against their husbands under such Chinese traditions. Our society also believes that women are more likely to endure abuse while men usually exert violence directly. As a result, our society has a great resent of wife abuse but regard it as typical while husband abuse is abnormal and exceptional. Furthermore, spousal abuse is a shameful experience to both wife and husband, but participants proposed that it is a more shameful experience to abused husbands.

Because of those predispositions in our society, media also pays more attention

to wife abuse cases. Media always report wife abuse cases extensively, in which husband is portrayed as an extremely awful person who do not treat his wife well and make her suffer. However, the wife is portrayed as a poor person who deserves all the concern and empathy from the general public. This makes wife abuse cases become a great concern of the public while husband abuse cases being neglected and ignored. Participants thought that husband abuse cases might not be reported in the media and handled by certain related services departments. They proposed that some social workers might expect husbands to solve the problem of being abused on their own.

Participants further regarded that the services provided for abused wives and abused husbands are different. Nowadays, the channels for abused husbands to seek professional help are particularly limited. Although recently there are hotline services provided for men, they mainly regard men as abusers who seek counseling services in stopping their violent behavior. However, there are more services, such as shelters provided for abused wives. Participants suggested that our government has put more resources in helping abused wives than abused husbands. Furthermore, there are more preventive measures on wife abuse than husband abuse. Therefore, people's awareness of wife abuse is higher than that of husband abuse.

7.4.1.3 General discussion on the beliefs about spousal abuse from the findings of focus groups

Two major beliefs about spousal abuse were discussed in the focus groups, including the contributing factors to spousal abuse as well as the similarities and differences between wife abuse and husband abuse.

First, participants discussed the contributing factors of spousal abuse. The findings from focus groups are consistent with the discussion on Chinese culture and spousal abuse summarized in Section 4.4 of Chapter 4. Similar to the review

discussed, participants in focus groups also agreed that Chinese patriarchal culture prescribed the gender roles between men and women. This made men superior while women inferior in the family and this indeed condones the happening of wife abuse. This belief also supports the hypothesis that endorsement of Chinese traditionality influences the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse set in the questionnaire survey. Consistent with participants' discussion in the focus groups, the researcher hypothesized that individuals identify with Chinese traditionality tend to have narrow conceptions and biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

Moreover, participants suggested economic conditions and crowded living conditions in Hong Kong as the contributing factors of spousal abuse. These beliefs are consistent with comments made by non-governmental organizations that economic fluctuant always contributes to elevated stress level and chances of spousal abuse. The recognition of stress as one of the contributing factors to spousal abuse is consistent with "reasonable justification" belief of spousal abuse discussed in Section 4.2 of Chapter 4. This showed that participants tend to have biased beliefs and justify spousal abuse because of stress from daily life.

Furthermore, participants suggested that the advocacy of gender equality contributes to the elevated status of women which tends to increase the number of conflicts and chances of abuse. However, participants tended to focus its relation to wife abuse and neglect the elevated status of women might be one of the reasons of husband abuse. This showed that participants tended to show more concern to wife abuse than husband abuse.

Participants mentioned that there are similarities between wife abuse and husband abuse. They proposed that same set of behavioral manifestations of abuse is applied to both wife abuse and husband abuse. They also put forward that both husband and wife have the same physical ability in exercising violence and same

punishment should be assigned to male and female abusers. However, their responses on similarities were only 27, which was far fewer than the differences between wife abuse and husband abuse. They discussed over 300 responses on the differences between wife abuse and husband abuse. This indicated that participants had different perceptions on wife abuse and husband abuse. The researcher formulated three items of beliefs about spousal abuse based on their discussions on the differences between wife abuse and husband abuse. These three items would be tested in the questionnaire survey.

7.4.1.3a Beliefs about different motivation of wife abuse and husband abuse cases

Participants discussed that female and male abusers have different motivations of being violent. They suggested that female abusers in husband abuse cases should have some personal reasons that justify their use of violence. They generally felt that female abusers only regard abuse as the last resort. However, male abusers in wife abuse cases are usually unreasonable who tend to use violence to solve problems directly. These biased beliefs make people have a higher tendency to justify violent acts of female abusers and tend to forgive them. The researcher believes that everybody has human right of not to be physically and psychological hurt by others. Thus, it is unreasonable to use violence under any conditions. There are two biased beliefs to justify spousal abuse based on the above discussion, including “Wife being violent to her husband when she could not stand her husband, which is understandable and should be forgiven”, and “Husband being violent to his wife when he could not stand his wife, which is understandable and should be forgiven.”

7.4.1.3b Beliefs about different forms of abuse in wife abuse and husband abuse cases

Participants put forward the different forms of abuse happened in wife abuse and

husband abuse cases. Wife abuse cases usually involve more physical abuse as husband has higher tendency to be violent as compared with his wife. However, wives are physically weaker than husbands, they tend not to physically abuse but psychologically abuse instead. Therefore, husband abuse usually involves more psychological abuse. The researcher would like to examine whether other social work undergraduates also agree to this belief. It is because individuals usually have a higher tendency to take notice of physical abuse rather than psychological abuse. Moreover, it was commented that psychological abuse was vaguely defined. Individuals might have lower awareness of psychological abuse. If social work undergraduates also think there are more psychological abuse in husband abuse, husband abuse cases may be neglected. Furthermore, we cannot exclude the happening of wives beating up their husbands. Such beliefs are biased which hindered our discovery of a clear picture in spousal abuse cases. As participants in focus groups suggested both males and females are capable to exert psychological abuse. Furthermore, research showed that physical strength is equalized between genders when females use weapons against their partners (Straus & Gelles, 1986). Therefore, physical and psychological abuse could happen in both wife abuse and husband abuse cases. Two items were generated to examine social work undergraduates' agreement about these beliefs. They were "Wife abuse usually involves more physical abuse, but less psychological abuse" and "Husband abuse usually involves more physical abuse, but less psychological abuse."

7.4.1.3c Beliefs about different frequencies of abuse in wife abuse and husband abuse cases

Participants also suggested that wife abuse usually happens in a long-term while husband abuse usually happens sporadically. Participants actually focused on the

physical abuse when making this suggestion. It was because they had mentioned that more psychological abuse happened in husband abuse cases while psychological abuse happened in a long-term before it caused harmful impacts on the victims. Therefore, these two suggestions actually contradict to each other. The researcher interpreted that they were suggesting that different forms of abuse happen with different duration in husband abuse cases. Physical abuse happened sporadically while psychological abuse happened in a long-term basis in husband abuse. However, both physical and psychological abuse happened in a long-term in wife abuse. If other social work undergraduates also believe that physical abuse in husband abuse cases usually happen in one single incident, they may show little concern to husband abuse cases. Consistent with the belief of different forms of abuse, they may also exclude the possibilities of wives beating up their husbands. They may regard husband abuse as a minor issue. Therefore, their level of concern and sensitivity to husband abuse may be lower. Two items were generated based on the above discussion. They were “In wife abuse case, wife is usually being psychologically abused by her husband for a long time, while physical abuse just happens sporadically” and “In husband abuse case, husband is usually being psychologically abused by his wife for a long time, while physical abuse just happens sporadically.”

7.4.1.4 Questionnaire items developed based on literature review and focus groups’ findings on beliefs about spousal abuse

Apart from finding the conceptions of spousal abuse, the second goal of this research is to investigate the beliefs about spousal abuse among social work undergraduates. Three beliefs about the differences between husband abuse and wife abuse were generated based on the discussions above. There were other beliefs about spousal abuse generated mainly based on previous research and supported by findings

in the focus groups. The beliefs generated are biased beliefs and the endorsements of these biased beliefs among social work undergraduates would be examined in the questionnaire survey.

In the literature review on beliefs about spousal abuse discussed in Section 4.2.1 of Chapter 4, five biased beliefs are summarized. They are “privacy”, “no big deal”, “misbehavior”, “provocation”, and “reasonable justification” beliefs. All these beliefs help to justify and trivialize spousal abuse.

Based on the “privacy belief”, wife abuse is a private family matter that outside intervention is inappropriate. However, previous research did not study people’s endorsements of this belief about husband abuse. Furthermore, as discussed in the focus groups, some participants expressed that they were curious when they heard about husband abuse. They perceived husband abuse as impossible as husbands are physically stronger who should be capable to defend themselves from abuse by their wives. Therefore, husbands should have the ability to handle abuse incidents on their own, which implies that outside intervention is not necessary. Two items were generated according to the privacy belief. They were “Wife abuse is a private matter between couples, outside intervention and help are not necessary”, and “Husband abuse is a private matter between couples, outside intervention and help are not necessary.” These two items mainly examine whether social work undergraduates believe spousal abuse as a private family matter and the differences in their endorsement towards wife abuse and husband abuse.

According to the “no big deal belief” and findings from the focus groups, people generally do not consider violent incidents among spouses as a serious matter or an issue that requires concern. Therefore, several behavioral manifestations were chosen, including overt and covert forms of physical abuse and psychological abuse from each of its sub-categories, to examine whether social work undergraduates consider these

actions as problems that require concern. It is because participants in the focus groups suggested that psychological abuse should happen in a long-term basis before it causes harmful impacts on the victims. Thus frequency of abuse was added in the behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse. Seven items were formed, including “It is not a big deal if husband slaps his wife”, “It is not a big deal if husband does not allow his wife to sleep by continuously making noise”, “It is not a big deal if husband does not allow his wife to do things she likes to do”, “It is not a serious matter if husband threatens his wife with sharp objects”, “It is not a problem if husband always teases his wife as no use”, “It is not a problem if husband always nags at his wife”, and “It is not a big deal if husband neglects his wife for a long time.” Identical items were formed to examine participants’ beliefs about husband abuse. Therefore, there were 14 items generated for “no big deal belief”.

Based on the “misbehavior belief”, it was found that it is legitimate to discipline a wife if she fails to perform as a loyal wife and/or a good mother. Therefore, misbehaviors justify punishment and abuse could be one of the methods. Meanwhile, participants in the focus groups suggested that wife abuses against his husband may be because of her husband’s wrong-doings, such as keeping mistress. This seems that spouse’s wrong-doings, such as being disloyal to marriage could be an excuse for being violent to own partner. Therefore, two items were generated, including “If husband knows his wife has extra marital affair, husband could use violence to punish his wife” and “If wife knows her husband has extra marital affair, wife could use violence to punish her husband.”

It is suggested by the “provocation belief” that female victims deserve to be beaten if they have provoked the male perpetrators. In the meantime, participants in the focus groups also proposed that victims have to share part of the responsibilities if they had provoked their spouses in the abuse incident. However, these are biased

beliefs toward spousal abuse. It is because everyone should be free from being hurt by others. Victims who provoke the perpetrators do not mean they deserve to be beaten up. Two items were generated, including “In wife abuse case, husband do not need to bear the responsibility if he is provoked by his wife” and “In husband abuse case, wife do not need to bear the responsibility if she is provoked by her husband.”

Based on the “reasonable justification belief”, life stressors could be reasonable factors that justify spousal abuse. Furthermore, participants in the focus groups also proposed that stress as one of the factors contributing to spousal abuse. Therefore, two items were formed to examine whether social work undergraduates accept life stressors as reasonable factors in justifying spousal abuse. They were “Life is stressful in Hong Kong. If husband slaps his wife because of stressful life, it is understandable and should be forgiven” and “Life is stressful in Hong Kong. If wife slaps her husband because of stressful life, it is understandable and should be forgiven.” Table 7.13 summarizes all the items on beliefs about spousal abuse generated based on literature review and findings from the focus groups.

7.5 Rigor of the focus groups study

The last section of this chapter discusses the rigor of the focus groups study. Based on Shek, Tang and Han’s (2005) study on evaluation of social work evaluation studies, 12 criteria were summarized in evaluating the quality of qualitative research. The researcher of this study would like to adopt these 12 criteria in discussing the rigor of the focus groups study. The evaluation on the quality of qualitative data is commonly ignored in previous studies but it is strongly emphasized in the present study.

The first criterion is the explicit discussion of the philosophical base of the study. As discussed in Section 6.2 of Chapter 6, this study adopted a post-positivistic

framework with focus group (qualitative method) as less dominant and questionnaire survey (quantitative method) as dominant mixed methods study. The researcher of this study also discussed the research paradigm in Section 6.1 of Chapter 6 explicitly. Thus this study fulfilled the first criterion.

The second criterion is the justification of number and nature of participants in the focus group. The researcher of this study based on suggestion from previous researcher (Morgan , 1997) and reference from previous research that adopted focus groups to examine the topic of spousal abuse (Bent-Goodley, 2004; Lewis et al., 2005) to decide the number of participants. Moreover, social work undergraduates were chosen as participants because it is vital to examine these potential social workers' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Their conceptions and beliefs directly influence their responses and actions to both the victims and perpetrators of spousal abuse. Indeed, similar focus groups study can be carried out with other service professional and their trainees, such as police constables, nurses, doctors and lawyers. This helps to improve the training about spousal abuse in these professionals.

Furthermore, this study also provided detailed descriptions on the procedures of recruiting participants and conducting the focus groups. The data collected was under the moderation of both the chief and the assistant moderator. The data was also summarized and asked for consentaneous agreement from participants of the focus groups immediately after the discussion. Furthermore, the analyzed data were further checked by two external checkers to ensure the objective categorization of the data. This fulfilled the third criterion in evaluating the quality of qualitative research. This study fulfilled the above three criterion which allows replication and comparison by other researchers.

The fourth and the fifth criteria are the clear statement of researcher's bias and preoccupation as well as methods to safeguard these bias and preoccupation. The

researcher of this study notices her bias may come from her own gender identity. As researcher is a woman, she may focus more on wife abuse cases and be more empathetic to female victims. However, at the same time she insists on examining the conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse. She indeed notices the general neglect of husband abuse and men as another important group in the feminist community.

The researcher is not a radical feminist instead she is more liberal and wish there are feasible equality between genders. She proposed that both males and females should enjoy same degree of human rights and live in a violence-free community. Both male and female victims in spousal abuse cases should receive equal amount of attention and good quality of services from governmental and non-governmental organizations. The researcher does not believe that examining husband abuse would take away the resources of abused wives. Instead, she regards it as discovery of more truths about spousal abuse. This in turn helps ask for more attention and resources to improve the existing services to both abused wives and husbands. The researcher also believes that both males and females are capable to be violent against the one they love. Meanwhile, both of them can be victims and endure the violence by their intimate partner for a certain period of time. Though others may regard this as irrational, the researcher believes that these happen day after day. That is why we need a more holistic understanding not only on wife abuse but also on husband abuse.

The researcher tried to eliminate her bias by inviting an external researcher as the assistant moderator in every focus group discussion. She is a social work master student with experience in conducting qualitative research. She helped to point out certain important issues and clarify certain misunderstanding in the focus groups. However, she is also a woman and she may also have the same bias as the researcher does. Apart from the assistant moderator, the researcher kept on discussing the analysis with her supervisor to avoid bias. Her supervisor provided suggestions and

clarified researcher's bias from the male viewpoints. The researcher considers that she can fulfill the fourth and the fifth criteria.

The sixth criterion is the reliability check of the qualitative data. Reliability check is important in post-positivistic paradigm. The researcher of this study invited two external raters to re-code 50 percent of the content of the focus groups. Moreover, the researcher also did intra-rater checking. Both inter- and intra- raters' reliability was reported in Section 7.2. Thus this study fulfilled this sixth criterion.

The seventh criterion is about triangulation of data. The researcher of this study did not fulfill this criterion. It is because the findings from focus groups only provide information for the development of the measurements in the questionnaire. The qualitative findings are supplement to the quantitative research, which is not a triangulation of data.

The eighth and ninth criteria are peer checking and member checking. Two inter-raters were invited to read over the data analysis as peer checking. A set of coding scheme and analyzed data were given to each checker. The first checker was a registered nurse who had a master degree in gerontology. The second checker was a secondary school teacher who was a master in linguistics. Checker 1 read over the analysis of Group 1, 3, and 5. The second checker read over the analysis of Group 2, 3, and 4. In order to compare the inter-rater consistency among the categorization of the data, they all have to read over the analyzed transcript of Group 3. They were asked to read about 50% of the analyzed transcription of each group and comment on whether they agreed to the categorization of the data. Moreover, the researcher also discussed the analyses with her supervisor. Therefore, this qualitative research fulfilled criterion 8. However, the researcher did not conduct member checking because of the difficulty in finding participants to read through the analyses after the discussion.

The tenth and eleventh criteria are the address of alternative interpretations and

explanation of negative cases of the qualitative data. The researcher of this study categorized the behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse discussed in the focus group mainly followed the existing categorization from legal and academic experts' perspectives. There may be other sets of categorization of behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse but the researcher would like to compare participants' categorizations with those of legal and academic experts. Therefore, the behavioral manifestations are generally categorized according to the existing recognized domains of spousal abuse. As no negative and inconsistent content of spousal abuse were discussed in the focus groups, no negative cases needed to be addressed. Furthermore, the researcher also tried her best to distinguish the superficial responses of participants by observing the degree of involvement of each participant. Through discussion with the assistant moderator, it is concluded that participants were in a serious manner in the discussion and only a few superficial responses were given.

The last criterion is the discussion of the limitations of this study. There are several limitations of the focus groups study. First, the participants of the focus groups mainly came from The Chinese University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Shue Yan University. There were no participants from The University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Thus the viewpoints of spousal abuse generated could not represent social work undergraduates among the six universities. Moreover, the number of female participants was three times more than male participants. Although this represents the true ratio of gender composition among social work undergraduates, the composition of more female and fewer male participants in the focus group hindered male participants to express their viewpoints. Furthermore, the chief moderator and the assistant moderator were females, this further made them feel the discussion was dominated by females, especially in groups 4 and 5 with only one male participant. Another limitation of this

study is that it only captured the viewpoints from participants who concerned about spousal abuse. Participants selectively joined the focus groups because they were interested in spousal abuse or wanted to know more about focus group. The viewpoints of those who did not concern about spousal abuse were absent.

To sum up, this qualitative study generally fulfilled the evaluating criteria of qualitative research. The numbers of groups and participants recruited in each group was set with references to previous research. Moreover, the internal and external reliabilities, the internal and external validity of the analyzed data are generally fulfilled with a post-positivistic worldview. Table 7.14 presents the evaluation of this focus groups study based on the criteria set in Shek et al.'s (2005) study. The symbol tick (✓) indicates the criterion that was fulfilled in the present study, the symbol (○) indicates the criterion that was partially fulfilled in the present study, while the symbol (x) indicates the criterion that was not fulfilled in the present study.

Table 7.1: Demographic characteristics of participants in the focus groups (N=40)

<i>Demographics</i>	<i>Group 1</i>	<i>Group 2</i>	<i>Group 3</i>	<i>Group 4</i>	<i>Group5</i>	<i>Total (N)</i>	<i>Total %</i>
<i>Gender</i>							
Male	2	3	2	2	1	10	25
Female	4	6	7	7	6	30	75
<i>Year of Study</i>							
Year 1	--	6	3	--	--	9	22.5
Year 2	--	--	5	8	2	15	37.5
Year 3	6	3	--	1	5	15	37.5
Year 4	--	--	1	--	--	1	2.5
<i>Institution</i>							
CUHK	--	9	9	1	1	20	50
CityU	--	--	--	7	3	10	25
Shue Yan	6	--	--	--	1	7	17.5
BU	--	--	--	1	2	3	7.5

*Note: CUHK: The Chinese University of Hong Kong
 City U: City University of Hong Kong
 Shue Yan: Hong Kong Shue Yan University
 BU: Hong Kong Baptist University*

Table 7.2: Participants' responses in defining physical abuse (sub-domains)

Responses	No. of responses	No. of respondents
Physical abuse	91	40
<i>Overt physical assaults:</i>		
1. Physical assaults and injury through direct body contact	28	
Battering	8	8
Injury by battering/ grabbing/ biting	8	8
Twisting partner's hair	4	4
Pushing	2	2
Striking and Kicking	2	2
Grabbing	1	1
Biting	1	1
Pinching	1	1
Slapping	1	1
2. Physical assaults by weapons/ other objects	27	
Hitting with weapons, chair/ other hard objects	15	11
Splashing hot water on partner	2	2
Using iron to scald partner	2	2
Slamming partner against the wall	2	2
Using electric shock against partner	1	1
Cutting partner's hair by force	1	1
Splashing urine on partner	1	1
Using cigarettes to scald partner	1	1
Attempt to throw something against partner that could hurt	1	1
Using scissors to castrate male partner	1	1
<i>Covert physical assaults:</i>		
3. Physical control involving force	19	
Forcing partner to do something he/ she is unwilling to do (drinking urine, eating some harmful food)	8	6
Not allowing partner to eat with force	6	5
Detaining partner with force	3	3
Forcing partner to do all the household chores	2	2
4. Covert actions that harm partner's well-being	17	
Cooking unhealthy food for partner	5	4
Cooking food that partner is allergic to	3	3
Doing something that hurt partner's physical well-being (e.g. non-stop smoking at home and switching on the TV with extremely high volume)	3	2
Putting things at home that partner is allergic to	2	2
Injecting some drugs into partner's body	1	1
Not allowing partner to sleep by continuously making noise	1	1
Not allowing partner to sleep by switching on the electric fan facing partner	1	1
Making partner take sleeping pills without notice	1	1

Table 7.3: Participants' responses in conceptualizing psychological abuse (sub-domains)

Responses	No. of responses	No. of respondents
Psychological abuse	139	40
1. Psychological control (without force)	38	
Controlling partner's social network (not allowing partner to use telephone, internet, make friends)	16	7
Financial control	14	14
Not allowing partner to meet with children	2	2
Invading partner's privacy (e.g. searching partner's belongings)	2	2
Not allowing partner to work	1	1
Keeping partner's traveling documents	1	1
Isolating partner from his/ her relatives	1	1
Not allowing partner to do something he/ she likes to do without forces	1	1
2. Threatening	26	
Hiding weapons and/ or putting things at home to create a frightening environment (newspaper clippings about spousal abuse)	11	11
Threatening (in general)	9	9
Threatening to stop financial support	2	2
Threatening partner with sharp objects/ weapons	1	1
Threatening to get partner out of the home	1	1
Threatening to kill partner or the whole family	1	1
Threatening to beat up partner	1	1
3. Neglect	25	
Depriving partner's sexual needs and/ or resources	18	14
Ignoring/ neglecting partner for a long time	4	3
Asking other family members to ignore/ neglect partner	2	1
Neglecting	1	
4. Verbal abuse	21	
Scolding partner	7	7
Yelling and shouting partner	4	3
Scolding partner in the public area	3	3
Nagging	3	3
Verbal abuse	1	
Scolding partner with foul language	1	1
Scolding partner without any reasons	1	1
Scolding partner in front of children	1	1
5. Insulting	17	
Teasing partner as no use/ not capable to earn money	9	9
Insulting	3	
Damaging partner's self-image/ reputation in his/ her community	3	3
Comparing own partner with others	1	1
Rebuking own partner	1	1
6. Stalking	7	
Non-stop phone calling partner	2	2
Stalking	1	
Non-stop phone calling partner's friends	1	1
Checking partner	1	1
Following ex-partner	1	1
Asking detective to follow partner	1	1
7. Others	5	
Unreasonable request	1	1
Blowing off unhappiness to partner	1	1
Peeping partner	1	1
Accusing partner has extra marital affairs with others	1	1
Name calling partner	1	1

Table 7.4: Participants' responses in defining sexual abuse

Responses	No. of responses	No. of respondents
Sexual abuse	30	40
Forcing partner to have sexual activities	9	7
Forcing partner to do something which is related to sex that he/ she is unwilling to do (watching pornographic movie, uniform seduce, watching partner to have sex with other)	9	5
Using violence in sex	7	5
Excessive sexual demand	3	3
Exchange partner with other to have sex	1	1
Marital rape	1	1

Table 7.5: Conceptions of spousal abuse from the legal perspectives

<i>Physical abuse:</i>	
*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assault (conducting unlawful violent behaviors with or without direct body contact with victims), 2. Beating (conducting unlawful violent behavior with direct body contact with victims).
**	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Slapping, 2. Pushing, 3. Pinching, 4. Spitting, 5. Kicking, 6. Hitting, 7. Punching, 8. Choking, 9. Burning, 10. Clubbing, 11. Stabbing, 12. Throwing boiling water or acid and setting on fire.
<i>Psychological abuse:</i>	
*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Shouting or swearing, 2. Shouting or yelling.
**	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Repeated verbal abuse, 2. Harassment, 3. Confinement, and deprivation of physical, financial, personal resources, and social activities.
<i>Sexual abuse:</i>	
*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forcing spouse to have sexual activities.
**	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spouse being forced to be involved in sex or undesirable sexual acts
<i>Stalking:</i>	
*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Non-stop phone calling, 2. Sending letters with offensive content, 3. Posting insulting posters in victims' workplace.

Note *Sources: Based on Domestic Violence Ordinance (Hong Kong Law Chapter 189) from the "Guidelines for social work professional in handling spousal abuse cases, 1st edition" designed by The Hong Kong Social Workers Association (Chinese version, June, 2005)
([http://www.hkswa.org.hk/Publication_Guideline%20\(Chinese\).doc](http://www.hkswa.org.hk/Publication_Guideline%20(Chinese).doc))

** Sources: Based on Multi-disciplinary Guidelines on the Handling of Battered Spouse Cases from the Social Welfare Department, 1996
(http://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_pubsvc/page_family/sub_fcwprocedure/id_batteredspous)

Table 7.6: Conceptions of spousal abuse from the academic experts' perspectives

CTS 2	
Subscale 1: Negotiation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I showed my partner I cared even though we disagree 2. Showed respect for my partner's feelings about an issue 3. Said I am sure we could work out a problem 4. Explained my side of a disagreement to my partner 5. Suggested a compromise to a disagreement 6. Agreed to try a solution to a disagreement my partner suggested
Subscale 2: Psychological aggression	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insulted or swore at my partner 2. Shouted or yelled at my partner 3. Stomped out of the room or house or yard during a disagreement 4. Said something to spite my partner 5. Called my partner fat or ugly 6. Destroyed something belonging to my partner 7. Accused my partner of being a lousy lover 8. Threatened to hit or throw something at my partner
Subscale 3: Physical Assault	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Threw something at my partner that could hurt 2. Twisted my partner's arm or hair 3. Pushed or shoved my partner 4. Grabbed my partner 5. Slapped my partner 6. Used a knife or gun on my partner 7. Punched or hit my partner with something that could hurt 8. Choked my partner 9. Slammed my partner against a wall 10. Beat up my partner 11. Burned or scalded my partner on purpose 12. Kicked my partner
Subscale 4: Injury	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. My partner had a sprain, bruise, or small cut because of a fight with me 2. My partner still felt physical pain the next day because of a fight we had 3. My partner passed out from being hit on the head in a fight with me 4. My partner went to a doctor because of a fight with me 5. My partner needed to see a doctor because of a fight with me, but did not 6. My partner had a broken bone from a fight with me
Subscale 5: Sexual coercion	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Made my partner have sex without a condom 2. Insisted on sex when my partner did not want to (but did not use physical force) 3. Insisted my partner have oral or anal sex (but did not use physical force) 4. Use force (like hitting, holding down, or using a weapon) to make my Partner have oral or anal sex. 5. Use force (like hitting, holding down, or using a weapon) to make my Partner have sex. 6. Use threats to make my partner have oral or anal sex 7. Use threats to make my partner have sex
Psychological aggression added in Chan's (2005) study:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Threatened to hurt partner's family members 2. Expressed to commit suicide 3. Expressed to die together with family members 4. Ignored partner during a disagreement 5. Threatened to hurt children

Table 7.7: The behavioral checklist in comparing conceptions of physical abuse defined from legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates' perspectives

	Behavioral Manifestations	Legal conceptions	Experts' conceptions	Lay conceptions
Physical Abuse				
<i>Overt physical assaults: Physical assaults and injury through direct body contact</i>				
1.	Beating up partner/ Battering 打配偶	✓	✓	✓
2.	Pushing or shoving 推配偶	✓	✓	✓
3.	Pinching 捏配偶	✓	✓	✓
4.	Striking and Kicking 對配偶拳打腳踢	✓	✓	✓
5.	Slapping 掌摑配偶	✓	✓	✓
6.	Grabbing 抓配偶	✓*	✓	✓
7.	Twisting partner's hair 扯配偶頭髮	✓*	✓	✓
8.	Biting 咬配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
9.	Choking 勒住配偶	✓	✓	x
<i>Physical assaults by weapons/ other objects</i>				
10.	Hitting with something that could hurt 用硬物襲擊配偶	✓	✓	✓
11.	Hitting with weapons 用武器打配偶	✓	✓	✓
12.	Using knife or gun on partner 用刀或槍襲擊配偶	✓	✓	✓
13.	Splashing hot water on partner 用熱水潑向配偶	✓	✓	✓
14.	Burning/ Scalding 燒傷配偶	✓	✓	✓
15.	Slamming partner against the wall 猛力推配偶撞向牆	✓*	✓	✓
16.	Throwing something that could hurt 用物件掙配偶，而可能會令配偶受傷	✓*	✓	✓
17.	Using electric shock against partner 用電電配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
18.	Cutting partner's hair 剪配偶頭髮	✓*	✓*	✓
19.	Splashing urine on partner 向配偶潑尿液	✓*	✓*	✓
20.	Using scissors to castrate male partner 醜割男配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
21.	Throwing acid 向配偶淋酸性液體	✓	✓*	✓*

Note:

(✓) the behavioral manifestations among legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates are identical or with similar meanings

(✓*) the behavioral manifestations were not explicitly defined under the specific conceptions but by definition can be incorporated in the conception of spousal abuse

(x) the behavioral manifestations of abuse were not mention by the participants in the focus groups

Table 7.7: The behavioral checklist in comparing conceptions of physical abuse defined from legal, academic experts, and social work students' perspectives (Cont')

	Behavioral Manifestations	Legal conceptions	Experts' conceptions	Lay conceptions
<i>Physical assaults by weapons/ other objects</i>				
22.	Spitting on partner 向配偶吐口水	✓	✓*	✓*
23.	Clubbing against partner 用棍棒打配偶	✓	✓*	✓*
<i>Covert physical assaults: Physical control involving force</i>				
24.	Forcing partner do something he/ she is unwilling to do 強迫配偶做非自願的行為	✓*	✓*	✓
25.	Not allowing partner to eat 禁止配偶飲食	✓*	✓*	✓
26.	Detaining partner with forces 使用武力禁錮配偶	✓	✓	✓
27.	Forcing partner to do all the household chores 強迫配偶做所有家務	✓*	✓*	✓
<i>Covert actions harm partner's well-being</i>				
28.	Making partner take in sleeping pills without notice 令配偶在不知情及無需要的情況下服用安眠藥	✓	✓	✓
29.	Cooking unhealthy food for partner 無益食物給配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
30.	Cooking food that partner is allergic to 一些會令配偶敏感的食物	✓*	✓*	✓
31.	Doing something that hurt partner's physical well-being 做一些傷害配偶身體健康的行為	✓*	✓*	✓
32.	Putting things at home that partner is allergic to 在家中放一些會令配偶產生敏感的物件	✓*	✓*	✓
33.	Injecting some drugs into partner's body 注射藥物入配偶身體	✓*	✓*	✓
34.	Not allowing partner to sleep by continuously making noise 不斷製造噪音令配偶不能入睡	✓*	✓*	✓
35.	Not allowing partner to sleep by switching on the electric fan facing partner 用風扇不停吹著配偶，令他/她不能入睡	✓*	✓*	✓

Note:

(✓) the behavioral manifestations among legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates are identical or with similar meanings

(✓*) the behavioral manifestations were not explicitly defined under the specific conceptions but by definition can be incorporated in the conception of spousal abuse

(x) the behavioral manifestations of abuse were not mention by the participants in the focus groups

Table 7.8: The questionnaire items of conceptions of physical abuse

Do you agree that the followings are the behavioral manifestations of wife abuse?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Please blacken the square in order to show your answer.				
1. Throwing something at wife that could hurt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Twisting wife's arm or hair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Pushing or shoving wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Grabbing wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Slapping wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Using knife or gun on wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Punching or hitting wife with something that could hurt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Choking wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Slamming wife against a wall	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Beating up wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Burning or scalding wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Kicking wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Forcing wife to do something she is unwilling to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Not allowing wife to eat with force	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Detaining wife with force	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Forcing wife to do all the household chores	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Cooking unhealthy food for wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Cooking food that wife is allergic to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Doing something that hurt wife's well-being	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Putting things at home that wife is allergic to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Injecting some drugs into wife's body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Not allowing wife to sleep by continuously making noise	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Not allowing wife to sleep by switching on the electric fan facing her	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Making wife take sleeping pills without notice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Table 7.9: The behavioral checklist in comparing conceptions of psychological abuse among legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates' perspectives

	Behavioral Manifestations	Legal conceptions	Experts' conceptions	Lay conceptions
Psychological Abuse				
	<i>Psychological control</i> 精神控制	✓	✓	✓
1.	Controlling, confining and depriving material, financial, personal resources and social activities 控制、限制及剝奪配偶經濟，個人資源和社交活動	✓	✓	✓
2.	Not allowing partner to meet with children 不准許配偶與子女見面	✓*	✓	✓
3.	Isolating partner from his/ her relatives 將配偶與親戚隔離	✓*	✓	✓
4.	Not allowing partner to do something he/ she likes to do 不准許配偶做自己喜歡的事情	✓*	✓*	✓
5.	Not allowing partner to work 不准許配偶工作	✓*	✓*	✓
6.	Invading partner's privacy 侵犯配偶私隱	✓*	✓*	✓
7.	Keeping partner's traveling documents 收起配偶的旅遊證件	✓*	✓*	✓
	<i>Threatening</i> 威嚇	✓*	✓	✓
8.	Hiding weapons and/ or putting things at home to create a frightening environment 在家中收藏武器製造一個令配偶感到威脅的環境	✓*	✓*	✓
9.	Threatening to stop financial support 威脅停止作為家中經濟支柱	✓*	✓*	✓
10.	Threatening to push partner downstairs 威脅要推配偶落樓梯	✓*	✓*	✓
11.	Threatening partner with sharp objects/weapon 用利器或武器指嚇配偶	✓*	✓	✓
12.	Threatening to beat up or throw something at partner 威脅要打或用物件掙向配偶	✓*	✓	✓
13.	Threatening to kill partner or the whole family 威脅要殺死配偶或全家人	✓*	✓	✓
	<i>Neglect</i> 忽略	✓*	✓	✓
14.	Ignoring/ neglecting partner for a long time 長時間忽略配偶	✓*	✓	✓
15.	Asking other family members to ignore/ neglect partner 要求家人忽略配偶	✓*	✓*	✓

Note:

(✓) the behavioral manifestations among legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates are identical or with similar meanings

(✓*) the behavioral manifestations were not explicitly defined under the specific conceptions but by definition can be incorporated in the conception of spousal abuse

(x) the behavioral manifestations of abuse were not mention by the participants in the focus groups

Table 7.9: The behavioral checklist in comparing conceptions of psychological abuse among the legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates' perspectives (Cont')

	Behavioral Manifestations	Legal conceptions	Experts' conceptions	Lay conceptions
Psychological Abuse				
	<i>Insulting</i> 侮辱	✓*	✓	✓
16.	Teasing partner as no use/ not capable to earn money 嘲笑配偶無用/沒能力賺錢	✓*	✓	✓
17.	Accusing partner as a lousy lover 指責配偶為極壞的伴侶	✓*	✓	✓
18.	Damaging partner's self-image/ reputation in his/ her community 在社區中毀壞配偶的名聲	✓*	✓*	✓
19.	Comparing own partner with others 將自己的配偶與其他人比較	✓*	✓*	✓
20.	Rebuking own partner 指責自己的配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
21.	Destroying partner's belongings 壞屬於配偶的物件	✓*	✓	×
	<i>Verbal abuse</i> 語言虐待	✓	✓	✓
22.	Scolding partner 責罵配偶	✓	✓	✓
23.	Shouting and yelling 呼喝配偶	✓	✓	✓
24.	Scolding partner in public area 在公共場所，責罵配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
25.	Nagging 不斷煩擾（哦）配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
26.	Scolding partner with foul language 用粗口責罵配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
27.	Scolding partner without any reasons 無理的責罵配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
28.	Scolding partner in front of children 在子女面前責罵配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
29.	Saying something that spite partner 說些話惡意傷害配偶	✓*	✓	✓
30.	Calling partner fat or ugly 說配偶肥或醜	✓*	✓	×

Note:

(✓) the behavioral manifestations among legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates are identical or with similar meanings

(✓*) the behavioral manifestations were not explicitly defined under the specific conceptions but by definition can be incorporated in the conception of spousal abuse

(x) the behavioral manifestations of abuse were not mention by the participants in the focus groups

Table 7.9: The behavioral checklist in comparing conceptions of psychological abuse among the legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates' perspectives (Cont')

	Behavioral Manifestations	Legal conceptions	Experts' conceptions	Lay conceptions
Psychological Abuse				
	<i>Stalking</i> 纏擾	✓	✓*	✓
✓	Non-stop phone calling partner 不斷打電話給配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
32.	Non-stop phone calling to partner's friends 不斷打電話給配偶的朋友	✓*	✓*	✓
33.	Checking partner 調查配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
34.	Following ex-partner 跟蹤已離婚的配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
35.	Asking detective to follow partner 找私家偵探跟蹤配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
	<i>Others</i>			
36.	Unreasonable request 對配偶作無理要求	✓*	✓*	✓
37.	Blowing off unhappiness to partner 將不開心發洩在配偶身上	✓*	✓*	✓
38.	Peeping partner 偷窺配偶	✓*	✓*	✓
39.	Name calling partner 直呼配偶名字	✓*	✓	✓
40.	Accusing partner has extra marital affair with other 指責配偶與其他人有婚外情	✓*	✓*	✓

Note:

(✓) the behavioral manifestations among legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates are identical or with similar meanings

(✓*) the behavioral manifestations were not explicitly defined under the specific conceptions but by definition can be incorporated in the conception of spousal abuse

(x) the behavioral manifestations of abuse were not mention by the participants in the focus groups

Table 7.10: The questionnaire items of conceptions of psychological abuse

Do you agree that the followings are the behavioral manifestations of wife abuse?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Please blacken the square in order to show your answer.				
1. Controlling, confining and depriving material, financial, personal resources and social activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Not allowing wife to meet with children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Not allowing wife to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Invading wife's privacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Keeping wife's traveling documents	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Isolating wife from her relatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Not allowing wife to do something she likes to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Hiding weapons and/ or putting things at home to create a frightening environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Threatening wife to stop financial support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Threatening wife with sharp objects/ weapon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Threatening to beat up or throw something at wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Threatening to push wife downstairs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Threatening to kill wife and the whole family	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Ignoring wife for a long time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. Asking other family members to ignore wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. Teasing wife as no use/ not capable to earn money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. Damaging wife's self-image/ reputation in her community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. Comparing own wife with others	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. Rebuking own wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. Accusing wife as a lousy lover	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. Destroying wife's belongings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. Scolding wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. Shouting and yelling at wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. Scolding wife in the public area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. Nagging wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. Scolding wife with foul language	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Scolding wife without any reasons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. Scolding wife in front of children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Saying something that spite wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. Calling wife fat or ugly	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Table 7.10: The questionnaire items of conceptions of psychological abuse (Cont')

Do you agree that the followings are the behavioral manifestations of wife abuse?	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Please blacken the square in order to show your answer.				
31. Non-stop phone calling wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. Non-stop phone calling to wife's friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. Checking wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. Following ex-wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. Asking detective to follow wife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Table 7.11: The suggested contributing factors of spousal abuse

Responses	No. of responses
Contributing factors of spousal abuse	218
1. Personal factors (individual level/microsystem of the ecological model)	65
Violent personality	
Improper problem-solving skills	
Stress from life, work and being poor	
Poor skills in handling stress	
2. Developmental factors (interpersonal level/mesosystem of the ecological model)	27
Learned to play the abuser roles by witnessing parental violence	
Learned to play the victims roles by witnessing parental violence	
Copied different means of abuse from the media	
3. Socio-economic factors (exosystem of the ecological model)	64
Economic conditions	
The crowded living environment in Hong Kong	
Copy cat effect of social trend	
The advocacy of gender equality	
4. Cultural factors (cultural level/macrosystem of the ecological model)	62
Chinese patriarchal cultural values on the divisions of gender roles which maintains women's inferior status	
Chinese patriarchal cultural values maintained men as the head of households which support husbands' control over wives	

Table 7.12: The similarities and differences between wife abuse and husband abuse

Responses	No. of responses
Similarities and differences between wife abuse and husband abuse	352
<i>Similarities between wife abuse and husband abuse</i>	27
1. Wife abuse and husband abuse are basically the same	
1.1 Same definitions applied to both wife abuse and husband abuse	
1.2 Same behavioral manifestations applied to both wife abuse and husband abuse	
1.3 Both wife and husband have the same ability in exerting abuse	
1.3.1 husbands are physically stronger and have advantage in using physical abuse while wives could use psychological abuse	
2. Both wife abuse and husband abuse cause physical hurt and psychological stress to the victims	
3. Both wife abuse and husband abuse negatively affect spouse' marital relationship and other family members	
4. Same punishment should be assigned to male abusers and female abusers if both of them committed the same degree of violence to their partners	
<i>Differences between wife abuse and husband abuse</i>	325
1. Different frequencies, forms and motivations between wife abuse and husband abuse	113
2. Individual wife and husband might have different understanding and level of sensitivity towards conceptions of spousal abuse	51
3. Different social perceptions and responses toward wife abuse and husband abuse	161

Table 7.13: Items on beliefs about spousal abuse generated based on literature review and findings from the focus groups

Items generated for "Privacy belief":

1. Wife abuse is a private matter between couples, outside intervention and help are not necessary. (丈夫虐待妻子是夫妻之間的私事，外間不應干涉。)
 2. Husband abuse is a private matter between couples, outside intervention and help are not necessary. (妻子虐待丈夫是夫妻之間的私事，外間不應干涉。)
-

Items generated for "No big deal belief":

3. It is not a big deal if husband slaps his wife.
(丈夫掌摑妻子只是小事，不必大驚小怪。)
 4. It is not a big deal if wife slaps her husband.
(妻子掌摑丈夫只是小事，不必大驚小怪。)
 5. It is not a big deal if husband does not allow his wife to sleep by continuously making noise. (丈夫不斷製造噪音令妻子不能入睡只是小事，不必大驚小怪。)
 6. It is not a big deal if wife does not allow her husband to sleep by continuously making noise. (妻子不斷製造噪音令丈夫不能入睡只是小事，不必大驚小怪。)
 7. It is not a big deal if husband does not allow his wife to do things she likes to do.
(丈夫不准許妻子做她喜歡的事情只是閒事，不必大驚小怪。)
 8. It is not a big deal if wife does not allow her husband to do things he likes to do.
(妻子不准許丈夫做他喜歡的事情只是閒事，不必大驚小怪。)
 9. It is not a serious matter if husband threatens his wife with sharp objects.
(丈夫用利器指嚇妻子並不是嚴重的事情，不必大驚小怪。)
 10. It is not a serious matter if wife threatens her husband with sharp objects.
(妻子用利器指嚇丈夫並不是嚴重的事情，不必大驚小怪。)
 11. It is not a problem if husband always teases his wife as no use.
(丈夫經常嘲笑妻子無用並不是問題，不必大驚小怪。)
 12. It is not a problem if wife always teases her husband as no use.
(妻子經常嘲笑丈夫無用並不是問題，不必大驚小怪。)
 13. It is not a problem if husband always nags at his wife.
(丈夫經常煩擾「哦」妻子並不是問題，不必大驚小怪。)
 14. It is not a problem if wife always nags at her husband.
(妻子經常煩擾「哦」丈夫並不是問題，不必大驚小怪。)
 15. It is not a big deal if husband neglects his wife for a long time.
(丈夫長時間忽略妻子只是閒事，不必大驚小怪。)
 16. It is not a big deal if wife neglects her husband for a long time.
(妻子長時間忽略丈夫只是閒事，不必大驚小怪。)
-

Items generated for "Misbehavior belief":

17. If husband knows his wife has extra marital affair, husband could use violence to punish his wife. (如果丈夫知道他的妻子有外遇，他用武力懲罰妻子是合理的。)
18. If wife knows her husband has extra marital affair, wife could use violence to punish her husband. (如果妻子知道她的丈夫有外遇，她用武力懲罰丈夫是合理的。)

Items generated for "Provocation beliefs":

19. In wife abuse case, husband do not need to bear the responsibility if he is provoked by his wife. (如果妻子因挑釁丈夫而受到丈夫用武力對待，她的丈夫不需要為虐妻的行爲負責。)
20. In husband abuse case, wife do not need to bear the responsibility if she is provoked by her husband. (如果丈夫因挑釁妻子而受到妻子用武力對待，他的妻子不需要為虐夫的行爲負責。)

Items generated for the "Reasonable justification belief":

21. Life is stressful in Hong Kong. If husband slaps his wife because of stressful life, it is understandable and should be forgiven.
(香港生活壓力很大。如果丈夫因為生活壓力而掌摑妻子，這是可以理解及原諒的。)
22. Life is stressful in Hong Kong. If wife slaps her husband because of stressful life, it is understandable and should be forgiven.
(香港生活壓力很大。如果妻子因為生活壓力而掌摑丈夫，這是可以理解及原諒的。)

Items generated for beliefs about "Different motivations between wife abuse and husband abuse":

23. Wife being violent to her husband when she could not stand her husband, which is understandable and should be forgiven.
(妻子在忍無可忍的情況下才向丈夫使用武力，是情有可原的。)
24. Husband being violent to his wife when he could not stand his wife, which is understandable and should be forgiven.
(丈夫在忍無可忍的情況下才向妻子使用武力，是情有可原的。)

Items generated for beliefs about "Different forms of abuse in wife abuse and husband abuse cases":

25. Wife abuse usually involves more physical abuse, but less psychological abuse.

(虐妻通常涉及較多的身體虐待，而精神虐待則較少。)

26. Husband abuse usually involves more physical abuse, but less psychological abuse.

(虐夫通常涉及較多的身體虐待，而精神虐待則較少。)

Items generated for beliefs about "Different frequencies of abuse in wife abuse and husband abuse cases":

27. In wife abuse case, wife is usually being psychologically abused by her husband for a long time, while physical abuse just happens sporadically. (在虐妻個案中，妻子通常被丈夫長時間精神虐待，而身體虐待只會偶爾發生。)

28. In husband abuse case, husband is usually being psychologically abused by his wife for a long time, while physical abuse just happens sporadically. (在虐夫個案中，丈夫通常被妻子長時間精神虐待，而身體虐待只會偶爾發生。)

Table 7.14: Evaluation of the focus groups study based on the criteria summarized in Shek et al. (2005) study.

Approach adopted	Criterion 1 Data collection method and analysis	Criterion 2 Statement of philosophical base of the study	Criterion 3 Justification for number and nature of the participants	Criterion 4 Procedure given in detail	Criterion 5 Bias and preoccupation stated	Criterion 6 Steps to guard against biases explicitly stated
Post-positivism	Mixed	√	√	√	√	√
Criterion 6 Reliability	Criterion 7 Triangulation	Criterion 8 Peer checking	Criterion 9 Member checking	Criterion 10 Alternative hypotheses and interpretation considered	Criterion 11 Negative evidence accounted for	Criterion 12 Limitations clearly stated
Inter-rater √	Intra-rater √	Data x	x	o	no negative cases found	√
				* Interpretation mainly followed existing recognized categories of spousal abuse * Chief moderator and assistant moderator concluded that participants discussed the topic in a serious manner with a few superficial responses		

Note: (√) criterion fulfilled in the present study, (o) criterion partially fulfilled in the present study, (x) criterion not fulfilled in the present study.

CHAPTER 8: RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

This chapter presents the results of Phase II Study (Questionnaire Survey). This phase of study aimed at examining the patterns of responses and the factors associated with the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse among a representative sample of social work undergraduates. There are four sections in this chapter. The profile of the participants is presented in the first section. The psychometric properties of the measurement scales in the questionnaire are summarized in the second section. The third section describes participants' responses to the measurement scales in the questionnaire. The final section presents the results of the questionnaire with reference to the research questions and research hypotheses stated in Chapter 5.

8.1 Profile of the participants

Three hundred and sixty-one social work undergraduates participated in the questionnaire survey. Their age ranged from 18 to 25, with a mean age of 20.9 ($SD = 1.64$, $Mode = 21$). Table 8.1.1 shows the participants' age cross-tabulated with their gender and year of study.

There were 231 female (64%) and 130 male (36%) social work undergraduates in the sample. Among the participants, 52 (14.4%) were from The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), 35 (9.7%) were from The University of Hong Kong (HKU), 57 (15.8%) were from Hong Kong Baptist University (BU), 53 (14.7%) were from The Hong Kong Polytechnic University (PolyU), 72 (19.9%) were from City University of Hong Kong (CityU), and 92 (25.5%) were from Hong Kong Shue Yan University (SYU). There were 107 year 1 (29.6%), 119 year 2 (33%), 111 year 3 (30.7%) and 24 year 4 (6.6%) undergraduates. The gender of the participants cross-tabulated with their university and year of study is shown in Table 8.1.2.

With regard to their family background, 310 (86.8%) participants lived with their

parents (Table 8.1.3). Two hundred and ninety-one (85.3%) participants' parents were in their first marital relationship (Table 8.1.4). Over one-third (36.8%) of the participants reported both of their parents had full-time job (Table 8.1.5). Only 11 (3.1%) participants reported that their family received Comprehensive Social Security Allowance (CSSA) (Table 8.1.6). Over half of the participants (64%) expressed their family lives were unhappy (Table 8.1.7). About half of the participants (49%- 55%) reported their parents never physically and/ or psychologically abused against each other (Table 8.1.8).

8.2 Psychometric properties of the measurement scales in the questionnaire

8.2.1 Conceptions of wife abuse

The conceptions of wife abuse were measured by the 59 self-constructed items based on findings from the focus groups. The physical assault subscale (12 items) from the revised Conflicts Tactic Scales (CTS2: Straus & Hamby, 1996) was incorporated in this measurement (Item 1-12). Detailed discussion of the development of this scale is presented in Section 7.3.1 of Chapter 7.

With regard to the conceptions of wife abuse, the internal consistency of the initial 59-item was very good ($\alpha = .97$). The mean inter-item correlation was .33 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .56. The item-total correlation ranged from .32 to .69. There was no item with item-total correlation less than .30. No item was removed from the 59-item conceptions of wife abuse.

Principal components analysis with varimax rotation was then performed. According to the Kaiser's (1960) criterion that select the number of factor based on eigenvalue greater than unity, a 9-factor solution was initially resulted. However, based on the Scree test (Cattell, 1978), only Factor 1 and Factor 2 kept in a steep slope, the slope started to level off from Factor 3. Furthermore, with reference to the

findings of focus groups, physical abuse and psychological abuse were found as the two general dimensions of wife abuse. Therefore, 2-factor and 3-factor solutions were analyzed and compared in order to find out the appropriate factor structure.

A 2-factor solution was then performed which explained 46.67% of total variance. All factor loadings were greater than .30. However, there were 16 items with double factor loadings (Items 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, 32, 34, 35, 36, and 37). These items were deleted and a 2-factor solution was performed again with the remaining 43 items. This 2-factor solution explained 49.97% of total variance, which was higher than that of the initial 59-item. A 3-factor solution was also performed, which explained 54.97% of total variance. All factor loadings were greater than .35. Although the 3-factor solution explained more percentage of the total variance than the 2-factor solution, there were nine more items with double factor loadings. This indicated that a 3-factor solution might be over-extracted and a 2-factor solution was adequate to simplify the structure of the items. Therefore, a 2-factor solution was chosen.

The final 2-factor solution explained 49.97% of total variance. All the factors had factor loadings greater than .35 and with no double factor loadings. Eigenvalues of all factors were greater than unity. The factors could be meaningfully interpreted and explained with Factor 1 named as psychological abuse, which explained 30.21% of total variance and Factor 2 named as physical abuse, which explained 19.76% of total variance. The rotated matrix of this 2-factor solution is showed in Table 8.2.1.

The remaining 43 items based on the factor analyses were grouped and named as the wife abuse index, while the initial 59 items were grouped and named as the omnibus wife abuse index. The internal consistency of the omnibus wife abuse index is reported in Chapter 6. The internal consistency of the wife abuse index (43 items) was good ($\alpha = .95$). The mean inter-item correlation was .32 whereas the mean

item-total correlation was .54. The item-total correlation ranged from .31 to .71, which indicated good correlation. This wife abuse index showed a good reliability.

The internal consistency of the sub-factors was then tested. The Cronbach's α of subscale based on items of Factor 1 was .96, which was very good. The mean inter-item correlation was .45 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .66. The item-total correlation ranged from .53 to .76, which indicated good correlation. This sub-scale showed a good reliability and it was named as the psychological wife abuse index.

The internal consistency of the subscale based on items of Factor 2 was good ($\alpha = .94$). The mean inter-item correlation was .42 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .66. The item-total correlation ranged from .56 to .76, which indicated good correlation. This sub-scale showed a good reliability and was named as the physical wife abuse index. In addition, this physical wife abuse index (Items 1-16) had a high correlation with the physical assault subscale of CTS2 (Items 1-12), ($r = .98, p < .01$). The correlation between psychological wife abuse index and the physical assault subscale of CTS2 was .35 ($p < .01$), this correlation was significantly lower than that between physical wife abuse index and the physical assault subscale of CTS2. This showed the measurement of physical abuse had a good criterion-related validity. Furthermore, the correlation between psychological wife abuse index and the physical assault subscale of CTS2 was .38 ($p < .01$). This lower correlation indicated the two indexes were measuring different constructs of wife abuse.

8.2.2 Conceptions of husband abuse

With regard to the conceptions of husband abuse, the internal consistency of the initial 59-item was very good ($\alpha = .97$). The mean inter-item correlation was .39 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .63. The item-total correlation ranged

from .48 to .72. There was no item with item-total correlation less than .30. No item was removed from the 59-item of conceptions of husband abuse.

Principal components analysis with varimax rotation was then performed. According to the Kaiser's (1960) criterion that select the number of factor based on eigenvalue greater than unity, a 9-factor solution was initially resulted. However, based on the Scree test (Cattell, 1978), only Factor 1 and Factor 2 kept in a steep slope, the slope started to level off from Factor 3. Furthermore, with reference to the findings of focus groups, physical abuse and psychological abuse were found as the two major dimensions of husband abuse. Therefore, 2-factor and 3-factor solutions were analyzed and compared in order to find out the appropriate factor structure.

A 2-factor solution was then performed which explained 51.47% of total variance. All factor loadings were greater than .30. However, there were 16 items with double factor loadings (Items 13, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, 32, 34, 35, 36 and 37). These items were deleted and a 2-factor solution was performed again with the remaining 43 items. This 2-factor solution explained 54.30% of total variance, which was higher than that of the initial 59-item. A 3-factor solution was also performed, which explained 59.49% of total variance. All factor loadings were greater than .35. Although the 3-factor solution explained more percentage of the total variance than the 2-factor solution, there were 14 more items with double factor loadings. This indicated that a 3-factor solution might be over-extracted and a 2-factor solution was adequate to simplify the structure of the items. Therefore, a 2-factor solution was chosen.

The final 2-factor solution explained 54.30% of total variance. All the factors had factor loadings greater than .35 and with no double factor loadings. Eigenvalues of all factors were greater than unity. The factors could be meaningfully interpreted and explained with Factor 1 named as psychological abuse, which explained 32.46% of

total variance, and Factor 2 named as physical abuse, which explained 21.84% of total variance. The items categorized in Factor 1 and Factor 2 of husband abuse were same as those in the conceptions of wife abuse. The rotated matrix of this 2-factor solution is showed in Table 8.2.2.

Similar to the conceptions of wife abuse, the remaining 43 items were grouped and named as the husband abuse index, while the initial 59 items were named as the omnibus husband abuse index. The internal consistency of omnibus husband abuse index is reported in Chapter 6. The internal consistency of this husband abuse index (43 items) was good ($\alpha = .96$). The mean inter-item correlation was .37 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .58. The item-total correlation ranged from .43 to .72, which indicated good correlation. This husband abuse index showed a good reliability.

The Cronbach's alpha was then tested for both of the sub-factors. The internal consistency of subscale based on items of Factor 1 was good ($\alpha = .95$). The mean inter-item correlation was .51 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .69. The item-total correlation ranged from .50 to .76, which indicated good correlation. This sub-scale showed a good reliability and it was named as the psychological husband abuse index.

The internal consistency of the subscale based on items of Factor 2 was very good ($\alpha = .97$). The mean inter-item correlation was .50 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .65. The item-total correlation ranged from .60 to .77, which indicated good correlation. This sub-scale showed a good reliability and it was named as the physical husband abuse index. In addition, physical husband abuse index (Items 1-16) had a high correlation with the physical assault subscale of CTS2 (Items 1-12), ($r = .98, p < .01$). The correlation between psychological husband abuse index and the physical assault subscale of CTS2 was .38 ($p < .01$), this correlation was

significantly lower than that between physical husband abuse index and the physical assault subscale of CTS2. This showed the measurement of physical abuse had a good criterion-related validity. Furthermore, the correlation between psychological husband abuse index and the physical assault subscale of CTS2 was .43 ($p < .01$). This lower correlation indicated these two indexes were measuring different constructs of husband abuse.

8.2.3 Beliefs about spousal abuse

The beliefs about spousal abuse were measured by self-constructed items based on literature review and findings from the focus groups. There are 14 items for the beliefs about spousal abuse. Identical sets of items were tested for wife abuse and husband abuse. The internal consistencies of these two sets of items were examined. The internal consistency of beliefs about wife abuse was good ($\alpha = .89$). The mean inter-item correlation was .38 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .58. The item-total correlation ranged from .47 to .67, which indicated good correlation.

The internal consistency of beliefs about husband abuse was good ($\alpha = .90$). The mean inter-item correlation was .40 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .59. The item-total correlation ranged from .26 to .69, which indicated good correlation. The scale showed good internal consistency.

8.2.4 Attitudes toward gender

Social work undergraduates' attitudes toward gender were measured by the GREAT (Chang, 1999). Attitudes toward gender were measured in work and domestic domains. The internal consistency of attitudes toward gender in the work domain was acceptable ($\alpha = .73$). The mean inter-item correlation was .35 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .50. The item-total correlation ranged from .34 to .64,

which indicated an acceptable reliability.

The internal consistency of the attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain was good ($\alpha = .85$). The mean inter-item correlation was .54 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .67. The item-total correlation ranged from .51 to .79, which indicated a good reliability.

8.2.5 Socialization of gender stereotypes

Participants were asked to report their perceptions of gender stereotypes endorsed by their parents. Four items of parents' gender stereotypes were generated with reference to the common beliefs in gender roles assignments. The internal consistency of perceptions of father's gender stereotypes was acceptable ($\alpha = .77$). The mean inter-item correlation was .46 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .58. The item-total correlation ranged from .49 to .63, which indicated an acceptable reliability. The internal consistency of participants' endorsement of father's attitudes toward gender stereotypes was acceptable ($\alpha = .81$). The mean inter-item correlation was .52 and the mean item-total correlation was .63. The item-total correlation ranged from .57 to .68, which indicated acceptable internal consistency.

The internal consistency of perceptions of mother's gender stereotypes was acceptable ($\alpha = .77$). The mean inter-item correlation was .46 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .57. The item-total correlation ranged from .52 to .67, which indicated an acceptable reliability. The internal consistency of participants' endorsement of mother's attitudes toward gender stereotypes was acceptable ($\alpha = .82$). The mean inter-item correlation was .53 and the mean item-total correlation was .64. The item-total correlation ranged from .56 to .71, which indicated an acceptable reliability.

8.2.6 Socialization of violence approval

Participants were asked to report their perceptions of violence approval endorsed by their parents. Six items on parents' violence approval were generated with reference to the Personal and Relationship Profile (PRP). The internal consistency of perceptions of father's violence approval was acceptable ($\alpha = .75$). The mean inter-item correlation was .33 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .49. The item-total correlation ranged from .36 to .59, which indicated an acceptable reliability. The internal consistency of endorsement of father's attitudes toward violence approval was acceptable ($\alpha = .80$). The mean inter-item correlation was .40 and the mean item-total correlation was .56. The item-total correlation ranged from .45 to .72, which indicated an acceptable reliability.

The internal consistency of perceptions of mother's violence approval was acceptable ($\alpha = .78$). The mean inter-item correlation was .38 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .58. The item-total correlation ranged from .40 to .60, which indicated an acceptable reliability. The internal consistency of participants' endorsement of mother's attitudes toward violence approval was acceptable ($\alpha = .80$). The mean inter-item correlation was .40 and the mean item-total correlation was .56. The item-total correlation ranged from .40 to .63, which indicated an acceptable reliability.

8.2.7 Chinese traditionality

Multidimensional Scale of Chinese Individual Traditionality developed by Yang, Yu, and Yep (1989) was used to measure participants' endorsement of Chinese traditionality. It was measured by two sub-scales, including Respect to Authority and Superiority of Male. The internal consistency of subscale: Respect to Authority was acceptable ($\alpha = .74$). The mean inter-item correlation was .26 whereas the mean

item-total correlation was .44. The item-total correlation ranged from .22 to .54, which indicated an acceptable reliability.

The internal consistency of subscale: Superiority of Male was .90, which was good. The mean inter-item correlation was .53 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .68. The item-total correlation ranged from .60 to .78, which indicated a good reliability.

8.2.8 Chinese modernity

Multidimensional Scale of Chinese Individual Modernity developed by Yang, Yu, and Yep (1989) was used to measure participants' endorsement of Chinese modernity. It was measured by two sub-scales, including Egalitarianism and Openness as well as Gender Equality. The internal consistency of subscale: Egalitarianism and Openness was acceptable ($\alpha = .69$). The mean inter-item correlation was .22 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .38. The item-total correlation ranged from .63 to .67, which indicated an acceptable reliability. The internal consistency of subscale: Gender Equality was good ($\alpha = .87$). The mean inter-item correlation was .46 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .63. The item-total correlation ranged from .48 to .69, which indicated a good reliability.

8.2.9 Perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in the social work curriculum

The perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse were measured by seven self-constructed questions with three items about the adequacy of training and the overall evaluation of knowledge of spousal abuse, two items about request for training on knowledge of spousal abuse, and two items about participants' willingness to handle spousal abuse cases in the future. The internal consistency of the adequacy

of training and overall evaluation of knowledge of spousal abuse was .78. The mean inter-item correlation was .54 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .62. The item-total correlation ranged from .53 to .70, the reliability of this measurement was acceptable. The internal consistency of the request for more training on knowledge of spousal abuse was .68. The mean inter-item correlation was .52 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .52, the reliability of this measurement was acceptable. The internal consistency of willingness to handle spousal abuse cases in the future was .68. The mean inter-item correlation was .51 whereas the mean item-total correlation was .51, the reliability of this measurement was acceptable.

In sum, all of the measurement scales of the questionnaire showed acceptable to good reliabilities in this main study. The psychometric properties of the measurement scales are summarized in Table 8.2.3.

8.3 Descriptive profiles of participants' responses to the measurement scales in the questionnaire

8.3.1 Conceptions of spousal abuse

Based on findings of factor analysis, four indexes of wife abuse were formulated and examined. The first index was the omnibus wife abuse index, which contained the initial 59 items of the behavioral manifestations of wife abuse. The second was the wife abuse index, which contained 43 items (16 initial items were deleted because of double factor loadings). The third was the physical wife abuse index, which contained 16 items of physical abuse based on findings of factor analysis. The fourth was the psychological wife abuse index, which contained 27 items of psychological abuse based on findings of factor analysis. Identical indexes of husband abuse were also formulated and examined. The items in wife abuse index and husband abuse index were identical. The percentage of responses to the measurement on the conceptions of

wife abuse is presented in Table 8.3.1 while that of husband abuse is presented in Table 8.3.2.

Regarding the physical abuse index, the means of all of the physical abuse items were over 3.4. The mode and the median of all items were 4, which indicated a strong agreement in constituting those behavioral manifestations as physical abuse.

Regarding the psychological abuse index, participants showed certain disagreement to the behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse. The means of the items ranged from 2 to 3, which indicated certain disagreement. Although the mode of over half of the items was 3, there were 11 items with mode of 2. In general, participants showed a consensus agreement on the behavioral manifestations of physical abuse, while they showed certain disagreement on those of psychological abuse.

8.3.2 Beliefs about spousal abuse

Generally, participants did not agree to the 14 biased beliefs about spousal abuse. Table 8.3.3 shows the percentage of responses to the measurement of beliefs about wife abuse and Table 8.3.4 shows those about husband abuse. The percentage of answer 1 and 2 indicated disagreement about those biased beliefs while the percentage of answer 3 and 4 (presented in a combined percentage) indicated endorsement of the biased beliefs.

Although participants generally disagreed to the biased beliefs, about one-tenth to one-third of them agreed to certain number of biased beliefs. Concerning beliefs about wife abuse, nearly one-third (N=109) of the participants agreed that “it is not a problem if husband always nags at his wife” (Item 14). There were about 17 percent (N=60) of the participants agreed that “it is not a big deal if husband does not allow his wife to do things she likes to do” (Item 6) and about 16 percent (N=57) of the participants agreed that “wife abuse usually involved more physical abuse, but less

psychological abuse" (Item 11). There were 12 percent (N=45) of the participants agreed that "in wife abuse case, wife usually being psychologically abused by her husband for a long time, while physical abuse just happens sporadically" (Item 13) and about 11 percent (N=39) of the participants agreed that "it is not a big deal if husband neglects his wife for a long time" (Item 12). There were about 10 percent (N=35) of the participants agreed that "it is not a big deal if husband does not allow his wife to sleep by continuously making noise" (Item 4), about nine percent (N=31) of the participants agreed that "it is not a problem if husband always teases his wife as no use" (Item 10) and another nine percent (N=32) of the participants agreed that "husband being violent to his wife when he could not stand his wife, which is understandable and should be forgiven" (Item 9).

Concerning beliefs about husband abuse, over 30 percent (N=117) of the participants agreed that "in husband abuse case, husband usually being psychologically abused by his wife for a long time, while physical abuse just happens sporadically" (Item 13) and 112 participants agreed that "it is not a big deal if wife neglects her husband for a long time" (Item 12). There were nearly 18 percent (N=65) of the participants agreed that "it is not a big deal if wife does not allow her husband to do things he likes to do" (Item 6). There were 14 percent (N=52) of the participants agreed that "it is not a problem if wife always nags at her husband" (Item 14). There were about 12 percent (N=43) of the participants agreed that "it is not a problem if wife always teases her husband as no use" (Item 10), and 10 percent (N=38) of the participants agreed that "it is not a big deal if wife does not allow her husband to sleep by continuously making noise" (Item 4) and another 10 percent (N=37) of the participants agreed that "wife being violent to her husband when she could not stand her husband, it is understandable and should be forgiven" (Item 9). There were eight percent (N=29) of the participants agreed that "husband abuse usually involves more

physical abuse, but less psychological abuse” (Item 11).

Based on the percentage of endorsement of beliefs about spousal abuse, it is observed that participants endorsed similar biased beliefs about both wife abuse and husband abuse. Some of the participants generally agreed that certain behavioral manifestations were not problems to be constituted as spousal abuse, such as nagging, not allowing spouse to do things he or she likes to do, neglecting spouse for a long time, teasing spouse as no use, not allowing spouse to sleep by continuously making noise. Besides, some of the participants generally endorsed that spousal abuse should be forgiven as the spouse only being violent when he or she could not stand his or her spouse. Lastly, some of the participants endorsed that spousal abuse usually involved more physical abuse but less psychological abuse. Participants also believed that psychological abuse happens in a long-term while physical abuse happens sporadically.

8.3.3 Social work undergraduates’ attitudes toward gender

Attitudes toward gender were measured by asking participants to assign male and female to activities in two major domains, including domestic and work. Lower score indicated participants endorsed higher level of egalitarian attitudes toward gender, which meant they regard both male and female are appropriate in performing the same activities in that particular domain. The mean score of participants’ attitudes toward gender in the work domain was .87, while the mean score of their attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain was 1. Table 8.3.5 summarizes participants’ scores on their attitudes toward gender in work and domestic domains.

8.3.4 Social work undergraduates’ socialization of parents’ gender stereotypes

Participants were categorized into four groups based on their answers to their

perceptions of parents' gender stereotypes and their endorsement of parents' attitudes. For participants who perceived their parents agreed to the four statements of gender stereotypes and they also agreed with their parents were categorized as "conservative group". Conservative group meant both participants and their parents agreed to the statements of gender stereotyping, and participants were socialized to their parents' gender stereotypes.

For participants who perceived their parents did not agree to the four statements of gender stereotypes and they also agreed with their parents were categorized as the "liberal group". Liberal group meant both of the participants and their parents disagreed to the statements of gender stereotyping and participants were socialized to their parents' anti-gender stereotypes. Both "conservative group" and "liberal group" were the foci of this study as they were participants influenced by parents' attitudes toward gender stereotypes.

For participants who perceived their parents agreed to the four statements of gender stereotypes but they did not agree with their parents were categorized as the "conservative parents only group". For participants who perceived their parents disagreed to the four statements of gender stereotypes but they did not agree with their parents were categorized as the "liberal parents only group". These two groups were not the foci of this study as they did not indicate participants' identification with parents' attitudes toward gender stereotypes.

There were 209 participants categorized as identified with their fathers' liberal attitudes toward gender (liberal group), 86 participants were categorized as identified with their fathers' conservative attitudes toward gender (conservative group), and 64 participants did not agree with their fathers' conservative attitudes toward gender (conservative father only group). There were 213 participants categorized as identified with their mothers' liberal attitudes toward gender (liberal group), 93 participants

were categorized as identified with their mothers' conservative attitudes toward gender (conservative group), and 54 participants did not agree with their mothers' conservative attitudes toward gender (conservative mother only group). No participants were categorized as the liberal father only and liberal mother only groups. Table 8.3.6 summarizes the number of participants categorized into these four groups. Two sets of categories are presented with one for father and the other for mother.

8.3.5 Social work undergraduates' socialization of parents' violence approval

Similar to the socialization of parents' gender stereotypes, participants were categorized into four groups based on their answers to their perceptions of parents' violence approval and their endorsement of parents' attitudes. For participants who perceived their parents approved violence in the six suggested situations and they also agreed with their parents' attitudes were categorized as "violence approval group". This meant both of the participants and their parents approved violence in the suggested situations, and participants were socialized to their parents' violence approval attitudes.

For participants who perceived their parents did not approve violence in the six suggested situations and they also agreed with their parents were categorized as the "violence disapproval group". This meant both of the participants and their parents disapproved violence in the suggested situations, and participants were socialized to their parents' violence disapproval attitudes. These two groups were the foci of this study as they were participants influenced by parents' attitudes on violence approval.

For participants who perceived their parents approved violence in the six suggested situations but they did not agree with their parents were categorized as "only parents approved violence group". For participants who perceived their parents disapproved violence in the six suggested situations but they did not agree with their

parents were categorized as “only parents disapproved violence group”. These two groups were not the foci of this study as they did not indicate participants’ identification with parents’ attitudes toward violence approval.

With regard to participants’ identification with father’s approval of violence, there were 104 participants categorized as violence approval group, 194 participants were categorized as violence disapproval group, and 62 participants were categorized as only father approved violence group. With regard to participants’ identification with mother’s approval of violence, there were 106 participants categorized as violence approval group, 217 participants categorized as violence disapproval group, and 37 participants categorized as only mother approved violence group. No participants were categorized as only parents disapproved violence group. Table 8.3.7 summarizes the number of participants categorized into these four groups. Two sets of categories are presented with one for father and the other for mother.

8.3.6 Social work undergraduates’ endorsement of Chinese traditionality

Participants generally did not agree to the statements of Chinese traditionality. The mean of Chinese traditionality was 1.97, the mean of the two sub-scales: Respect to Authority was 2.16 and Superiority of Male was 1.73. This indicated that social work undergraduates in general did not endorse the Chinese traditional cultural values. Table 8.3.8 summarizes participants’ responses to the measurement of Chinese traditionality.

8.3.7 Social work undergraduates’ endorsement of Chinese modernity

Participants generally agreed to the statements of Chinese modernity. The mean of Chinese modernity was 3.2, the means of the two sub-scales: Egalitarianism and Openness was 3.04 and Gender Equality was 3.35. These indicated that social work

undergraduates endorsed the Chinese modern cultural values. Table 8.3.9 summarizes participants' responses to the measurement of Chinese modernity.

8.3.8 Social work undergraduates' perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum

With regard to the adequacy of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum, three hundred and seven (85.2%) participants disagreed that there were adequate training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum. Moreover, 283 (80%) participants disagreed that the curriculum provided them enough knowledge of spousal abuse. In general, 297 (82.5%) participants disagreed that they had enough knowledge of spousal abuse. Only 63 (17.5%) participants expressed they had adequate knowledge of spousal abuse.

Regarding request for more training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum, three hundred and twenty-five (90.3%) participants requested more courses about spousal abuse in social work curriculum. Moreover, 340 (94.5%) participants requested extra information about spousal abuse which can be provided through talks and visits to organizations that handle spousal abuse.

With regard to participants' willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future, two hundred and eighty-one (78%) participants expressed that they would like to have placement practice in organizations that handle spousal abuse. One hundred and seventy-four participants (48.5%) showed willingness to work in organizations that handle spousal abuse in the future. Table 8.3.10 summarizes participants' perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum.

Two hundred and five participants reported they had taken one course that mentioned spousal abuse in the course content (Table 8.3.11). Nearly half of the (48.2- 48.9%) participants expressed they learned the conceptions and beliefs about

spousal abuse from social work curriculum (Table 8.3.12). Only 34 (8.4%) participants reported they had taken extra courses about spousal abuse outside social work curriculum. The rest of them (328) expressed they never took courses about spousal abuse outside social work curriculum. The extra courses on spousal abuse included minor courses, general education courses, workshops and courses provided by non-governmental organizations (Table 8.3.13).

8.4 Results of the questionnaire survey with reference to the research questions and research hypotheses

8.4.1 Results of Research Question 3: Differences in the conceptions between wife abuse and husband abuse among social work undergraduates

This section aims at answering Research Question 3: “Do social work undergraduates have different conceptions between wife abuse and husband abuse?” and its corresponding hypothesis. The breadth of the conceptions of spousal abuse was measured based on broad (inclusive) versus narrow (exclusive) dimension. Broad conceptions are preferred over narrow conceptions. It is because broad conceptions mean both mild and severe forms of violence and abuse are constituted as spousal abuse. This contributes to lower tolerance and higher sensitivity to violence in conjugal relationship, thus leading to better identification of spousal abuse. Higher score indicated broader conceptions of spousal abuse.

Hypothesis 1:

Because of the wider media and academic research coverage on wife abuse, social work undergraduates would have broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse.

In responses to Hypothesis 1, paired-samples t tests were conducted amongst the four spousal abuse indexes. The results showed that participants had broader

conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse when omnibus wife abuse and omnibus husband abuse indexes (59-item) were compared. The mean of omnibus wife abuse index was 3.18 ($N=309$) and omnibus husband abuse index was 3.15 ($N=309$), ($t=2.83, p<.01$), though with a small effect size ($d=.08$).

Participants also had broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse when wife abuse and husband abuse indexes were compared. The mean of wife abuse index was significantly greater than that of husband abuse with small effect size ($M=3.10$ and 3.08 , respectively; $t=2.12, p<.05, d=.06$). Consistent results were found among the omnibus, wife abuse and husband abuse indexes, these findings supported Hypothesis 1 that participants had broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse.

When comparing the physical and psychological abuse indexes, paired-samples t tests showed participants had broader conceptions of physical wife abuse than physical husband abuse with small effect size ($M=3.75$ and 3.65 , respectively; $t=6.34, p<.01, d=.26$). However, no significant difference was found in their conceptions of psychological wife abuse and psychological husband abuse ($M=2.71$ and 2.74 , respectively; $t=-1.43, p>.05$).

These observations provide support for Hypothesis 1 that social work undergraduates had broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse. However, such differences existed in physical abuse only, no significant difference was found in their conceptions of psychological wife abuse and psychological husband abuse. Table 8.4.1 summarizes the differences between the conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse.

8.4.2 Results of Research Question 4: Differences in the conceptions of spousal abuse based on victims' (abused wife vs. abused husband) and participants' gender (female vs. male social work undergraduates)

This section aims at answering Research Question 4: "Are the conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse related to social work undergraduates' gender?" and its corresponding hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2:

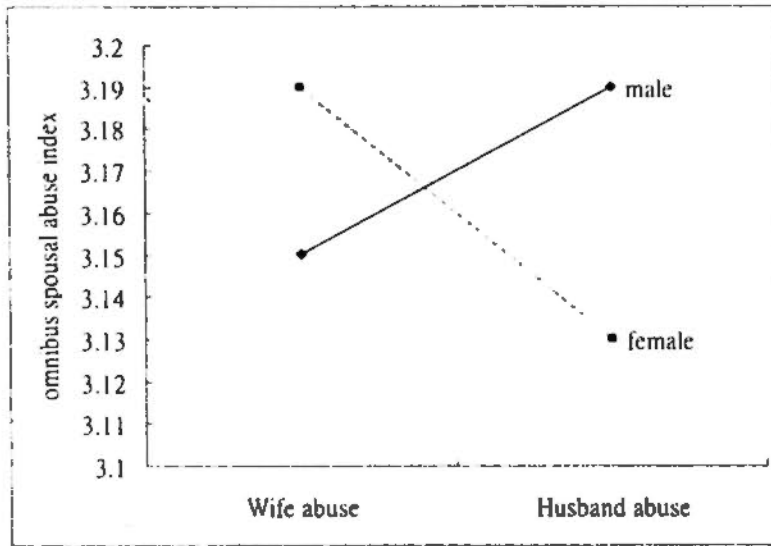
Based on the hypothesis of same sex favoritism, conceptions of spousal abuse are related to both victims' and participants' gender. Female social work undergraduates would have broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse. On the other hand, male social work undergraduates would have broader conceptions of husband abuse than wife abuse.

In answering Hypothesis 2, within-subjects analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to examine the main effects of both victims' and participants' gender as well as their interaction effects on the conceptions of spousal abuse.

8.4.2.1 Omnibus spousal abuse index

For the omnibus spousal abuse indexes, the results showed that the main effects of victims' gender ($F = .83, p > .05$) and participants' gender ($F = .08, p > .05$) were not significant while the interaction effects were significant with medium effect size ($F = 16.73, p < .01, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .05$). The interaction effects are illustrated in Figure 8.1. Table 8.4.2 also summarizes the effects of victims' and participants' gender on the omnibus indexes of spousal abuse.

Figure 8.1: Interaction effects of victims' and participants' gender on the omnibus wife abuse and omnibus husband abuse indexes



Post-hoc analyses were conducted to further elaborate the interaction effects.

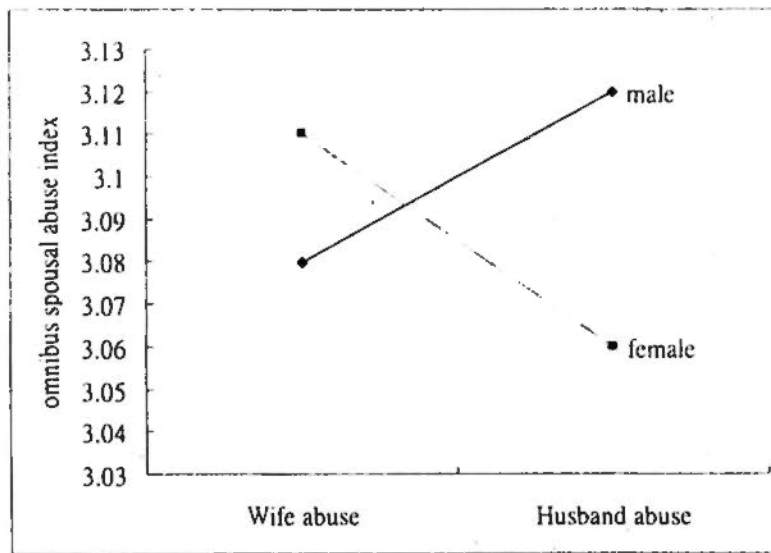
Based on the omnibus wife abuse index, results showed that female participants had significant broader conceptions when compared with their male counterparts ($t=2.58$, $p < .05$, $d = .15$). Based on the omnibus husband abuse index, male participants showed significant broader conceptions of husband abuse when compared with their female counterparts ($t=3.86$, $p < .05$, $d = .10$). The results indicated that female participants had broader conceptions of wife abuse than male participants, while male participants had broader conceptions of husband abuse than female participants.

Post-hoc analyses also demonstrated that female participants had significant broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse ($t=4.56$, $p < .05$, $d = .10$), and male participants had significant broader conceptions of husband abuse than wife abuse ($t=2.28$, $p < .05$, $d = .14$). Hypothesis 2 was supported as female social work undergraduates had broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, while male social work undergraduates had broader conceptions of husband abuse than wife abuse. The results of the post-hoc analyses are summarized in Table 8.4.3.

8.4.2.2 Wife abuse and husband abuse indexes

For the wife abuse and husband abuse indexes, the results showed that the main effects of victims' gender ($F = .08, p > .05$) and participants' gender ($F = .16, p > .05$) were not significant while the interaction effects were significant with medium effect size ($F = 14.93, p < .01, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .04$). The interaction effects are illustrated in Figure 8.2. Table 8.4.3 also summarizes the effects of victims' and participants' gender on the conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse indexes.

Figure 8.2: Interaction effects of victims' and participants' gender on the wife abuse and husband abuse indexes



Post-hoc analyses were conducted to further elaborate the interaction effects. It was found that participants did not have significant difference on the conceptions of wife abuse ($t = 1.84, p > .05$), although findings were in the predicted direction. Regarding the husband abuse index, male participants showed significant broader conceptions of husband abuse when compared with their female counterparts ($t = 3.69, p < .05, d = .14$).

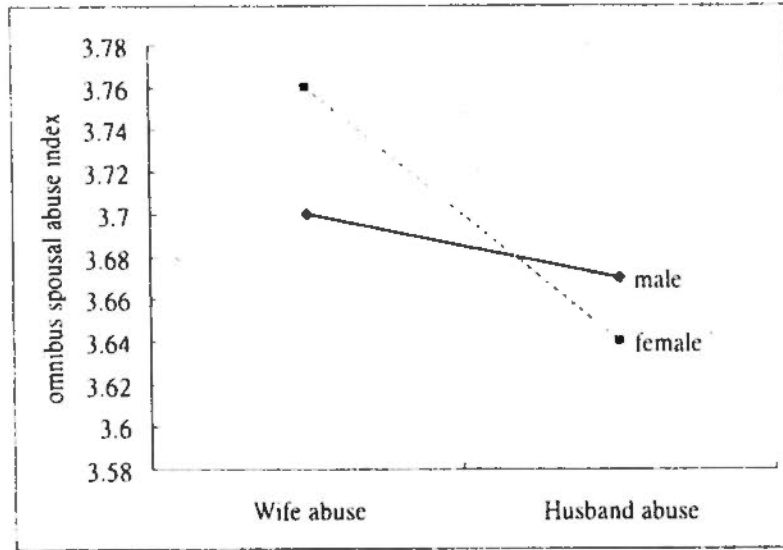
Post-hoc analyses also demonstrated that female participants had significant broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse ($t = 3.62, p < .05, d = .12$), and

male participants had significant broader conceptions of husband abuse than wife abuse ($t=2.17, p <.05, d=.10$). These supported Hypothesis 2 that female social work undergraduates had broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, while male social work undergraduates had broader conceptions of husband abuse than wife abuse.

8.4.2.3 Physical wife abuse and physical husband abuse indexes

With regard to the physical abuse indexes, the results showed that the main effect of the victims' gender was significant with medium effect size ($F=25.78, p <.01, \text{partial } \eta^2=.07$) while the main effect of participants' gender ($F=.26, p >.05$) was not significant. This meant participants had broader conceptions of physical abuse in wife abuse index when compared with husband abuse index ($M=3.74$ and 3.65 , respectively). This supported Hypothesis 1 that participants had broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, especially in physical abuse. The interaction effects of victims' and participants' gender were significant with small effect size ($F=8.39, p <.01, \text{partial } \eta^2=.02$). The interaction effects are illustrated in Figure 8.3. Table 8.4.3 also summarizes the effects of victims' and participants' gender on the conceptions of physical abuse between wife abuse and husband abuse.

Figure 8.3: Interaction effects of victims' and participants' gender on the conceptions of physical wife abuse and physical husband abuse indexes



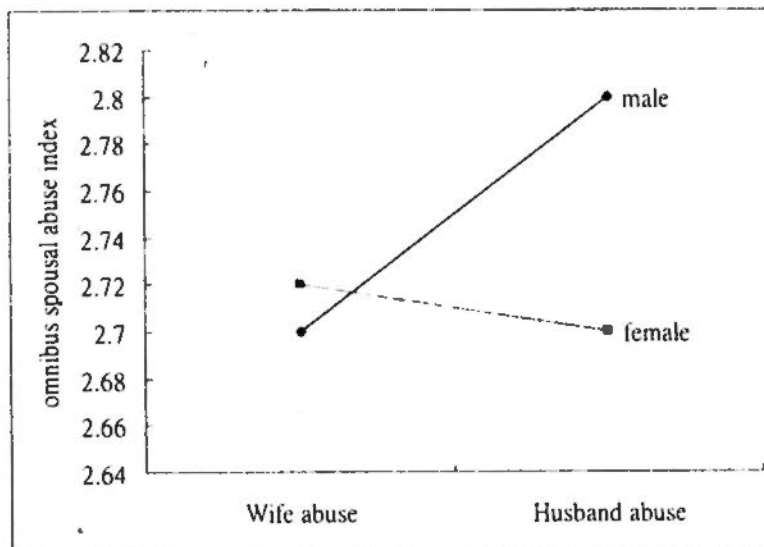
Post-hoc analyses were conducted to further elaborate the interaction effects. It was found that female participants had significant broader conceptions of physical wife abuse when compared with their male counterparts ($t=2.81, p <.05, d=.16$). With regard to physical husband abuse, post-hoc analyses showed that male participants did not have significant differences in the conceptions of physical husband abuse when compared with their female counterparts ($t=1.40, p >.05$).

Post-hoc analyses also demonstrated that female participants had significant broader conceptions of physical wife abuse than physical husband abuse ($t=6.6, p <.05, d=.33$). However, male participants did not have significant differences in their conceptions of physical wife abuse and physical husband abuse ($t=-1.24, p >.05$). Regarding physical abuse, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported as only female social work undergraduates had broader conceptions of physical wife abuse than physical husband abuse, while male social work undergraduates did not have significant broader conceptions of physical husband abuse than physical wife abuse. Though the effects were not significant, the findings showed a predicted direction as proposed in the hypothesis.

8.4.2.4 Psychological wife abuse and psychological husband abuse indexes

Concerning with psychological abuse, the results indicated that the main effect of victims' gender was significant with small to medium effect size ($F = 10.50, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$) while the main effect of participants' gender was not significant ($F = .37, p > .05$). This meant that participants had broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse than psychological wife abuse ($M = 2.74$ and 2.71 , respectively). This finding contradicted to Hypothesis 1, in which participants had broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse than psychological wife abuse. Furthermore, the interaction effects of victims' and participants' gender were significant with small to medium effect size ($F = 12.51, p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$). The interaction effects are illustrated in Figure 8.4. Table 8.4.3 also summarizes the effects of victims' and participants' gender on the conceptions of psychological wife abuse and psychological husband abuse.

Figure 8.4: Interaction effects of victims' and participants' gender on the conceptions of psychological wife abuse and psychological husband abuse



Post-hoc analyses were conducted to further elaborate the interaction effects.

With regard to psychological wife abuse, post-hoc analyses showed that female and male participants did not have significant difference on the conceptions of

psychological wife abuse ($t = .99, p > .05$). With regard to psychological husband abuse, post-hoc analyses showed that male participants had significant broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse when compared with their female counterparts ($t = 4.45, p < .05, d = .16$).

Post-hoc analyses also demonstrated that female participants did not have significant difference in their conceptions of psychological wife abuse and psychological husband abuse ($t = .58, p > .05$), while male participants had significant broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse than psychological wife abuse ($t = 4.37, p < .05, d = .18$). Regarding psychological abuse, Hypothesis 2 was partially supported as only male social work undergraduates had broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse than psychological wife abuse, while female social work undergraduates did not have significant broader conceptions of psychological wife abuse and psychological husband abuse.

In sum, the findings generally supported Hypothesis 2 that the degree on the breadth of conceptions of spousal abuse depended on victims' and participants' gender. Female participants tended to show more empathy to female and had broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, while male participants tended to show more empathy to male and had broader conceptions of husband abuse than wife abuse. However, the effects of victims' and participants' gender were further differentiated when the types of (physical and psychological) abuse were considered. Only female participants had broader conceptions of physical wife abuse than physical husband abuse, while only male participants had broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse than psychological wife abuse.

8.4.3 Results of Research Question 5: Differences in the beliefs about spousal abuse based on victims' (abused wife vs. abused husband) and participants' gender (female vs. male social work undergraduates)

This section aims at answering Research Question 5: "Are the beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse related to social work undergraduates' gender?" and its corresponding hypothesis. Beliefs about spousal abuse were measured based on the endorsement of more versus fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. The 14 items of beliefs about spousal abuse were biased, so a higher score indicated a higher endorsement of biased beliefs.

Hypothesis 3:

Based on the hypothesis of same sex favoritism, beliefs about spousal abuse are related to both victims' and participants' gender.

Female social work undergraduates would endorse fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse than husband abuse. On the other hand, male social work undergraduates would endorse fewer biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse.

In order to answer Hypothesis 3, within-subjects analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to examine the main effect of victims' and participants' gender as well as their interaction effects on the endorsement of biased beliefs about spousal abuse. The results showed that the main effect of victims' gender was significant with small effect size ($F = 4.06, p < .05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .01$) and the main effect of participants' gender was also significant with small effect size ($F = 7.61, p < .01, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .02$). Participants generally endorsed more biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse ($M = 1.76$ and 1.73 , respectively). Moreover, male participants endorsed more biased beliefs about spousal abuse than their female counterparts (beliefs about wife abuse: $M = 1.81$ and 1.67 ; beliefs about husband abuse: $M = 1.83$ and 1.72 , respectively).

The interaction effects between victims' and participants' gender were not

significant ($F = .73, p > .05$). The findings showed that participants in general endorsed more biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse and male participants endorsed more biased beliefs about spousal abuse. However, they did not support Hypothesis 3 was not supported and participants' beliefs about spousal abuse were not related to the interaction between victims' and participants' gender. Table 8.4.4 summarizes the effects of victims' and participants' gender on beliefs about spousal abuse.

8.4.3.1 Different endorsement of beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse

Participants' endorsement of biased beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse was compared. Same pairs of biased beliefs from wife abuse and husband abuse were compared by conducting McNemar-Bowker test. This test is used to examine the differences on individuals' endorsement of binary to multi-nominal categories. Significant differences were found in participants' justification of spousal abuse (Item 3: McNemar-Bowker test = 23.40, $p < .001, \phi_c = .15$). There were more participants endorsed that wife could use violence against his husband than husband could use violence against her wife if extra marital affair of spouse is noticed.

Moreover, there were more participants believed that more physical abuse and less psychological abuse happens in wife abuse than husband abuse (Item 11: McNemar-Bowker test = 20.43, $p < .01, \phi_c = .14$). This indirectly indicated that participants generally believed that "physical abuse" usually happens in wife abuse than husband abuse. Furthermore, participants believed that "psychological abuse happens in a long term while physical abuse happens sporadically" in husband abuse than wife abuse (Item 13: McNemar-Bowker test = 57.03, $p < .001, \phi_c = .23$). This indirectly reflected that participants believed husband abuse involved more long term psychological abuse than wife abuse.

Finally significant differences were found in the behavioral manifestations that constituted as wife abuse and husband abuse. There were more participants agreed that “neglect is not a problem” in husband abuse than in wife abuse (Item 12: McNemar-Bowker test =69.25, $p < .001$, $\phi_c = .25$). Moreover, more participants believed that “nagging is not a big problem” in wife abuse than in husband abuse (Item 14: McNemar test =62.46, $p < .001$, $\phi_c = .24$).

In sum, participants believed that husband abuse was more justified than wife abuse when extra-marital affairs were noticed, husband abuse involved more long-term psychological abuse and sporadic physical abuse, while wife abuse involved more physical but less psychological abuse. “Wife neglects her husband” and “husband nags against his wife” were not big problems to be concerned as spousal abuse. Table 8.4.5 summarizes the differences in the endorsement of biased beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse.

8.4.4 Results of Research Question 6: Relationships between attitudes toward gender and the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

This section aims at answering Research Question 6: “Are participants’ attitudes toward gender related to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?” and its corresponding hypotheses. Attitudes toward gender were measured in both work and domestic domains, with traditional versus egalitarian dimension. Higher score indicated traditional while lower score indicated egalitarian attitudes toward gender in that particular domain.

Hypothesis 4a:

Participants who have higher level of egalitarian attitudes toward gender would have broader conceptions of spousal abuse. This means that there is a positive relationship between endorsement of egalitarian attitudes toward gender and conceptions of spousal abuse.

Hypothesis 4b:

Participants who have higher level of egalitarian attitudes toward gender would endorse fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. This means that there is a negative relationship between endorsement of egalitarian attitudes toward gender and beliefs about spousal abuse.

In answering Hypothesis 4a, correlation analyses were conducted. The results showed that attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain were negatively related to the omnibus wife abuse index ($r = -.19, p < .01$), the omnibus husband abuse index ($r = -.17, p < .01$), the wife abuse index ($r = -.20, p < .01$) and the husband abuse index ($r = -.18, p < .01$), as well as psychological wife abuse ($r = -.20, p < .01$) and psychological husband abuse ($r = -.19, p < .01$). However, no significant correlation was found between attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and conceptions of physical wife abuse ($r = -.06, p > .05$) and physical husband abuse ($r = -.07, p > .05$).

Hypothesis 4a was supported when attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain was considered. A higher level of egalitarian attitudes toward gender (a lower score) in the domestic domain was related to broader conceptions, especially psychological abuse. However, no significant correlation was found between attitudes toward gender in the work domain and the conceptions of spousal abuse. Table 8.4.8 summarizes the correlations between attitudes toward gender and the conceptions of spousal abuse.

In answering Hypothesis 4b, correlation analyses were conducted. The results demonstrated that attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain were positively correlated with beliefs about wife abuse ($r = .15, p < .01$) and husband abuse ($r = .14,$

$p < .01$). Hypothesis 4b was supported when attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain was considered. This indicated that participants had higher level of egalitarian attitudes toward gender (a lower score) in the domestic domain endorsed fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse, though the magnitudes of the correlation were small. However, no significant correlation was found between attitudes toward gender in the work domain and beliefs about spousal abuse. Table 8.4.8 summarizes the relationships between attitudes toward gender and beliefs about spousal abuse.

8.4.5 Results of Research Question 7: Relationships between socialization of gender stereotypes and the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

This section aims at answering Research Question 7: “Is participants’ socialization of gender stereotypes related to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?” and its corresponding hypotheses. Participants were categorized into “conservative group” and “liberal group”, with former denoted participants were highly identified with parents’ gender stereotypical thoughts and the latter denoted participants’ identification with parents liberal attitudes toward gender stereotypes.

Hypothesis 5a:

Participants who are highly socialized to gender stereotypes would have narrower conceptions of spousal abuse. This means there is a negative relationship between endorsement of gender stereotypes and conceptions of spousal abuse.

Hypothesis 5b:

Participants who are highly socialized to gender stereotypes would endorse more biased beliefs about spousal abuse. This means there is a positive relationship between endorsement of gender stereotypes and biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

In answering Hypothesis 5a, correlation analyses were performed. Kendall’s tau-b correlation analyses were conducted with categorical data among different

groupings of participants. No significant correlation was found among socialization to parents' gender stereotypes and the conceptions of spousal abuse. Table 8.4.8 summarizes the relationships among socialization of gender stereotypes and the conceptions of spousal abuse.

In response to Hypothesis 5b, correlation analyses were performed. Based on the Kendall's tau-b correlation analyses, no significant correlation was found among the socialization of gender stereotypes and the beliefs about spousal abuse. Table 8.4.8 summarizes the relationships among the socialization of gender stereotypes and the beliefs about spousal abuse.

It was because liberal group and conservative group were the two foci of this study. In order to examine if these two groups had significant differences in their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, independent sample t-tests were performed. Results indicated that participants who categorized into these two groups showed no difference in their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Table 8.4.6 summarizes the results from the independent sample t-tests.

8.4.6 Results of Research Question 8: Relationships between socialization of violence approval and the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

This section aims at answering Research Question 8: "Is participants' socialization of violence approval related to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?" and its corresponding hypotheses. Participants were categorized into "violence approval group" and "violence disapproval group", the former denoted participants were highly socialized to parents' violence approval attitudes, the latter denoted participants were socialized to parents' violence disapproval attitudes.

Hypothesis 6a:

Participants who are highly socialized to violence approval would have narrower conceptions of spousal abuse. This means there is a negative relationship between endorsement of violence approval and conceptions of spousal abuse.

Hypothesis 6b:

Participants who are highly socialized to violence approval would have more biased beliefs about spousal abuse. This means there is a positive relationship between endorsement of violence approval and biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

In answering Hypothesis 6a, correlation analyses were performed. Based on the Kendall's tau-b correlation analyses, no significant correlations were found among socialization to parents' violence approval and the conceptions of spousal abuse. Table 8.4.8 summarizes the relationships among socialization of violence approval and the conceptions of spousal abuse.

In answering Hypothesis 6b, correlation analyses were performed. Based on the Kendall's tau-b correlation analyses, no significant correlation was found among the socialization of violence approval with the beliefs about spousal abuse. Table 8.4.8 summarizes the relationships among socialization of violence approval and the beliefs about spousal abuse.

It was because violence approval group and violence disapproval group were the two foci of this study. In order to examine if these two groups had significant differences in the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, independent sample t-tests were performed. Results indicated that participants who categorized into these two groups showed no difference in their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Table 8.4.7 summarizes the results from the independent sample t-tests.

8.4.7 Results of Research Question 9: Relationships between Chinese traditionality and the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

This section aims at answering Research Question 9: “Is participants’ endorsement to Chinese traditionality related to their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?” and its corresponding hypotheses. A higher endorsement of Chinese traditionality was indicated by a higher score on the measurement scales of Chinese traditionality.

Hypothesis 7a:

Participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese traditionality would have narrower conceptions of spousal abuse. This means there is a negative relationship between endorsement of traditionality and conceptions of spousal abuse.

Hypothesis 7b:

Participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese traditionality would have more biased beliefs about spousal abuse. This means there is a positive relationship between endorsement of traditionality and biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

In answering Hypothesis 7a, correlation analyses were performed, results indicated that Chinese traditionality had significant negative correlations with the omnibus wife abuse index ($r = -.13, p < .05$), physical wife abuse ($r = -.22, p < .01$) and physical husband abuse ($r = -.16, p < .01$). However, no significant correlation was found between Chinese traditionality and the conceptions of omnibus husband abuse index: ($r = -.06, p > .05$), wife abuse index ($r = -.10, p > .05$) and husband abuse index ($r = -.07, p > .05$). Furthermore, no significant correlation was found between Chinese traditionality and psychological wife abuse ($r = -.04, p > .05$); and psychological husband abuse ($r = -.02, p > .05$).

The correlations among sub-scales and conceptions of spousal abuse were also examined. Results indicated that Respect to Authority had a significant negative correlation with wife physical abuse ($r = -.13, p < .05$). No significant correlation was

found between this sub-scale and other measurement on the conceptions of spousal abuse.

The sub-scale: Superiority of Male was significantly correlated with the omnibus wife abuse index ($r = -.15, p < .01$), wife abuse index ($r = -.13, p < .05$), and physical wife abuse ($r = -.24, p < .01$) and physical husband abuse ($r = -.21, p < .01$). The results demonstrated that higher endorsement of Chinese traditionality would lead to narrower conceptions of wife abuse and physical abuse. Furthermore, higher endorsement of both sub-scales would lead to narrower conceptions of wife abuse, especially physical abuse. The endorsement of Chinese traditionality had no significant correlation with the conceptions of husband abuse and psychological abuse. Table 8.4.8 presents the relationships between Chinese traditionality and conceptions of spousal abuse.

In answering Hypothesis 7b, correlation analyses were conducted. Results indicated that Chinese traditionality had significant positive correlations with beliefs about wife abuse ($r = .46, p < .01$) and husband abuse ($r = .31, p < .01$). This supported the hypothesis that higher endorsement of Chinese traditionality was related to more biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

The correlations among the two sub-scales and beliefs about spousal abuse were also examined. Results showed that Respect to Authority had significant positive correlations with beliefs about wife abuse ($r = .36, p < .01$) and husband abuse ($r = .22, p < .01$). Sub-scale: Superiority of Male also had significant positive correlations with beliefs about wife abuse ($r = .44, p < .01$) and husband abuse ($r = .31, p < .01$). These indicated that higher endorsement of Chinese traditionality includes Respect to Authority and Superiority of Male would lead to more biased beliefs about spousal abuse. Table 8.4.8 presents the relationships between Chinese traditionality and beliefs about spousal abuse.

8.4.8 Results of Research Question 10: Relationships between Chinese modernity and the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

This section aims at answering Research Question 10: “Is participants’ endorsement to Chinese modernity related to their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?” and its corresponding hypotheses. A higher endorsement of Chinese modernity was indicated by a higher score on the measurement scale of Chinese modernity.

Hypothesis 8a:

Participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese modernity would have broader conceptions of spousal abuse. This means there is a positive relationship between endorsement of modernity and conceptions of spousal abuse.

Hypothesis 8b:

Participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese modernity would endorse fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. This means there is a negative relationship between endorsement of modernity and biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

In answering Hypothesis 8a, correlation analyses were performed. Results showed that Chinese modernity had significant positive correlations with omnibus wife abuse index ($r = .22, p < .01$), omnibus husband abuse index ($r = .23, p < .01$), wife abuse index ($r = .18, p < .01$) and husband abuse index ($r = .21, p < .01$); physical wife abuse ($r = .24, p < .01$), physical husband abuse ($r = .25, p < .01$); as well as psychological wife abuse ($r = .12, p < .05$) and psychological husband abuse ($r = .15, p < .01$). These indicated that higher endorsement of Chinese modernity was related to broader conceptions of both wife abuse and husband abuse as well as their sub-factors of abuse.

The sub-scale: Egalitarianism and Openness had significant positive correlations with omnibus wife abuse index ($r = .13, p < .05$), omnibus husband abuse index ($r = .17, p < .01$), husband abuse index ($r = .15, p < .01$), physical wife abuse ($r = .16, p < .01$)

and physical husband abuse ($r = .17, p < .01$), as well as psychological husband abuse ($r = .12, p < .05$).

The sub-scale: Gender Equality had significant positive correlations with omnibus wife abuse index ($r = .24, p < .01$), omnibus husband abuse index ($r = .23, p < .01$), wife abuse index ($r = .21, p < .01$), husband abuse index ($r = .21, p < .01$); and physical wife abuse ($r = .26, p < .01$) and physical husband abuse ($r = .26, p < .01$); as well as psychological wife abuse ($r = .15, p < .05$) and psychological husband abuse ($r = .15, p < .01$). The relationships of Chinese modernity and the conceptions of spousal abuse are summarized in Table 8.4.8.

In answering Hypothesis 8b, correlations analyses were performed. Results showed that Chinese modernity had significant negative correlations with beliefs about wife abuse ($r = -.18, p < .01$) and husband abuse ($r = -.14, p < .01$). These indicated that higher endorsement of Chinese modernity was related to fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. The sub-scale: Gender Equality was negatively related to beliefs about wife abuse ($r = -.27, p < .01$) and husband abuse ($r = -.21, p < .01$). However, no significant correlation was found between subscale: Egalitarianism and Openness and beliefs about spousal abuse. This indicated that high endorsement of Chinese modernity, in particular Gender Equality would have few biased beliefs about spousal abuse. The relationships of Chinese modernity and the beliefs about spousal abuse are summarized in Table 8.4.8. Table 8.4.9 presents the statistical results corresponding to the proposed hypotheses.

8.4.9 Results of Research Question 11: Predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

This section aims at answering Research Question 11: “What are the salient predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse amongst the psychosocial

correlates organized in the proposed ecological model?" Results are summarized in Table 8.4.10.

8.4.9.1 Predictors of conceptions of spousal abuse

In order to examine the contribution of each psychosocial correlate and which were the salient predictors of the conceptions of spousal abuse, hierarchical regression analyses were performed. Separate hierarchical regression analyses were conducted for the four indexes of spousal abuse. The individual and ecological psychosocial correlates were entered as six blocks, with gender as Block 1. Attitudes toward gender in the domestic and the work domains were entered as Block 2. The dummy variables of socialization of father's and mother's gender stereotypes were entered as Block 3. The dummy variables of socialization of father's and mother's violence approval were entered as Block 4. The Chinese traditionality and its two sub-scales: Respect to Authority and Superiority of Male were entered as Block 5. The Chinese modernity and its two sub-scales: Egalitarianism and Openness as well as Gender Equality were entered as Block 6.

8.4.9.1.1 Predictors of conceptions of wife abuse

8.4.9.1.1a Omnibus wife abuse index of the total sample

Regarding the 59-item omnibus wife abuse index, gender in Block 1 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .001$, F change = .31, $p > .05$). Attitudes toward gender in Block 2 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .043$, F change = 6.76, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .04$). Socialization of gender stereotypes in Block 3 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .004$, F change = .32, $p > .05$). Socialization of violence approval in Block 4 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .01$, F change = .50, $p > .05$). Chinese traditionality in Block 5 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, F change = 2.69, $p > .05$). Chinese modernity in Block 6

was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, F change = 6.68, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .05$).

The total variance accounted by the full model was 11%. Beta values of the final block showed broader conceptions of omnibus wife abuse index were best predicted by egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.22$) and a higher level of endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .25$).

8.4.9.1.1b Wife abuse index of the total sample

Regarding the 43-item wife abuse index, gender in Block 1 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .001$, F change = .22, $p > .05$). Attitudes toward gender in Block 2 was significant ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, F change = 6.88, $p < .01$), though the effect size was small ($f^2 = .04$). Socialization of gender stereotypes from parents in Block 3 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .004$, F change = .30, $p > .05$). Socialization of violence approval from parents in Block 4 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .007$, F change = .51, $p > .05$). Chinese traditionalism in Block 5 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .013$, F change = 2, $p > .05$). Chinese modernity in Block 6 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .034$, F change = 5.42, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .04$). The total variance accounted by the full model was 10%. Beta values of the final block showed broader conceptions of wife abuse were best predicted by egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.23$) and a higher level of endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .23$).

8.4.9.1.1c Physical wife abuse index of the total sample

Regarding physical wife abuse index (16-item), gender in Block 1 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .006$, F change = 1.83, $p > .05$). Attitudes toward gender in Block 2 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .005$, F change = .80, $p > .05$). Socialization of gender stereotypes from parents in Block 3 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .005$, F change = .35, p

>.05). Socialization of violence approval from parents in Block 4 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .020$, F change= 1.52, $p > .05$). Chinese traditionality in Block 5 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .055$, F change= 8.78, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .06$). Chinese modernity in Block 6 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, F change=4.65, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .03$). The total variance accounted by the full model was 12%. Beta values of the final block showed broader conceptions of wife physical abuse were best predicted by lower endorsement of Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male ($\beta = -.17$) and higher endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .17$).

8.4.9.1.1d Psychological wife abuse index of the total sample

Regarding psychological wife abuse index (27-item), gender in Block 1 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .00$, F change= .04, $p > .05$). Attitudes toward gender in Block 2 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .05$, F change= 8, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .05$). Socialization of gender stereotypes from parents in Block 3 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .009$, F change= .70, $p > .05$). Socialization of violence approval from parents in Block 4 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .005$, F change= .37, $p > .05$). Chinese traditionality in Block 5 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .005$, F change= .80, $p > .05$). Chinese modernity in Block 6 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .03$, F change=4.20, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .03$). The total variance accounted by the full model was 10%. Beta values of the final block showed broader conceptions of psychological wife abuse were best predicted by egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.27$) and higher endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .21$).

In short, two salient predictors were found in predicting the conceptions of wife abuse. First, Chinese modern value of Gender Equality saliently predicted the four

indexes of wife abuse. Second, attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain significantly predicted three indexes of wife abuse, except physical wife abuse index. Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male was another significant predictor of wife physical abuse index. Table 8.4.10 summarizes the results of hierarchical regression analyses on the four indexes of wife abuse.

8.4.9.1.2 Predictors of conceptions of husband abuse

8.4.9.1.2a Omnibus husband abuse index of the total sample

Regarding the 59-item omnibus husband abuse index, gender in Block 1 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .003$, F change = .91, $p > .05$). Attitudes toward gender in Block 2 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, F change = 5.88, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .04$). Socialization of gender stereotypes in Block 3 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .003$, F change = .20, $p > .05$). Socialization of violence approval in Block 4 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .01$, F change = .50, $p > .05$). Chinese traditionality in Block 5 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .02$, F change = 2.32, $p > .05$). Chinese modernity in Block 6 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .06$, F change = 9.19, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .06$). The total variance accounted by the full model was 12%. Beta values of the final block showed broader conceptions of omnibus husband abuse index were best predicted by egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.20$) and a higher endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .27$).

8.4.9.1.2b Husband abuse index of the total sample

Regarding the 43-item husband abuse index, gender in Block 1 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .003$, F change = 1.01, $p > .05$). Attitudes toward gender in Block 2 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, F change = 5.91, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .04$). Socialization of gender stereotypes from parents in Block 3 was not significant (ΔR^2

=.003, F change= .22, $p > .05$). Socialization of violence approval from parents in Block 4 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .006$, F change= .46, $p > .05$). Chinese traditionalism in Block 5 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .011$, F change= 1.67, $p > .05$). Chinese modernity in Block 6 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .05$, F change=7.82, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .06$). The total variance accounted by the full model was 11%. Beta values of the final block showed broader conceptions of husband abuse were best predicted by egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.20$) and a higher endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .23$).

8.4.9.1.2c Physical husband abuse of the total sample

Regarding the conceptions of physical husband abuse index (16-item), gender in Block 1 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .00$, F change= .10, $p > .05$). Attitudes toward gender in Block 2 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .006$, F change= .97, $p > .05$). Socialization of gender stereotypes from parents in Block 3 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .006$, F change= .44, $p > .05$). Socialization of violence approval from parents in Block 4 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .004$, F change= .30, $p > .05$). Chinese traditionalism in Block 5 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .052$, F change= 8.07, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .05$). Chinese modernity in Block 6 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, F change=5.85, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .04$). The total variance accounted by the full model was 10%. Beta values of the final block showed broader conceptions of husband physical abuse were best predicted by a lower endorsement of Chinese traditional value of male superiority ($\beta = -.19$) and a higher endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .20$).

8.4.9.1.2d Psychological husband abuse of the total sample

Regarding the psychological husband abuse index (27-item), gender in Block 1 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .004$, F change = 1.28, $p > .05$). Attitudes toward gender in Block 2 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .044$, F change = 6.97, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .05$). Socialization of gender stereotypes from parents in Block 3 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .008$, F change = .65, $p > .05$). Socialization of violence approval from parents in Block 4 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .007$, F change = .55, $p > .05$). Chinese traditionalism in Block 5 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .002$, F change = .37, $p > .05$). Chinese modernity in Block 6 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .04$, F change = 6, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .04$). The total variance accounted by the full model was 10%. Beta values of the final block showed broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse were best predicted by egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.23$) and higher endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .21$).

In sum, similar to the conceptions of wife abuse, two salient predictors of conceptions of husband abuse were found. First, Chinese modern value of Gender Equality saliently predicted all of the four indexes of husband abuse. Second, attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain significantly predicted three indexes of conceptions of husband abuse, except physical abuse. Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male was another significant predictor of husband physical abuse. Table 8.4.10 summarizes the results of the hierarchical regression analyses of the four indexes of husband abuse.

8.4.9.3 Predictors of beliefs about spousal abuse

In order to examine the contribution of each psychosocial correlate and which were the best predictors of the beliefs about spousal abuse, hierarchical regression

analyses were performed. There were two separate hierarchical regression analyses for the beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse. The individual and ecological psychosocial correlates were entered as six blocks, with the same sequence of those entered in the regression model of the conceptions of spousal abuse. Results of the predictors of beliefs about spousal abuse are summarized in Table 8.4.10.

8.4.9.3a Beliefs about wife abuse of the total sample

Regarding the beliefs about wife abuse, gender in Block 1 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .023$, F change = 7.17, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .01$). Attitudes toward gender in the domestic and the work domains in Block 2 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .025$, F change = 3.9, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .03$). Socialization of gender stereotypes from parents in Block 3 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .008$, F change = .62, $p > .05$). Socialization of violence approval from parents in Block 4 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .019$, F change = 1.52, $p > .05$). Chinese traditionalism in Block 5 was significant with moderate effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .16$, F change = 29.88, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .20$). Chinese modernity in Block 6 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .012$, F change = 2.34, $p > .05$). The total variance accounted by the full model was 23%. Beta values showed fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse was endorsed by female participants ($\beta = -.16$), egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = .15$), lower endorsement of Chinese traditional values of Respect to Authority ($\beta = .18$) and Superiority of Male ($\beta = .31$).

In short, gender, attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain, and Chinese traditional values of Respect to Authority and Superiority of Male were the salient predictors of beliefs about wife abuse. Table 8.4.10 summarizes the results of the hierarchical regression analyses of beliefs about wife abuse.

8.4.9.3b Beliefs about husband abuse of the total sample

Regarding the beliefs about husband abuse, gender in Block 1 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .013$, F change = 4, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .01$). Attitudes toward gender in the domestic and the work domains in Block 2 were significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .022$, F change = 3.38, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .02$). Socialization of gender stereotypes from parents in Block 3 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .001$, F change = .08, $p > .05$). Socialization of violence approval from parents in Block 4 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .019$, F change = 1.48, $p > .05$). Chinese traditionality in Block 5 was significant with small effect size ($\Delta R^2 = .068$, F change = 11.28, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .08$). Chinese modernity in Block 6 was not significant ($\Delta R^2 = .006$, F change = 1, $p > .05$). The total variance accounted by the full model was 12%. Beta values showed fewer biased beliefs about husband abuse was endorsed by female participants ($\beta = -.12$), egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = .13$) and lower endorsement of Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male ($\beta = .21$).

In sum, gender, attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain, and Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male were the salient predictors of beliefs about husband abuse. Though similar predictors were found in beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse, the predictors could explain the beliefs about wife abuse more than the beliefs about husband abuse ($R^2 = .23$ and $.12$, respectively). Table 8.4.10 summarizes the results of the hierarchical regression analyses of the beliefs about husband abuse.

8.4.9.4 Further statistical tests in examining the mediation effects

Structural equation modeling (SEM) was conducted in order to examine the latent processes of effects among the three-level of correlates in the proposed ecological model. However, the sample size was not big enough to ensure the size of

each cell within the model, thus structural equation modeling was not performed.

Then simple mediation effect was examined with reference to the significant predictors of the conceptions and beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse. Attitude toward gender in the domestic domain at the individual level was set as the mediator, which mediated the processes between independent variables at the cultural level (Chinese traditionality and Chinese modernity) and the dependent variables (conceptions and beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse). Sobel tests indicated that no significant differences were found in the beta values on the dependent variables between the mediator (attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain) and the independent variables at the cultural level. Table 8.4.10a and Table 8.4.10b summarize the results based on the Sobel tests.

8.4.10 Results of Research Question 12: Differences in the predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse based on victims' (abused wife vs. abused husband) and participants' gender (female vs. male social work undergraduates)

This section aims at answering Research Question 12: "Would the predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse different based on victims' and participants' gender?" In order to answer this question, hierarchical regression analyses on the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse were separately conducted for male and female samples. The individual and ecological psychosocial correlates were entered as six blocks, with the same sequence of those entered in the regression model of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, which is presented before. Table 8.4.11 summarizes the results of the hierarchical regression analyses of the conceptions and beliefs about wife abuse separated with female and male samples.

8.4.10.1 Predictors of conceptions and beliefs about wife abuse compared between female and male samples

8.4.10.1.1 Conceptions of wife abuse between female and male samples

8.4.10.1.1a Omnibus wife abuse index

Regarding the omnibus wife abuse index, the full model explained 13% of the total variance with small effect size ($R^2 = .13$, F Change = 5.43, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .05$) and two significant predictors were found in the female sample. They were attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.24$) and Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .28$). Female participants who had egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and higher endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality predicted broader conceptions of wife abuse. However, in the male sample, the full model was not statistically significant in explaining the conceptions of wife abuse and no significant predictor was found.

The predictors (beta values) of attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain were compared between female and male samples. No significant difference was found ($t = -.57$, $p > .05$). No significant difference was found in the beta values of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($t = 1.43$, $p > .05$). Results are summarized in Table 8.4.11.

8.4.10.1.1b Wife abuse index

Similar results were found in the wife abuse index, the full model explained 11% of the total variance with small effect size ($R^2 = .11$, F Change = 4.00, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .04$) and two significant predictors were found in the female sample. They were attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.24$) and Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .25$). Female participants who had egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and higher endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender

Equality predicted broader conceptions of wife abuse. However, in the male sample, the full model was not statistically significant in explaining the conceptions of wife abuse and no significant predictor was found.

The predictors (beta values) of attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain were compared between female and male samples. No significant difference was found ($t = -.19, p > .05$). Moreover, no significant difference was found in the beta values of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($t = .84, p > .05$). Results are summarized in Table 8.4.11.

8.4.10.1.1c Physical wife abuse index

Regarding physical wife abuse, the full model explained 13% of the total variance with small effect size ($R^2 = .13, F \text{ Change} = 6.83, p < .01, f^2 = .05$) and two significant predictors were found in the female sample. They were Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male ($\beta = -.24$) and Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .28$). Female participants who had lower endorsement of Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male and higher endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality would have broader conception of physical wife abuse.

In the male sample, the full model explained 20% of the total variance ($R^2 = .20, F \text{ Change} = 5.81, p < .01$) with small effect size ($f^2 = .10$) and only one significant predictor was found. The significant predictor was Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male ($\beta = -.25$). Male participants who had lower endorsement of Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male would have broader conceptions of physical wife abuse.

The predictors (beta values) of Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male were compared between female and male samples. No significant difference was found ($t = .10, p > .05$). However, significant differences were found in the predictors

(beta values) of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($t = 3.29, p < .05$) between female and male samples. Results are summarized in Table 8.4.11.

8.4.10.1.1d Psychological wife abuse index

With regard to the psychological wife abuse, the full model explained 6% of the total variance with small effect size ($R^2 = .06, F \text{ Change} = 7.47, p < .01, f^2 = .06$) and only one significant predictor was found in the female sample. The predictor was the attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.27$). Female participants who had egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain would have broader conceptions of psychological wife abuse.

However, in the male sample, the full model explained 14% of the total variance with small effect size ($R^2 = .14, F \text{ Change} = 3.34, p < .05, f^2 = .06$) and two significant predictors were found, included attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.25$) and Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .24$). Male participants who had egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and higher endorsement of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality would have broader conceptions of psychological wife abuse.

The predictors (beta values) of attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain were compared between male and female samples, no significant difference was found ($t = -.19, p > .05$). The predictors (beta values) of Chinese modern value of Gender Equality were also compared, no significant difference was found ($t = -.46, p > .05$). Table 8.4.11 summarizes the results.

In short, the predictors (attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and Chinese modern values of gender equality) were stronger in predicting omnibus wife abuse and wife abuse indexes in the female than in the male sample. Furthermore, the predictors of physical wife and psychological wife abuse work differently in the

female and the male samples. Table 8.4.12 is a grand matrix summarizing the salient predictors of the four indexes of wife abuse.

8.4.10.2 Beliefs about wife abuse between female and male samples

Regarding the beliefs about wife abuse, the full model explained 24% of the total variance with medium effect size ($R^2 = .24$, F Change = 4.42, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .15$) and five significant predictors were found in the female sample. They were attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = .15$), Chinese traditional values of Respect to Authority ($\beta = .17$), and Superiority of Male ($\beta = .16$), as well as Chinese modern values of Egalitarianism and Openness ($\beta = -.15$) and Gender Equality ($\beta = -.23$). Female participants who had egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain, lower endorsement of Chinese traditional values of Respect to Authority and Superiority of Male, as well as higher endorsement of Chinese modern values of Egalitarianism and Openness as well as Gender Equality would have fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse.

However, in the male sample, the full model explained 31% of the total variance with medium effect size ($R^2 = .31$, F Change = 14.27, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .25$) and only two significant predictors were found. They were identification with father's violence disapproval ($\beta = -.27$) and Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male ($\beta = .40$). Male participants who identified with their father's violence disapproval attitudes and endorsed lower level of Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male would have fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse.

The predictors (beta values) between female and male samples were compared. Significant differences were found in the predictors of attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($t = 2.35$, $p < .05$), identification with father's violence disapproval ($t = 2.67$, $p < .05$), Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male ($t = 2.57$, $p < .05$), and

Chinese modern values of Egalitarianism and Openness ($t = -1.71, p < .05$) and Gender Equality ($t = 3.63, p < .05$). No significant difference was found in the predictors of Chinese traditional value of Respect to Authority ($t = .43, p > .05$) between male and female samples. Results are summarized in Table 8.4.11.

In sum, more salient predictors were found in the beliefs about wife abuse in female sample than in male sample. Though only two significant predictors of beliefs about wife abuse were found in the male sample, the full model could explain beliefs about wife abuse more in male than in the female sample ($R^2 = .31$ and $.24$, respectively). Table 8.4.12 is a grand matrix summarizing the salient predictors of beliefs about wife abuse.

8.4.10.3 Predictors of conceptions and beliefs about **husband abuse** compared between female and male samples

Same as the conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse, hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to examine the salient predictors of conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse. Results are summarized in Table 8.4.13.

8.4.10.3.1 Conceptions of husband abuse between female and male samples

8.4.10.3.1a Omnibus husband abuse index

Regarding the omnibus husband abuse index, the full model explained 14% of the total variance with small effect size ($R^2 = .14, F \text{ Change} = 5.08, p < .01, f^2 = .05$) and three significant predictors were found in the female sample. They were attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.21$), Chinese traditional value of Respect to Authority ($\beta = .18$), and Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .26$). Female participants who had egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain, endorsed higher levels of Respect to Authority and Gender Equality would have

broader conceptions of husband abuse.

In the male sample, the full model explained 18% of the total variance with small effect size ($R^2 = .18$, F Change = 5.48, $p < .01$, $f^2 = .10$) and only one significant predictor was found. Male participants who endorsed a higher level of Gender Equality ($\beta = .22$) would have broader conceptions of husband abuse.

The predictors (beta values) of Chinese traditional value of Respect to Authority between female and male samples were compared, significant differences were found ($t = 2.50$, $p < .05$). No significant difference was found in the predictors of attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($t = -.10$, $p > .05$) and Chinese modernity of Gender Equality ($t = .39$, $p > .05$). Results are summarized in Table 8.4.13.

8.4.10.3.1b Husband abuse index

With regard to the husband abuse index, the full model explained 12% of the total variance with small effect size ($R^2 = .12$, F Change = 3.93, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .04$) and four significant predictors were found in female sample. They were attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.19$), Chinese traditional values of Respect to Authority and Superiority of Male ($\beta = .16$ and $.22$, respectively), and the Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .22$). Female participants who had egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain, endorsed higher levels of Respect to Authority and Superiority of Male, as well as higher level of Gender Equality would have broader conceptions of husband abuse.

In the male sample, the full model explained 18% of the total variance with small effect size ($R^2 = .18$, F Change = 4.41, $p < .05$, $f^2 = .08$) and two significant predictors were found. They were attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.23$) and Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .21$). Male participants who had egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and endorsed higher level

of Gender Equality would have broader conceptions of husband abuse.

The predictors (beta values) of Chinese traditional value of Respect to Authority between female and male samples were compared, significant differences were found ($t = 2.40, p < .05$). No significant difference was found in the predictors of attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($t = .38, p > .05$), Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male ($t = .19, p > .05$), and Chinese modernity of Gender Equality ($t = .10, p > .05$). Results are summarized in Table 8.4.13.

8.4.10.3.1c Physical husband abuse index

Regarding the physical husband abuse, the full model explained 13% of the total variance with small effect size ($R^2 = .13, F \text{ Change} = 4.79, p < .01, f^2 = .07$) and three significant predictors were found in the female sample. They were Chinese traditional values of Respect to Authority and Superiority of Male ($\beta = .16$ and $-.19$, respectively), and Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($\beta = .25$). Female participants who endorsed higher level of Respect to Authority and Gender Equality as well as lower level of Superiority of Male would have broader conceptions of physical husband abuse.

In the male sample, the full model explained 14% of the total variance ($R^2 = .14, F \text{ Change} = 3.75, p < .05$) with small effect size ($f^2 = .07$) and only one significant predictor was found. It was Chinese modern value of Egalitarianism and Openness ($\beta = .24$). Male participants who had a higher level of Chinese modern value of Egalitarianism and Openness would have broader conceptions of physical husband abuse.

The predictors (beta values) of Chinese modern value of Egalitarianism and Openness between female and male samples were compared, significant differences were found ($t = 2.54, p < .05$). Significant differences were also found in Chinese

modern value of Gender Equality ($t = 2.26, p < .05$). No significant difference was found in the predictors of Chinese traditional value of Respect to Authority ($t = 1.59, p > .05$), and Superiority of Male ($t = .09, p > .05$). Results are summarized in Table 8.4.13.

8.4.10.3.1d Psychological husband abuse index

With regard to the psychological husband abuse, the full model explained 6% of the total variance ($R^2 = .06, F \text{ Change} = 7.32, p < .01$) with small effect size ($f^2 = .06$) and only one significant predictor was found in the female sample. Female participants with egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.21$) would have broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse.

However, in the male sample, the full model explained 22% of the total variance ($R^2 = .22, F \text{ Change} = 3.94, p < .05$) with small effect size ($f^2 = .07$) and four salient predictors were found. Male participants who had egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = -.30$), identification with mother's liberal attitudes toward gender ($\beta = -.27$), a higher endorsement of Superiority of Male and Gender Equality ($\beta = .33$ and $.26$, respectively) would have broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse.

The predictors (beta values) of identification with mother's liberal attitudes toward gender between female and male samples were compared, significant differences were found ($t = 2.54, p < .05$). Significant differences were also found in Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male ($t = 4.56, p < .05$). No significant difference was found in the predictors of attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($t = .88, p > .05$), and Chinese modern value of Gender Equality ($t = .95, p > .05$). Results are summarized in Table 8.4.13.

In sum, the predictors could explain the four indexes of husband abuse more in

the male sample than in the female sample, especially psychological husband abuse. Predictors also work differently in predicting the conceptions of husband abuse among the female and the male samples. Table 8.4.14 is a grand matrix summarizing the salient predictors of the four indexes of conceptions of husband abuse between female and male samples.

8.4.10.4 Beliefs about husband abuse

In the female sample, the full model explained 16% of the total variance ($R^2 = .16$, F Change = 7.34, $p < .01$) with small effect size ($f^2 = .12$) and two salient predictors were found. They were attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain ($\beta = .17$) and Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male ($\beta = .19$). Female participants who had traditional attitudes toward gender and higher level of Superiority of Male would have more biased beliefs about husband abuse.

In the male sample, the full model explained 19% of the total variance ($R^2 = .19$, F Change = 6.22, $p < .01$) with small effect size ($f^2 = .11$) and only one salient predictor was found. Male participants who had a higher endorsement of Superiority of Male ($\beta = .33$) would have more biased beliefs about husband abuse.

The predictors (beta values) of attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain between the female and the male samples were compared, significant differences were found ($t = 3.51$, $p < .05$) with small effect size ($f^2 = .11$). No significant difference was found in the predictor of Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male ($t = -1.4$, $p > .05$). Table 8.4.13 summarizes the results.

In sum, different predictors worked in predicting beliefs about husband abuse in female and male samples. The predictors could explain the beliefs about husband abuse more in the male sample than in the female sample ($R^2 = .19$ and $.16$, respectively). Table 8.4.14 is a matrix summarizing the salient predictors of beliefs

about husband abuse between female and male samples.

8.4.11 Results of Research Question 13: Relationships between participants' perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum and the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse

In response to the last research question, participants' perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum and the relationships with the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse were examined. Results of the correlations are summarized in Table 8.4.15.

8.4.11.1 Adequacy of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum

The three items (Questions 1 to 3 in Table 8.3.10) examining participants' perceptions of adequacy of training on knowledge of spousal abuse and their overall knowledge of spousal abuse were combined to form the adequacy of training index. It was found to be positively correlated with omnibus wife abuse index ($r=.12, p<.05$), omnibus husband abuse index ($r=.14, p<.01$), wife abuse index ($r=.14, p<.05$), husband abuse index ($r=.17, p<.01$), psychological wife abuse index ($r=.23, p<.01$), and psychological husband abuse index ($r=.20, p<.01$). These indicated that adequate training and knowledge of spousal abuse were related to broader conceptions of spousal abuse, especially psychological abuse.

8.4.11.2 Request for more training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum

The two items (Questions 4 and 5 in Table 8.3.10) examining participants' request for more training on knowledge of spousal abuse were combined as the

request for training on knowledge of spousal abuse index. It was found that this index was positively correlated with omnibus wife abuse index ($r=.19, p<.01$), omnibus husband abuse index ($r=.13, p<.05$), wife abuse index ($r=.19, p<.01$), husband abuse index ($r=.14, p<.01$), physical wife abuse index ($r=.18, p<.01$), physical husband abuse index ($r=.11, p<.05$), psychological wife abuse index ($r=.15, p<.01$); and psychological husband abuse index ($r=.12, p<.05$). These indicated that more request for training on knowledge of spousal abuse was related to broader conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse. This index was negatively related to beliefs about wife abuse ($r=-.17, p<.01$). This meant more request for training on knowledge of spousal abuse was related to fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

8.4.11.3 Willingness to handle spousal abuse cases in the future

The two items (Questions 6 and 7 in Table 8.3.10) examining participants' willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future were combined and formed the willingness to handle spousal abuse index. This index was positively correlated with wife abuse index ($r=.12, p<.05$), psychological wife abuse ($r=.11, p<.05$), and negatively related to beliefs about wife abuse ($r=-.11, p<.05$). These meant that more willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future was related to broader conceptions of wife abuse, especially psychological abuse and fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse. Table 8.4.15 summarizes the correlations amongst perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum and the outcome variables.

The relationships among the indexes of training on knowledge of spousal abuse were also examined. It was found that no significant relationship was found between adequacy of training on knowledge of spousal abuse and participants' willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future. However a significant negative relationship was found between adequacy of training and request for more training on knowledge of

spousal abuse ($r = -.14, p < .01$). It is because participants perceive that the training on knowledge of spousal abuse is inadequate in social work curriculum, so they tend to request for more training. Furthermore, a significant positive relationship was found between request for more training on knowledge of spousal abuse and willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future. This revealed that the higher the willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future, the more the requests for training on knowledge of spousal abuse.

Table 8.1.1: Age of the participants by gender and year of study

Year of Study	Gender	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Year 1	Male	38	19.80	1.18
	Female	69	19.60	1.08
	Total	107	19.70	1.11
Year 2	Male	41	21.30	1.11
	Female	78	50.60	1.04
	Total	119	20.80	1.66
Year 3	Male	41	21.98	1.34
	Female	70	21.61	1.08
	Total	111	21.75	1.63
Year 4	Male	10	23.3	.94
	Female	14	22.62	1.19
	Total	24	22.91	1.58
Total	Male	130	21.23	1.59
	Female	231	20.72	1.40
	Total	361	20.9	1.64

Table 8.1.2: Gender of the participants by college and year of study

Gender	University	Year of Study				Total
		1	2	3	4	
Male	CUHK	3 (30%)	3 (30%)	4 (40%)	0 (0%)	10
	HKU	8 (32%)	10 (40%)	7 (28%)	0 (0%)	25
	BU	4 (32%)	5 (33.3%)	6 (40%)	0 (0%)	15
	Poly U	7 (50%)	2 (14.3%)	5 (35.7%)	0 (0%)	14
	City U	10 (35.7%)	10 (35.7%)	8 (28.6%)	0 (0%)	28
	SYU	6 (15.8%)	11 (28.9%)	11 (28.9%)	10 (26.3%)	38
	Total	38 (29.2%)	41 (31.5%)	41 (31.5%)	10 (7.7%)	130
Female	CUHK	15 (35.7%)	12 (28.6%)	13 (31%)	2 (4.8%)	42
	HKU	3 (30%)	5 (50%)	2 (20%)	0 (0%)	10
	BU	15 (35.7%)	13 (31%)	14 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	42
	Poly U	11 (28.2%)	16 (41%)	12 (30.8%)	0 (0%)	39
	City U	11 (25%)	15 (34.1%)	18 (40.9%)	0 (0%)	44
	SYU	14 (25.9%)	17 (31.5%)	11 (20.4%)	12 (22.2%)	54
	Total	69 (29.9%)	78 (33.8%)	70 (30.3%)	14 (6.1%)	231

Table 8.1.3: Participants' family living conditions

<i>Family living conditions:</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Mainly lived with parents	310	86.8
Lived with father only	8	2.2
Lived with mother only	33	9.2
Did not live with parents	6	1.8
Total	357	100

Table 8.1.4: Marital status of participants' parents

<i>Parents' marital status:</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Parents divorced and did not remarry	17	5
Parents separated and did not remarry	17	5
Parents were in their first marital relationship	291	85.3
Parents divorced and remarried	16	4.7
Total	341	100

Table 8.1.5: Work status of participants' parents

<i>Parents' work status:</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Both parents had full-time jobs	127	36.8
Only father had full-time job	99	28.7
Only mother had full-time job	24	7
Father had full-time job and mother had part-time job	53	15.4
Mother had full-time job and father had part-time job	7	2
Both parents did not have full-time job and receive CSSA*	24	7
Both parents did not have full-time job but they received CSSA*	11	3.1
Total	345	100

*CSSA denotes Comprehensive Social Security Allowance

Table 8.1.6: Participants' family economic conditions

<i>Family received CSSA*:</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	11	3.1
No	346	96.9
Total	357	100

*Note: CSSA denotes Comprehensive Social Security Allowance

Table 8.1.7: Participants' feelings about their family life

<i>Participants' feelings about their family life:</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Very happy	4	1.1
Happy	18	5
Fairly happy	107	29.9
Unhappy	159	44.4
Very unhappy	70	19.6
Total	358	100

Table 8.1.8: Parental abuse reported by participants

<i>Parental abuse:</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Father physically and/ or psychologically abused against mother</i>		
Never	178	49.4
Seldom	109	30.3
Sometimes	51	14.2
Always	22	6.1
Total	360	100
<i>Mother physically and/ or psychologically abused against father</i>		
Never	198	55
Seldom	100	27.8
Sometimes	49	13.6
Always	13	3.6
Total	360	100

Table 8.2.1: Rotated factor matrix of the 2-factor structure of conceptions of wife abuse

Items no.	Items	Factor Loadings		% of total variance explained
		1	2	
	<i>Factor 1: Psychological abuse</i>			30.21
44	Accusing wife as a lousy lover	.79	.08	
45	Destroying wife's belongings	.77	.13	
48	Scolding wife in the public area	.77	.09	
52	Scolding partner in front of children	.76	.09	
47	Shouting and yelling at wife	.75	.12	
54	Calling wife fat or ugly	.73	.04	
40	Teasing wife as no use/ not capable to earn money	.73	.12	
41	Damaging wife's self-image/ reputation in her community	.73	.14	
46	Scolding wife	.72	.12	
51	Scolding wife without any reasons	.72	.06	
53	Saying something that spite wife	.72	.20	
43	Rebuking own wife	.72	.06	
42	Comparing own wife with others	.71	.00	
50	Scolding wife with foul language	.71	.15	
49	Nagging wife	.69	.05	
56	Non-stop phone calling to wife's friends	.67	.03	
57	Checking wife	.66	.05	
39	Asking other family members to ignore wife	.65	.16	
33	Threatening wife to stop financial support	.63	.19	
55	Non-stop phone calling wife	.62	-.03	
31	Not allowing wife to do something she likes to do	.60	.15	
38	Ignoring wife for a long time	.60	.15	
58	Following ex-wife	.59	.10	
29	Keeping wife's traveling documents	.58	.23	
59	Asking detective to follow wife	.58	.07	
28	Invading wife's privacy	.58	.19	
27	Not allowing wife to work	.52	.21	
	<i>Factor 2: Physical abuse</i>			19.76
10	Beating up wife	-.02	.82	
7	Punching or hitting wife with something that could hurt	.10	.80	
11	Burning or scalding wife	-.01	.80	
6	Using knife or gun on wife	-.05	.79	
9	Slamming wife against a wall	-.02	.77	
15	Detaining wife with force	.07	.75	
2	Twisting wife's arm or hair	.16	.74	
8	Choking wife	.05	.72	
5	Slapping wife	.17	.71	
12	Kicking wife	.13	.71	
14	Not allowing wife to eat with force	.17	.68	
21	Injecting some drugs into wife's body	.10	.64	
4	Grabbing wife	.27	.64	
1	Throwing something at wife that could hurt	.18	.58	
3	Pushing or shoving wife	.27	.57	
19	Doing something that hurt wife's well-being	.27	.56	

Table 8.2.2: Rotated factor matrix of the 2-factor structure of conception of husband abuse

Items no.	Items	Factor loadings		% of total variance explained
		1	2	
<i>Factor 1: Psychological abuse</i>				32.46
44	Accusing husband as a lousy lover	.80	.11	
52	Scolding husband in front of children	.78	.14	
43	Rebuking own husband	.78	.05	
45	Destroying husband's belongings	.77	.15	
48	Scolding husband in the public area	.77	.18	
47	Shouting and yelling at husband	.77	.15	
54	Calling husband fat or ugly	.77	.05	
51	Scolding husband without any reasons	.75	.17	
42	Comparing own husband with others	.74	.01	
50	Scolding husband with foul language	.74	.20	
53	Saying something that spite husband	.72	.25	
46	Scolding husband	.72	.11	
40	Teasing husband as no use/ not capable to earn money	.72	.16	
41	Damaging husband's self-image/ reputation in her community	.71	.12	
49	Nagging husband	.71	.11	
57	Checking husband	.70	.12	
55	Non-stop phone calling husband	.69	.07	
56	Non-stop phone calling to husband's friends	.67	.12	
39	Asking other family members to ignore husband	.66	.26	
31	Not allowing husband to do something she likes to do	.65	.26	
29	Keeping husband's traveling documents	.64	.21	
58	Following ex-husband	.64	.17	
33	Threatening husband to stop financial support	.64	.21	
59	Asking detective to follow husband	.64	.11	
28	Invading husband's privacy	.63	.21	
27	Not allowing husband to work	.58	.26	
38	Ignoring husband for a long time	.57	.27	
<i>Factor 2: Physical abuse</i>				21.84
10	Beating up husband	.06	.82	
11	Burning or scalding husband	.05	.81	
6	Using knife or gun on husband	.04	.80	
9	Slamming husband against a wall	.11	.79	
7	Punching or hitting husband with something that could hurt	.06	.78	
2	Twisting husband's arm or hair	.15	.77	
8	Choking husband	.13	.76	
12	Kicking husband	.16	.74	
4	Grabbing husband	.26	.73	
15	Detaining husband with force	.21	.70	
1	Throwing something at husband that could hurt	.17	.70	
3	Pushing or shoving husband	.24	.69	
5	Slapping husband	.20	.69	
21	Injecting some drugs into husband's body	.20	.64	
19	Doing something that hurt husband's well-being	.29	.62	
14	Not allowing husband to eat with force	.29	.62	

Table 8.2.3: Internal consistency of the measurement scales in the main study

Measurement scales	Cronbach's alpha (α)	Mean inter-item correlation	Mean item-total correlation	Range of item-total correlation
<i>Conceptions of wife abuse:</i>				
Omnibus wife abuse index (59-item)	.97	.33	.56	.32-.69
Wife abuse index (43-item)	.95	.32	.54	.31-.71
Wife physical abuse index (16-item)	.94	.42	.66	.56-.76
Wife psychological abuse index (27-item)	.96	.45	.66	.53-.76
<i>Conceptions of husband abuse:</i>				
Omnibus husband abuse index (59-item)	.97	.39	.63	.48-.72
Husband abuse index (43-item)	.96	.37	.58	.43-.72
Husband physical abuse index (16-item)	.97	.50	.65	.60-.77
Husband psychological abuse index (27-item)	.95	.51	.69	.50-.76
<i>Beliefs about spousal abuse:</i>				
Beliefs about wife abuse	.89	.38	.58	.47-.67
Beliefs about husband abuse	.90	.40	.59	.26-.69
<i>Attitudes toward gender:</i>				
GREAT (Work domain)	.73	.35	.50	.34-.64
GREAT (Domestic domain)	.85	.54	.67	.51-.79
<i>Socialization of parents' gender stereotypes:</i>				
Perceptions of father's gender stereotypes	.77	.46	.58	.49-.63
Endorsement of father's gender stereotypes	.81	.52	.63	.57-.68
Perceptions of mother's gender stereotypes	.77	.46	.57	.52-.67
Endorsement of mother's gender stereotypes	.82	.53	.64	.56-.71
<i>Socialization of parents' violence approval:</i>				
Perceptions of father's violence approval	.75	.33	.49	.36-.59
Endorsement of father's violence approval	.80	.40	.56	.45-.72
Perceptions of mother's violence approval	.78	.38	.58	.40-.60
Endorsement of mother's violence approval	.80	.40	.56	.40-.63
<i>Chinese traditionalism:</i>				
Respect to Authority	.74	.26	.44	.22-.54
Superiority of Male	.90	.53	.68	.60-.78
<i>Chinese modernity:</i>				
Egalitarianism and Openness	.69	.22	.38	.63-.67
Gender Equality	.87	.46	.63	.48-.69
<i>Perceptions on training:</i>				
Adequacy of training	.78	.54	.62	.53-.70
Request for more training	.68	.52	.52	.51-.53
Willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future	.68	.51	.51	.51-.53

Table 8.3.1: Percentage of responses to the measurement of conceptions of wife abuse

	N	Mean	Median	Mode	% of participants with answer *			
					1	2	3	4
<i>Physical abuse index: The first 12 items were from the physical assault subscales of CTS2. Items 14, 15, 19 and 21 were additional items based on findings from focus groups</i>								
1. Throwing something at wife that could hurt	361	3.60	4	4	.6	.8	37.1	61.5
2. Twisting wife's arm or hair	360	3.69	4	4	.6	1.1	26.7	71.7
3. Pushing or shoving wife	361	3.42	4	4	.3	5.8	45.7	48.2
4. Grabbing wife	360	3.59	4	4	.6	2.5	34.7	62.2
5. Slapping wife	361	3.66	4	4	.8	2.8	26.3	70.1
6. Using knife or gun on wife	361	3.90	4	4	.6	.3	7.8	91.4
7. Punching or hitting wife with something that could hurt	360	3.8	4	4	.6	.3	17.8	81.4
8. Choking wife	361	3.79	4	4	.8	1.1	16.6	81.4
9. Slamming wife against a wall	361	3.84	4	4	.8	0	13	86.1
10. Beating up wife	361	3.89	4	4	.8	.6	6.9	91.7
11. Burning or scalding wife	361	3.91	4	4	.6	0	6.9	92.5
12. Kicking wife	360	3.74	4	4	.3	.8	23.1	75.8
14. Not allowing wife to eat with force	361	3.71	4	4	.8	2.2	21.6	75.3
15. Detaining wife with force	361	3.86	4	4	.8	.3	11.4	87.5
19. Doing something that hurt wife's well-being	360	3.62	4	4	.6	3.6	29.4	66.4
21. Injecting some drugs into wife's body	360	3.84	4	4	.8	.6	12.5	96.1
<i>Psychological abuse index:</i>								
27. Not allowing wife to work	361	2.74	3	3	.3	37.7	41.8	17.5
28. Invading wife's privacy	360	2.74	3	3	.6	37.5	49.7	12.2
29. Keeping wife's traveling documents	359	2.71	3	3	1.4	40.9	43.2	14.5
31. Not allowing wife to do something she likes to do	360	2.84	3	3	.8	29.4	54.7	15
33. Threatening wife to stop financial support	360	2.81	3	3	1.9	34.7	44.2	19.2
38. Ignoring wife for a long time	360	2.93	3	3	1.1	27.8	48.3	22.8
39. Asking other family members to ignore wife	360	3.1	3	3	1.1	17.2	52.5	29.4
40. Teasing wife as no use/ not capable to earn money	360	2.79	3	3	.8	33.3	51.4	14.4
41. Damaging wife's self-image/ reputation in her community	357	3.08	3	3	.3	21.3	48.2	30.3
42. Comparing own wife with others	359	2.31	2	2	7.5	61	24.8	6.7
43. Rebuking own wife	359	2.45	2	2	4.2	54.9	32.3	8.6
44. Accusing wife as a lousy lover	359	2.73	3	3	1.7	39	43.7	15.6
45. Destroying wife's belongings	359	2.76	3	3	1.7	37.9	42.9	17.5
46. Scolding wife	359	2.64	3	2	1.7	45.1	40.1	13.1
47. Shouting and yelling at wife	359	2.70	3	3	1.4	39.8	45.7	13.1
48. Scolding wife in the public area	359	2.87	3	3	.8	30.4	49.6	19.2
49. Nagging wife	358	2.53	2	2	2	52	36.9	9.2
50. Scolding wife with foul language	358	2.88	3	3	.6	28.5	53.4	17.6
51. Scolding partner without any reasons	359	2.98	3	3	.6	24.2	51.8	23.4
52. Scolding partner in front of children	359	2.71	3	2	.8	42.9	40.4	15.9
53. Saying something that spite wife	357	3.02	3	3	.8	18.8	58	22.4
54. Calling wife fat or ugly	358	2.47	2	2	5	51.4	35.2	8.4
55. Non-stop phone calling wife	359	2.27	2	2	10	57.7	27.3	5
56. Non-stop phone calling wife's friends	359	2.44	2	2	5.8	53.5	31.5	9.2
57. Checking wife	361	2.5	2	2	3	52.9	34.9	9.1
58. Following ex-wife	361	2.63	3	2	3.6	43.5	38.8	14.1
59. Asking detective to follow wife	361	2.66	3	2	2.3	45.7	36.3	15.8
<i>Items deleted based on factor analysis:</i>								
13. Forcing wife to do something she is unwilling to do	361	3.41	3	4	.3	6.9	43.8	49
16. Forcing wife to do all the household chores	359	3.08	3	3	.8	17.5	54.9	26.7
17. Cooking unhealthy food for wife	360	3.03	3	3	1.9	21.9	47.4	28.5
18. Cooking food that wife is allergic to	360	3.52	4	4	.8	4.2	37.2	57.8
20. Putting things at home that wife is allergic to	359	3.41	4	4	1.1	8.1	39.8	51

	N	Mean	Median	Mode	% of participants with answer *			
					1	2	3	4
22. Not allowing wife to sleep by continuously making noise	361	3.27	3	3	1.1	10.2	49.6	39.1
23. Not allowing wife to sleep by switching on the electric fan facing her	361	3.20	3	3	1.1	15.8	44.9	38.2
24. Making wife take in sleeping pills without notice	361	3.50	4	4	.8	6.9	33.2	59
25. Controlling, confining and depriving material, financial, personal resources and social activities	361	3.41	4	4	.6	10	37.4	52.1
26. Not allowing wife to meet with children	361	3.36	3	4	.8	11.4	38.8	49
30. Isolating wife from her relatives	360	3.03	3	3	.6	22.2	51.4	25.8
32. Hiding weapons and/ or putting things at home to create a frightening environment	359	3.41	4	4	.6	9.7	37.9	51.8
34. Threatening wife with sharp objects/ weapon	359	3.63	4	4	.6	1.9	31.5	66
35. Threatening to beat up or throw something at wife	359	3.58	4	4	.3	2.8	35.4	61.6
36. Threatening to push wife downstairs	360	3.61	4	4	.6	2.8	32.2	64.4
37. Threatening to kill wife and the whole family	360	3.66	4	4	.6	2.5	26.9	70

Note: * The answer chosen by the participants: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree

Table 8.3.2: Percentage of responses to the measurement of conceptions of husband abuse

	N	Mean	Median	Mode	% of participants with answer *			
					1	2	3	4
<i>Physical abuse index: The first 12 items were from the physical assault subscales of CTS2. Items 14, 15, 19 and 21 were additional items based on findings from focus groups</i>								
1. Throwing something at husband that could hurt	361	3.58	4	4	.3	2.2	37.1	60.4
2. Twisting husband's arm or hair	361	3.61	4	4	.3	2.8	33	64
3. Pushing or shoving husband	360	3.40	4	4	.8	10.3	37.2	51.7
4. Grabbing husband	361	3.47	4	4	.6	6.4	38.5	54.6
5. Slapping husband	361	3.52	4	4	.3	6.9	33	59.8
6. Using knife or gun on husband	360	3.84	4	4	.3	0	15	84.7
7. Punching or hitting husband with something that could hurt	361	3.73	4	4	.3	1.4	23.3	75.1
8. Choking husband	360	3.73	4	4	.3	2.5	20.8	76.4
9. Slamming husband against a wall	361	3.76	4	4	.3	1.1	21.3	77.3
10. Beating up husband	361	3.81	4	4	.3	1.4	15.5	82.8
11. Burning or scalding husband	361	3.84	4	4	.3	.8	13	85.9
12. Kicking husband	360	3.59	4	4	.6	5.8	28.1	65.6
14. Not allowing husband to eat with force	361	3.52	4	4	.3	6.6	34.1	59
15. Detaining husband with force	361	3.73	4	4	.3	1.1	23.5	75.1
19. Doing something that hurt husband's well-being	361	3.53	4	4	.6	3.3	38	58.2
21. Injecting some drugs into husband's body	359	3.76	4	4	.3	.8	21.2	77.7
<i>Psychological abuse index:</i>								
27. Not allowing husband to work	360	3.01	3	3	1.4	26.1	42.8	29.7
28. Invading husband's privacy	361	2.82	3	3	.8	35.7	44	19.4
29. Keeping husband's traveling documents	361	2.75	3	3	.8	40.7	41	17.5
31. Not allowing husband to do something he likes to do	361	2.76	3	3	1.1	37.7	45.2	16.1
33. Threatening husband to stop financial support	360	2.89	3	3	1.9	31.9	41.4	24.7
38. Ignoring husband for a long time	361	2.99	3	3	.6	28.5	42.1	28.8
39. Asking other family members to ignore husband	361	3.07	3	3	.8	22.4	45.7	31
40. Teasing husband as no use/ not capable to earn money	361	2.96	3	3	1.1	26.6	47.9	24.4
41. Damaging husband's self-image/ reputation in his community	361	3.06	3	3	1.1	19.1	53.2	26.6
42. Comparing own husband with others	361	2.49	2	2	4.7	54	28.8	12.5
43. Rebuking own husband	361	2.56	2	2	2.5	52.1	32.7	12.7
44. Accusing husband as a lousy lover	361	2.76	3	3	1.4	39.1	41.6	18
45. Destroying husband's belongings	361	2.80	3	3	1.9	37.7	38.5	21.9
46. Scolding husband	361	2.61	2	2	2.2	49.3	34.1	14.4
47. Shouting and yelling at husband	361	2.68	3	2	1.9	44.6	37.1	16.3
48. Scolding husband in the public area	361	2.89	3	3	.8	34.1	39.9	25.2
49. Nagging husband	361	2.49	2	2	4.7	53.2	30.7	11.4
50. Scolding husband with foul language	361	2.84	3	3	.8	32.1	49.3	17.7
51. Scolding husband without any reasons	360	2.89	3	3	.8	31.1	46.4	21.7
52. Scolding husband in front of children	361	2.75	3	3	.8	40.2	42.4	16.6
53. Saying something that spite husband	361	2.96	3	3	1.7	22.4	54.3	21.6
54. Calling husband fat or ugly	361	2.48	2	2	5.5	53.2	29.4	11.9
55. Non-stop phone calling husband	361	2.37	2	2	7.8	56.5	27.1	8.6
56. Non-stop phone calling husband's friends	361	2.56	2	2	5.5	47.6	32.4	14.4
57. Checking husband	360	2.47	2	2	3.6	57.5	27.5	11.4
58. Following ex-husband	360	2.60	2	2	4.2	46.9	33.9	15
59. Asking detective to follow husband	360	2.62	2	2	3.6	48.6	30.6	17.2

	N	Mean	Median	Mode	% of participants with answer *			
					1	2	3	4
<i>Items deleted based on factor analysis:</i>								
13. Forcing husband to do something he is unwilling to do	360	3.31	3	4	.8	12.5	41.7	45
16. Forcing husband to do all the household chores	361	3.01	3	3	1.7	24.7	44.6	29.1
17. Cooking unhealthy food for husband	361	3.04	3	3	1.1	24.4	43.5	31
18. Cooking food that husband is allergic to	361	3.44	4	4	.6	6.9	40.2	52.4
20. Putting things at home that husband is allergic to	360	3.41	3	4	.6	7.5	42.8	49.2
22. Not allowing husband to sleep by continuously making noise	361	3.19	3	3	.3	15.8	49	34.9
23. Not allowing husband to sleep by switching on the electric fan facing him	361	3.13	3	3	.8	17.7	48.8	32.7
24. Making husband take in sleeping pills without notice	359	3.48	4	4	.6	7.2	35.1	57.1
25. Controlling, confining and depriving material, financial, personal resources and social activities	359	3.32	3	4	.3	14.2	39	46.5
26. Not allowing husband to meet with children	359	3.21	3	3	.8	15.9	44.8	38.4
30. Isolating husband from his relatives	361	3.01	3	3	.3	23.3	52.1	24.4
32. Hiding weapons and/ or putting things at home to create a frightening environment	361	3.46	4	4	.6	9.4	33.8	56.2
34. Threatening husband with sharp objects/ weapon	361	3.66	4	4	.3	2.2	29.4	68.1
35. Threatening to beat up or throw something at husband	361	3.55	4	4	.3	4.7	34.9	60.1
36. Threatening to push husband downstairs	361	3.58	4	4	.3	4.4	32.7	68.7
37. Threatening to kill husband and the whole family	361	3.65	4	4	.3	3.3	27.7	62.6

Note: * The answer chosen by the participants: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree

Table 8.3.3: The percentage of responses to the measurement of beliefs about wife abuse

	N	Mean	Median	Mode	% of participants with answer*		
					1	2	3&4
1. Wife abuse is a private matter between couples, outside intervention and help are no need.	361	1.55	1	1	52.4	42.4	5.2
2. It is not a big deal if husband slaps his wife.	361	1.60	2	2	45.7	50.1	4.1
3. If husband knows his wife has extra marital affair, husband could use violence to punish his wife.	361	1.48	1	1	57.3	38.5	4.1
4. It is not a big deal if husband does not allow wife to sleep by continuously making noise.	361	1.81	2	2	29.9	60.4	9.7
5. In wife abuse case, wife has to share part of the responsibilities if she had provoked her husband.	361	1.72	2	2	35.6	57.5	6.9
6. It is not a big deal if husband does not allow his wife to do things she likes to do.	361	1.98	2	2	20.5	62.9	16.6
7. Life is stressful in Hong Kong. If husband slaps his wife because of suffering from stressful life, it is understandable and should be forgiven.	361	1.58	2	1	47.9	46.8	5.2
8. It is not a serious matter if husband threatens his wife with sharp objects.	361	1.32	1	1	70.6	27.7	1.6
9. Husband being violent to his wife when he could not stand his wife, which is understandable and should be forgiven.	360	1.58	1	1	51.1	40.3	8.6
10. It is not a problem if husband always teases his wife as no use.	361	1.83	2	2	26.6	64.5	8.9
11. Wife abuse usually involves more physical abuse, but less psychological abuse.	361	1.80	2	2	37.7	46.5	15.8
12. It is not a big deal if husband neglects his wife for a long time.	361	1.84	2	2	27.7	61.5	10.8
13. In wife abuse case, wife usually being psychologically abused by her husband for a long time, while physical abuse just happens sporadically.	360	1.88	2	2	25.3	62.5	12.3
14. It is not a problem if husband always nags at his wife.	361	2.20	2	2	11.1	58.7	30.2

Note: *The answer chosen by the participants: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree.

Table 8.3.4: The percentage of responses to the measurement of beliefs about husband abuse

	N	Mean	Median	Mode	% of participants with answer*		
					1	2	3&4
1. Husband abuse is a private matter between couples, outside intervention and help are no need.	361	1.54	1	1	51.5	43.8	4.7
2. It is not a big deal if wife slaps her husband.	361	1.63	2	2	43.5	51	5.5
3. If wife knows her husband has extra marital affair, wife could use violence to punish her husband.	360	1.61	2	2	46.1	47.8	6.1
4. It is not a big deal if wife does not allow husband to sleep by continuously making noise.	361	1.82	2	2	28.8	60.9	10.3
5. In husband abuse case, husband has to share part of the responsibilities if he had provoked his wife.	361	1.62	2	2	44.9	48.8	6.3
6. It is not a big deal if wife does not allow her husband to do things he likes to do.	361	1.96	2	2	22.2	60.1	17.8
7. Life is stressful in Hong Kong. If wife slaps her husband because of suffering from stressful life, it is understandable and should be forgiven.	360	1.64	2	2	43.1	50	4.1
8. It is not a serious matter if wife threatens husband with sharp objects.	361	1.4	1	1	67.9	29.1	2.8
9. Wife being violent to her husband when she could not stand her husband, which is understandable and should be forgiven.	361	1.62	2	1	48.2	41.8	10
10. It is not a problem if wife always teases her husband as no use.	361	1.85	2	2	28	60.1	11.9
11. Husband abuse usually involves more physical abuse, but less psychological abuse.	361	1.69	2	2	40.2	51.8	8
12. It is not a big deal if wife neglects her husband for a long time.	360	2.16	2	2	16.9	52.2	30.9
13. In husband abuse case, husband usually being psychologically abused by his wife for a long time, while physical abuse just happens sporadically.	360	2.11	2	2	25.6	41.9	32.5
14. It is not a problem if wife always nags at her husband.	361	1.93	2	2	21.9	64	14.2

Note: *The answer chosen by the participants: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree.

Table 8.3.5: Participants' scores on their attitudes toward gender in domestic and work domains

	<i>N</i>	Mean*	Median	Mode
Work domain				
1. Being a leader	354	1.26	0	0
2. Having successful career	355	1.26	0	0
3. Running a business	356	1.12	0	0
4. Having the highest education	356	1.12	0	0
5. Making money	354	.65	0	0
Total	357	.87		
Domestic domain				
1. Taking care of children	355	1.42	1	0
2. Washing clothes	359	.99	0	0
3. Doing household chores	359	.88	0	0
4. Making meals at home	358	1.07	1	0
5. Shopping for groceries	358	.58	0	0
Total	359	1		

*Note: Lower scores mean more egalitarian attitudes toward gender in that particular domain

Table 8.3.6: Number of participants categorized based on parents' attitudes toward gender stereotypes

<i>Socialization of fathers' gender stereotypes:</i>	<i>N</i>	%
Conservative group	86	24
Liberal group	209	58.2
Conservative father only group	64	17.8
Liberal father only group	0	0
Total	359	100
<i>Socialization of mothers' gender stereotypes:</i>		
Conservative group	93	25.8
Liberal group	213	59.2
Conservative mother only group	54	15
Liberal mother only group	0	0
Total	360	100

Table 8.3.7: Number of participants categorized based on parents' approval of violence

<i>Socialization of fathers' violence approval:</i>		
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Violence approval group	104	28.9
Violence disapproval group	194	53.9
Only father approved violence group	62	17.2
Only father disapproved violence group	0	0
Total	360	100
<i>Socialization of mothers' violence approval:</i>		
	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Violence approval group	106	29.4
Violence disapproval group	217	60.3
Only mother approved violence group	37	10.3
Only mother disapproved violence group	0	0
Total	360	100

Table 8.3.8: Percentage of responses to the measurement of Chinese traditionality

	N	Mean	Median	Mode	% of participants with answer*		
					1	2	3&4
Respect to Authority 尊重權威							
1. All the social policy should be decided by the chief government official. 行政長官是大家長，一切政策 應聽從他決定。	361	1.76	2	2	34.1	56.5	9.5
2. In order to avoid making mistakes, it is better to listen to the elderly. 要避免發生錯誤，最好的辦法是聽從長輩的話。	361	2.16	2	2	13.9	57.3	28.8
3. Women should be disciplined by their fathers before marriage, and obeys their husbands after getting married. 女人婚前接受父親管教，出嫁後則應順從丈夫。	361	2.01	2	2	24.9	51	24.1
4. Teenagers are inexperienced and naïve, they should not make decisions on their own. 年輕人不知天高地厚，不能讓他們獨自處理事情。	361	1.97	2	2	19.9	64	16.1
5. One should seek advice from the elderly over unresolved disputes. 如果因事爭執不下，應請輩份最高的人主持公道。	360	2.26	2	2	13.3	50	36.7
6. Children should show respect to people who are respected by their parents. 父母所敬愛的人，子女也應敬愛。	361	2.46	2	2	6.9	44.9	48.2
7. In order to keep the tranquility of the society, personal speech should be controlled. 為了維護社會安寧，個人言論應該受到更多管制。	361	1.89	2	2	26	60.1	13.9
8. Primary and secondary school students should wear school uniform. 中、小學生應該穿著校服。	361	3.03	3	3	1.9	10.8	87.2
Superiority of Male 男性優越							
9. Wives should obey their husbands even when they have different opinions. 夫妻意見不合時，妻子應該順從丈夫。	361	1.87	2	2	23.3	67	9.7
10. Women should cover themselves as much as possible in public. 女人應該避免在外拋頭露面。	361	1.65	2	1	46.8	42.4	10.8
11. Men are the heads of the household who decide everything within the family. 男人是一家之主，家中的事應由丈夫作主。	361	1.98	2	2	24.7	53.7	21.6
12. Wives' emotional feelings should be matched with husband. 妻子的喜怒好惡，應該儘量迎合丈夫。	361	1.78	2	2	31.6	59.6	8.9
13. Wives should regard their husbands' means and opinions as standard in children discipline. 管教子女時，妻子應以丈夫的看法和方法為標準。	361	1.79	2	2	30.2	61.2	8.6
14. Women are not as capable and efficient as men in any working environments. 女人的工作能力和效率，總是不如男人。	361	1.60	2	2	46.3	48.2	5.6
15. For sexual life, men should enjoy more freedom than women. 在性生活方面，男人應比女人享有更多的方便與自由。	360	1.68	2	2	44.2	44.4	11.4
16. Married women should stay home. 女人的事業在家庭，已婚婦女不應出外工作。	361	1.63	2	2	44.9	48.2	6.9

Table 8.3.9: Percentage of responses to the measurement of Chinese modernity

	N	Mean	Median	Mode	% of participants with answer*		
					1	2	3&4
Egalitarianism and Openness 平權與開放							
1. Citizen can openly criticize the chief executive officer if he or she makes mistakes. 行政長官犯了錯，市民可以公開批評。	361	3.34	3	3	3.3	3.9	92.8
2. It is alright for one to leave his or her own country to study and work. 爲了求學與就業，離鄉背井也沒有關係。	361	3.05	3	3	1.7	10.5	87.9
3. In order to monitor our government, we need a strong and powerful opposition party. 爲了有效監督政府，我們需要強而有力的在野黨。	306	2.76	3	3	1.9	30.3	67.8
4. If children have reasonable argument, they should stand up for themselves even it is against their parents' wish. 如果子女覺得自己的想法合理，即使父母反對，也應該據理力爭。	361	3.02	3	3	0.6	11.1	88.4
5. If marriage is unhappy, divorce is one of the solutions to solve it. 如果婚姻生活太痛苦，離婚不失爲解決問題的方法。	361	2.86	3	3	4.4	17.2	78.4
6. Pornography can never be banned, as there are demands from the public. 色情刊物是禁不掉的，因爲總有些人需要看這種刊物。	361	2.81	3	3	5.3	18.8	75.9
7. If teachers make mistakes, students can raise arguments to debate. 如果師長有錯，學生可以提出理由辯論。	361	3.16	3	3	0.8	3.3	95.8
8. Parents should allow their children to have religious beliefs that are different from theirs. 子女的宗教信仰與父母不同，父母也應該容許。	361	3.30	3	3	0.6	3.3	96.1
Gender Equality 性別平等							
9. Husband should not object his wife if she wishes to have a job. 如果妻子希望外出工作，丈夫不應反對。	361	3.27	3	3	0.8	4.7	94.5
10. It is not bad if the Chief Executive is female. 行政長官由女性來擔任，也沒有什麼不好。	361	3.24	3	3	0.3	3.6	96.1
11. Wife should have her independent characters and not obliged to follow her husband all the time. 妻子應有獨立人格，不必事事服從丈夫。	361	3.27	3	3	3	66.5	30.5
12. Spouses should have time to be alone and free from disturbs. 夫妻都應有獨處的時間，不受對方干擾。	360	3.31	3	3	2.2	64.2	33.6
13. Both genders should have equal chance for having better education. 男女兩性應有同等的機會接受良好的教育。	357	3.57	4	4	0.3	42.3	57.4
14. In most of the occupations, both genders can work on the same post. 在大多數的行業中，女性與男性應該可以擔任同樣的工作。	361	3.27	3	3	6.9	59	34.1
15. Spouses should have their own friends. 夫妻應該各有自己的朋友。	361	3.46	3	3	1.7	51	47.4
16. Women are not inferior to men, they should enjoy the same social status as men do. 女子在各方面都不比男子差，她們應該享有同等的社會地位。	360	3.44	3	4	0.3	3.6	96.1

Table 8.3.10: Participants' perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum

	N	Median	Mode	Responses			
				1	2	3	4*
1) In the social work curriculum, training about spousal abuse is enough.	360	2	2	16.9	68.3	13.9	.8
2) The social work courses I had taken provided me enough knowledge about spousal abuse.	360	2	2	14.2	64.4	20.6	.8
3) Overall, I have enough knowledge about spousal abuse.	360	2	2	15	67.5	16.9	.6
4) I hope the department can provide more courses about spousal abuse.	360	3	3	.6	9.2	76.7	13.6
5) I hope the department can provide extra information about spousal abuse through talks and visits to organizations.	360	3	3	.3	5.3	79.2	15.3
6) If I have chance, I am willing to have placement in organizations that handle spousal abuse.	360	3	3	.8	21.1	65.8	12.2
7) I wish to work in organizations that handle spousal abuse after graduation.	359	2	2	2.8	48.7	45.7	2.8

Note: *1 indicates "strongly disagree", 2 "Disagree", 3 "Agree", and 4 "Strongly Agree".

Table 8.3.11: Number of courses taken by participants which mentioned spousal abuse in the course content

	N	%
None	13	3.7
1	205	58.2
2	74	21
3	30	8.5
4 or above	30	8.5
Total	352	100

Table 8.3.12: Number of participants who learned the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse in the social work curriculum

<i>In the social work curriculum...</i>	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total
participants learned the conceptions of spousal abuse	175 (48.9)	183 (51.1)	358
participants built up the beliefs about spousal abuse	171 (48.2)	184 (51.8)	355

Table 8.3.13: Extra courses about spousal abuse taken by participants apart from the social work curriculum

	<i>N</i>	%
Minor courses	11	32.4
General education courses	3	8.8
Workshops and courses by NGOs	20	58.8
Total	34	100

Table 8.4.1: Differences between the conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse (N=309)

Four Spousal Abuse Indexes	Wife abuse <i>Mean (SD)</i>	Husband abuse <i>Mean (SD)</i>	<i>t</i> -value	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Omnibus Index (59-item)	3.18 (.38)	3.15 (.43)	2.83*	.08
Indexes with items deleted (43-item)	3.10 (.38)	3.08 (.43)	2.12**	.06
Physical abuse	3.75 (.35)	3.65 (.39)	6.34*	.26
Psychological abuse	2.71 (.50)	2.74 (.54)	-1.43	--

Note: * $p < \text{Bonferroni-corrected } \alpha (.05/4)$, ** $p < .05$

Table 8.4.2: Effects of victims' and participants' gender on the conceptions of spousal abuse

Conceptions of spousal abuse	Male <i>Mean (SD)</i>	Female <i>Mean (SD)</i>	Effect	<i>F</i> -value	Effect size (partial η^2)
Omnibus wife abuse index	3.15 (.40)	3.19 (.38)	Victims' gender main effect	.83	
Omnibus husband abuse index	3.19 (.44)	3.13 (.42)	Participants' gender main effect Interaction effect	.08 16.73*	.045
Wife abuse index	3.08 (.39)	3.11 (.38)	Victims' gender main effect	.08	
Husband abuse index	3.12 (.44)	3.06 (.42)	Participants' gender main effect Interaction effect	.16 14.93*	.04
Physical wife abuse	3.70 (.43)	3.76 (.32)	Victims' gender main effect	25.78*	.067
Physical husband abuse	3.67 (.41)	3.64 (.40)	Participants' gender main effect Interaction effect	.26 8.39*	.023
Psychological wife abuse	2.70 (.50)	2.72 (.50)	Victims' gender main effect	10.50*	.028
Psychological husband abuse	2.80 (.58)	2.71 (.52)	Participants' gender main effect Interaction effect	.37 12.51*	.034

Note: * $p < .01$

Table 8.4.3: Post-hoc analyses of the interaction effects on the conceptions of spousal abuse

Conceptions of spousal abuse	Male Mean (SD)		Female Mean (SD)	<i>t</i> -value	Cohen's <i>d</i>
Omnibus wife abuse index	3.15 (.40)	↔	3.19 (.38)	2.58*	.15
	↕		↕		
Omnibus husband abuse index	3.19 (.44)	↔	3.13 (.42)	3.86*	.10
<i>t</i> -value (<i>d</i>)	2.28* (.14)		4.56* (.10)		
Wife abuse index	3.08 (.39)	↔	3.11 (.38)	1.84	--
	↕		↕		
Husband abuse index	3.12 (.44)	↔	3.06 (.42)	3.69*	.14
<i>t</i> -value (<i>d</i>)	2.17* (.10)		3.62* (.12)		
Physical wife abuse	3.70 (.43)	↔	3.76 (.32)	2.81*	.16
	↕		↕		
Physical husband abuse	3.67 (.41)	↔	3.64 (.40)	1.4	--
<i>t</i> -value (<i>d</i>)	-1.24 (--)		6.6* (.33)		
Psychological wife abuse	2.70 (.50)	↔	2.72 (.50)	.99	--
	↕		↕		
Psychological husband abuse	2.80 (.58)	↔	2.71 (.52)	4.45*	.16
<i>t</i> -value (<i>d</i>)	4.37* (.18)		.58 (--)		

Note: * $p < .05$; The double-arrows indicate the post-hoc comparison between each pair of means

Table 8.4.4: Effects of victims' and participants' gender on beliefs about spousal abuse

Beliefs about	Male Mean (SD)	Female Mean (SD)	Effect	F-value*	Partial Eta Squared
Wife abuse	1.81 (.48)	1.67 (.36)	Victims' gender main effect	4.06*	.01
Husband abuse	1.83 (.51)	1.72 (.42)	Participants' gender main effect Interaction effect	7.61** .73	.02

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 8.4.5: Different endorsement of beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse

No.	Items	Wife abuse		Husband abuse		McNemar & Bowker test (ϕ_c)
		Disagree No. (%)	Agree No. (%)	Disagree No. (%)	Agree No. (%)	
<i>Justification of abuse</i>						
3.	If spouse knows his/ her partner has extra marital affair, spouse could use violence to punish his/ her partner.	346 (96)	14 (4)	338 (94)	22 (6)	23.40** (.15)
<i>Differences between wife abuse and husband abuse</i>						
11.	Spousal abuse usually involves more physical abuse, but less psychological abuse.	304 (84)	57 (16)	332 (92)	29 (8)	20.43* (.14)
13.	In spousal abuse case, spouse usually being psychologically abused by his/her spouse for a long time, while physical abuse just happens sporadically.	315 (88)	44 (12)	243 (68)	116 (32)	57.03** (.23)
<i>Behavior that constituted as spousal abuse</i>						
12.	It is not a big deal if spouse neglects his/ her partner.	321 (89)	39 (11)	249 (69)	111 (31)	69.25** (.25)
14.	It is not a problem if spouse always nags at his/ her partner.	252 (70)	109 (30)	310 (86)	51 (14)	62.46** (.24)

Note: * $p < .01$, ** $p < .001$

Table 8.4.6: Differences between conservative group and liberal group in the outcome variables

	Father's gender stereotypes		<i>t</i> -value	Mother's gender stereotypes		<i>t</i> -value
	Conservative group	Liberal group		Conservative group	Liberal group	
	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Mean (<i>SD</i>)		Mean (<i>SD</i>)	Mean (<i>SD</i>)	
Conceptions of spousal abuse:						
Omnibus wife abuse index	3.21 (.37)	3.16 (.36)	1.06	3.20 (.39)	3.16 (.36)	.94
Omnibus husband abuse index	3.20 (.41)	3.14 (.41)	1.14	3.19 (.45)	3.13 (.40)	1.15
Wife abuse index	3.13 (.38)	3.09 (.35)	.79	3.13 (.39)	3.08 (.35)	.91
Husband abuse index	3.10 (.43)	3.06 (.40)	.62	3.11 (.45)	3.06 (.40)	.89
Physical abuse:						
Wife abuse	3.75 (.35)	3.76 (.28)	-.14	3.73 (.35)	3.76 (.28)	-.68
Husband abuse	3.65 (.40)	3.65 (.37)	.03	3.6 (.41)	3.66 (.36)	-1.16
Psychological abuse:						
Wife abuse	2.75 (.52)	2.69 (.47)	.97	2.77 (.54)	2.68 (.48)	1.29
Husband abuse	2.77 (.59)	2.72 (.51)	.74	2.82 (.60)	2.70 (.50)	1.61
Beliefs about spousal abuse:						
Wife abuse	1.73 (.54)	1.70 (.34)	.48	1.74 (.53)	1.71 (.35)	.36
Husband abuse	1.75 (.51)	1.74 (.42)	.18	1.76 (.55)	1.75 (.41)	.16

Table 8.4.7: Differences between violence approval group and violence disapproval group in the outcome variables

	Father's violence approval		Mother's violence approval		<i>t-value</i>
	Mean (<i>SD</i>)		Mean (<i>SD</i>)		
	Approval group	Disapproval group	Approval group	Disapproval group	
Conceptions of spousal abuse:					
Omnibus wife abuse index	3.20 (.40)	3.16 (.64)	3.22 (.38)	3.17 (.35)	1.11
Omnibus husband abuse index	3.20 (.43)	3.12 (.40)	3.22 (.41)	3.13 (.41)	1.88
Physical abuse:					
Wife abuse index	3.13 (.40)	3.09 (.34)	3.15 (.38)	3.09 (.35)	1.34
Husband abuse index	3.13 (.44)	3.05 (.39)	3.14 (.41)	3.06 (.40)	1.68
Psychological abuse:					
Wife abuse	3.73 (.34)	3.77 (.27)	3.75 (.32)	3.77 (.27)	-.56
Husband abuse	3.64 (.40)	3.65 (.37)	3.67 (.36)	3.65 (.38)	.25
Beliefs about spousal abuse:					
Wife abuse	2.78 (.54)	2.68 (.46)	2.79 (.52)	2.68 (.46)	1.78
Husband abuse	2.82 (.57)	2.69 (.50)	2.83 (.55)	2.70 (.50)	1.99
Beliefs about spousal abuse:					
Wife abuse	1.77 (.50)	1.72 (.35)	1.74 (.49)	1.71 (.35)	.51
Husband abuse	1.79 (.53)	1.75 (.41)	1.79 (.54)	1.74 (.39)	.89

Table 8.4.8: Correlations amongst the psychosocial correlates and the outcome variables (conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse)

Independent variables	Attitudes toward gender in domestic domain	Attitudes toward gender in work domain	Father's gender stereotypes	Father's violence approval	Mother's gender stereotypes	Mother's violence approval	Chinese Traditionalism	Respect to Authority	Superiority of Male	Chinese Modernity	Egalitarianism and Openness	Gender Equality
Conceptions of spousal abuse:												
Omnibus wife abuse index	-.19**	-.09	-.04	-.05	-.04	-.04	-.13*	-.07	-.15**	.22**	.13*	.24**
Omnibus husband abuse index	-.17**	-.08	-.05	-.06	-.08	-.08	-.06	-.03	-.07	.23**	.17**	.23**
Wife abuse index	-.20**	-.09	-.04	-.04	-.05	-.04	-.10	-.05	-.13*	.18**	.09	.21**
Husband abuse index	-.18**	-.11	-.03	-.06	-.05	-.07	-.07	-.03	-.09	.21**	.15**	.21**
Physical abuse:												
Wife abuse	-.06	-.06	.00	.03	.00	.03	-.22**	-.13*	-.24**	.24**	.16**	.26**
Husband abuse	-.07	-.06	-.01	.01	.02	.01	-.16**	-.06	-.21**	.25**	.17**	.26**
Psychological abuse:												
Wife abuse	-.20**	-.08	-.05	-.06	-.07	-.07	-.04	.00	-.06	.12*	.05	.15*
Husband abuse	-.19**	-.11	-.04	-.08	-.08	-.08	-.02	-.01	-.02	.15**	.12*	.15**
Beliefs about spousal abuse												
Wife abuse	.15**	.09	-.03	-.01	.01	-.00	.46**	.36**	.44**	-.18**	-.03	-.27**
Husband abuse	.14**	.10	-.01	.01	-.00	-.01	.31**	.22**	.31**	-.14*	-.03	-.21**

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 8.4.9: Hypotheses supported by statistical results of present study

Hypotheses	Omnibus wife abuse	Omnibus husband abuse	Wife abuse	Husband abuse	Physical wife abuse	Physical husband abuse	Psychological wife abuse	Psychological husband abuse	Beliefs about wife abuse	Beliefs about husband abuse
1. Because of wider media and academic research coverage on wife abuse, social work undergraduates would have broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse.	√	√	√	√	√	√	×	×	--	--
2. Based on the hypothesis of same sex favoritism, conceptions of spousal abuse related to both victims' and participants' gender. Female participants would have broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, while male participants would have broader conceptions of husband abuse than wife abuse.	√	√	√	√	○	○	○	○	--	--
3. Based on the hypothesis of same sex favoritism, beliefs about spousal abuse are related to both victims' and participants' gender. Female participants would have fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse than husband abuse, while male participants would have fewer biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse.	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	×	×
4. Participants who have higher level of egalitarian attitudes toward gender would have broader conceptions of spousal abuse and endorse fewer biased about spousal abuse.	√	√	√	√	×	×	√	√	√	√
5. Participants who are highly socialized to gender stereotypes would have narrower conceptions and more biased beliefs about spousal abuse.	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
6. Participants who are highly socialized to violence approval would have narrower conceptions and more biased beliefs about spousal abuse.	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
7. Participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese traditionality would have narrower conceptions and more biased beliefs about spousal abuse.	√	×	×	×	√	√	×	×	√	√
8. Participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese modernity would have broader conceptions and fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse.	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√

Note: √ denotes the hypothesis was completely supported by the statistical results (background in grey).
 ○ denotes the hypothesis was partially supported by the statistical results (background in grey).
 × denotes the hypothesis was not supported by the statistical results.

Table 8.4.10: Predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse (Total sample)

IV \ DV	Omnibus abuse index	43-item abuse index	Physical abuse index	Psychological abuse index	Beliefs index
Wife abuse					
<i>β</i>					
<i>Block 1: Female</i>	-0.00	-0.00	.01	.00	-.16**
<i>Block 2: Attitudes toward gender in:</i>					
domestic domain	-.22**	-.23**	-.03	-.27**	.15*
work domain	.07	.07	.02	.07	.01
<i>Block 3: Identification with:</i>					
Father's liberal attitudes toward gender	-.03	.01	-.02	.02	.02
Mother's liberal attitudes toward gender	-.08	-.1	-.06	-.09	.04
<i>Block 4: Identification with:</i>					
Father's violence disapproval	-.10	-.01	.02	-.03	-.04
Mother's violence disapproval	-.04	-.05	.02	-.07	-.03
<i>Block 5: Chinese traditionality:</i>					
Respect to Authority	.07	.08	.02	.09	.18**
Superiority of Male	-.05	-.04	-.17*	.02	.31**
<i>Block 6: Chinese modernity:</i>					
Egalitarianism and Openness	-.01	-.02	.05	-.04	.13
Gender Equality	.25**	.23**	.17*	.21**	-.11
F Change (Full model)	6.68**	5.42**	4.65**	4.20*	29.88**
R ²	.11	.10	.12	.10	.23
f ² (Full model)	.05	.04	.03	.03	.20
Husband abuse					
<i>β</i>					
<i>Block 1: Female</i>	-.08	-.07	-.10	-.05	-.12*
<i>Block 2: Attitudes toward gender in:</i>					
domestic domain	-.20**	-.20**	-.05	-.23**	.13*
work domain	.04	.02	.02	.02	.03
<i>Block 3: Identification with:</i>					
Father's liberal attitudes toward gender	-.02	.02	-.06	.05	.03
Mother's liberal attitudes toward gender	-.06	-.09	.04	-.13	.04
<i>Block 4: Identification with:</i>					
Father's violence disapproval	-.02	-.03	.02	-.04	.00
Mother's violence disapproval	-.06	-.06	-.01	-.06	-.09
<i>Block 5: Chinese traditionality:</i>					
Respect to Authority	.11	.10	.11	.08	.07
Superiority of Male	-.03	-.02	-.19*	.06	.21**
<i>Block 6: Chinese modernity:</i>					
Egalitarianism and Openness	.03	.05	.05	.04	.08
Gender Equality	.27**	.23**	.20*	.21**	-.10
F Change (Full model)	9.19**	7.82**	5.85**	6.00**	11.28**
R ²	.12	.11	.10	.10	.12
f ² (Full model)	.06	.06	.04	.04	.08

Note: **p*<.05, ***p*<.01

Table 8.4.10a Results of the mediation effects on the conceptions and beliefs about wife abuse (Sobel tests)

	Unstandardized regression coefficients	Standard error	Sobel test values
<i>DV: Omnibus wife abuse index</i>			
<i>Mediator: Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain</i>	-.071	.022	1.31
<i>Independent variable: Chinese modernity of Gender Equality</i>	-.205	.143	
<i>DV: Wife abuse index</i>			
<i>Mediator: Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain</i>	-.072	.021	1.32
<i>Independent variable: Chinese modernity of Gender Equality</i>	-.205	.143	
<i>DV: Psychological wife abuse index</i>			
<i>Mediator: Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain</i>	-.104	.028	1.34
<i>Independent variable: Chinese modernity of Gender Equality</i>	-.205	.143	
<i>DV: Beliefs about wife abuse</i>			
<i>Mediator: Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain</i>	.031	.022	1.32
<i>Independent variable: Chinese traditionality of Respect to Authority</i>	.539	.139	
<i>DV: Beliefs about wife abuse</i>			
<i>Mediator: Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain</i>	.030	.021	1.31
<i>Independent variable: Chinese traditionality of Superiority of Male</i>	.377	.115	

Table 8.4.10b Results of the mediation effects on the conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse (Sobel tests)

	Unstandardized regression coefficients	Standard error	Sobel test values
<i>DV:</i> Omnibus husband abuse index			
<i>Mediator:</i> Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.073	.024	1.30
<i>Independent variable:</i> Chinese modernity of Gender Equality	-.205	.143	
<i>DV:</i> Husband abuse index			
<i>Mediator:</i> Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.074	.024	1.30
<i>Independent variable:</i> Chinese modernity of Gender Equality	-.205	.143	
<i>DV:</i> Psychological husband abuse index			
<i>Mediator:</i> Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.105	.031	1.32
<i>Independent variable:</i> Chinese modernity of Gender Equality	-.205	.143	
<i>DV:</i> Beliefs about wife abuse			
<i>Mediator:</i> Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	.04	.025	1.44
<i>Independent variable:</i> Chinese traditionality of Superiority of Male	.377	.115	

Table 8.4.11: Predictors of conceptions and beliefs about wife abuse
(Female vs. Male sample)

DV	Omnibus abuse index	43-item abuse index	Physical abuse index	Psychological abuse index	Beliefs index
IV					
Female sample					
β					
<i>Block 1: Attitudes toward gender in:</i>					
domestic domain	-.24**	-.24**	-.03	-.27**	.15*
work domain	.06	.05	.05	.05	-.04
<i>Block 2: Identification with:</i>					
Father's liberal attitudes toward gender	-.03	.00	-.02	-.04	.11
Mother's liberal attitudes toward gender	-.04	-.06	-.10	-.01	.05
<i>Block 3: Identification with:</i>					
Father's violence disapproval	.03	-.02	.04	-.03	-.02
Mother's violence disapproval	-.06	-.06	-.01	-.06	.01
<i>Block 4: Chinese traditionality:</i>					
Respect to Authority	.14	.13	.07	.11	.17*
Superiority of Male	-.06	-.05	-.24**	-.10	.16*
<i>Block 5: Chinese modernity:</i>					
Egalitarianism and Openness	-.05	-.06	.02	-.08	-.15*
Gender Equality	.28**	.25**	.28**	.19	-.23**
F Change (Full model)	5.43**	4.00*	6.83**	7.47**	4.42*
R ²	.13	.11	.13	.06	.24
f ² (Full model)	.05	.04	.05	.06	.15
Male sample					
β					
<i>Block 1: Attitudes toward gender in:</i>					
domestic domain	-.18	-.22	.20	-.25*	-.07
work domain	.02	.05	-.08	.09	-.03
<i>Block 2: Identification with:</i>					
Father's liberal attitudes toward gender	-.01	.04	-.02	.05	-.10
Mother's liberal attitudes toward gender	-.19	-.21	-.02	-.23	.01
<i>Block 3: Identification with:</i>					
Father's violence disapproval	-.03	-.06	-.08	-.03	-.27*
Mother's violence disapproval	.04	-.00	.04	-.03	-.07
<i>Block 4: Chinese traditionality:</i>					
Respect to Authority	-.09	-.06	-.12	-.10	.13
Superiority of Male	-.02	.01	-.25*	.11	.40**
<i>Block 5: Chinese modernity:</i>					
Egalitarianism and Openness	.13	.09	.16	.03	.01
Gender Equality	.13	.16	-.05	.24*	.11
F Change (Full model)	2.98	2.66	5.81**	3.34*	14.27**
R ²	.16	.16	.20	.14	.31
f ² (Full model)	--	--	.10	.06	.25
t-value for the differences in beta between female and male samples					
Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.57	-.19	--	-.19	2.35*
Identification with father's violence disapproval	--	--	--	--	2.67*
Chinese traditionality: Respect to Authority	--	--	--	--	.43
Chinese traditionality: Superiority of Male	--	--	.10	--	2.57*
Chinese modernity: Egalitarianism and Openness	--	--	--	--	-1.71*
Chinese modernity: Gender Equality	1.43	.84	3.29*	-.46	3.63*

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Table 8.4.12: Matrix of salient predictors of conceptions and beliefs about wife abuse between female and male samples

	<i>Female sample</i>		<i>Male sample</i>	
	Predictors	β	Predictors	β
<i>Conceptions of wife abuse</i>				
<i>Omnibus wife abuse index</i>	1) Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.24**	No salient predictor was found	--
	2) Chinese modern value of Gender Equality	.28**		
<i>Wife abuse index</i>	1) Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.24**	No salient predictor was found	--
	2) Chinese modern value of Gender Equality	.25**		
<i>Physical wife abuse index</i>	1) Chinese traditional values of Superiority of Male	-.24**	1) Chinese traditional values of Superiority of Male	-.25*
	2) Chinese modern value of Gender Equality	.28**		
<i>Psychological wife abuse index</i>	1) Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.27**	1) Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.25*
			2) Chinese modern value of Gender Equality	.24*
<i>Beliefs about wife abuse</i>	1) Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	.15*	1) Identification with father's violence disapproval attitudes	-.27*
	2) Chinese traditional value of Respect to Authority	.17*	2) Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male	.40**
	3) Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male	.16*		
	4) Chinese modern value of Egalitarianism and Openness	-.15*		
	5) Chinese modern value of Gender Equality	-.23**		

Table 8.4.13: Predicators of conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse
(Female vs. Male sample)

IV \ DV	Omnibus abuse index	43-item abuse index	Physical abuse index	Psychological abuse index	Beliefs index
	Female sample				
	β				
<i>Block 1: Attitudes toward gender in:</i>					
domestic domain	-.21**	-.19*	-.06	-.21**	.17*
work domain	-.02	-.04	-.01	-.06	.01
<i>Block 2: Identification with:</i>					
Father's liberal attitudes toward gender	-.01	-.02	-.05	-.01	.14
Mother's liberal attitudes toward gender	.00	-.02	.05	-.01	.04
<i>Block 3: Identification with:</i>					
Father's violence disapproval	-.05	-.05	.03	-.06	-.01
Mother's violence disapproval	-.04	-.03	-.02	-.03	-.12
<i>Block 4: Chinese traditionality:</i>					
Respect to Authority	.18*	.16*	.16*	.11	.09
Superiority of Male	-.13	.22*	-.19*	-.15	.19*
<i>Block 5: Chinese modernity:</i>					
Egalitarianism and Openness	-.03	.00	-.03	.02	.14
Gender Equality	.26**	.22*	.25**	.16	.16
F Change (Full model)	5.08**	3.93*	4.79**	7.32**	7.34**
R ²	.14	.12	.13	.06	.16
f ² (Full model)	.05	.04	.07	.06	.12
	Male sample				
	β				
<i>Block 1: Attitudes toward gender in:</i>					
domestic domain	-.20	-.23*	.05	-.30**	-.18
work domain	.12	.12	.03	.13	-.02
<i>Block 2: Identification with:</i>					
Father's liberal attitudes toward gender	.01	.06	-.05	.09	-.11
Mother's liberal attitudes toward gender	-.19	-.22	.02	-.27*	-.08
<i>Block 3: Identification with:</i>					
Father's violence disapproval	-.04	-.05	-.07	-.04	.02
Mother's violence disapproval	.01	-.01	.06	-.03	.04
<i>Block 4: Chinese traditionality:</i>					
Respect to Authority	-.08	-.09	-.01	-.10	.04
Superiority of Male	.18	.20	-.20	.33**	.33**
<i>Block 5: Chinese modernity:</i>					
Egalitarianism and Openness	.13	.10	.24*	.02	-.08
Gender Equality	.22*	.21*	.01	.26*	.05
F Change (Full model)	5.48**	4.41*	3.75*	3.94*	6.22**
R ²	.18	.18	.14	.22	.19
f ² (Full model)	.10	.08	.07	.07	.11
t-value for the differences in beta between female and male samples					
Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.10	.38	--	.88	3.51*
Identification with mother's liberal attitudes toward gender	--	--	--	2.54*	--
Chinese traditionality: Respect to Authority	2.50*	2.40*	1.59*	--	--
Chinese traditionality: Superiority of Male	--	.19	.09	4.56*	-1.4
Chinese modernity: Egalitarianism and Openness	--	--	2.54*	--	--
Chinese modernity: Gender Equality	.39	.10	2.26*	.95	--

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 8.4.14: Matrix of salient predictors of conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse between female and male samples

	<i>Female sample</i>		<i>Male sample</i>	
	Predictors	β	Predictors	β
Conceptions of husband abuse				
<i>Omnibus husband abuse index</i>	1) Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.21**	1) Chinese modern values of Gender Equality	.22*
	2) Chinese traditional values of Respect to Authority	.18*		
	3) Chinese modern values of Gender Equality	.26**		
<i>Husband abuse index</i>	1) Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.19*	1) Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.23*
	2) Chinese traditional value of Respect to Authority	.16*	2) Chinese modern values of Gender Equality	.21*
	3) Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male	.22*		
	4) Chinese modern values of Gender Equality	.22*		
<i>Physical husband abuse index</i>	1) Chinese traditional value of Respect to Authority	.16*	1) Chinese modern values of Egalitarianism and Openness	.24*
	2) Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male	-.19*		
	3) Chinese modern values of Gender Equality	.25**		
<i>Psychological husband abuse index</i>	1) Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	-.21*	1) Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	.24*
			2) Identification with mother's liberal attitudes toward gender	-.27*
			3) Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male	.33**
			4) Chinese modern value of Gender Equality	.26*
<i>Beliefs about husband abuse</i>	1) Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain	.17*	1) Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male	.33**
	2) Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male	.19*		

Table 8.4.15: Correlations amongst perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in the social work curriculum and the outcomes variables

	Adequacy of training	Request for more training on knowledge of spousal abuse	Willingness to handle spousal abuse cases in the future
Conceptions of spousal abuse:			
Omnibus wife abuse index	.12*	.19**	.10
Omnibus husband abuse index	.14**	.13*	.08
Wife abuse index	.14*	.19**	.12*
Husband abuse index	.17**	.14*	.09
Physical abuse:			
Wife abuse	-.09	.18**	.08
Husband abuse	.02	.11*	.08
Psychological abuse:			
Wife abuse	.23**	.15**	.11*
Husband abuse	.20**	.12*	.08
Beliefs about spousal abuse:			
Wife abuse	.10	-.17**	-.11*
Husband abuse	.03	-.09	-.04
Adequacy of training	--	-.14**	.06
Request for more training on spousal abuse	-.14**	--	.37**

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

CHAPTER 9: DISCUSSION

There are five sections in this chapter. It starts with a brief discussion on the profile of the participants. The second section addresses the psychometric properties of the measurement scales developed and adopted in this study. The third section highlights the observations in participants' responses to the psychosocial correlates and the outcome variables. The fourth section discusses the major findings for the research questions and their corresponding hypotheses. The fifth section presents the significance and implications of this study.

9.1 Profile of the participants

This study adopted a convenience sampling in Phase I Study: Focus groups and stratified random sampling in Phase II Study: Questionnaire survey. Convenience sampling was used in the focus groups because it was difficult to randomly recruit participants to join a 2-hour discussion on topic they may have no interest. Although representative sample may not be obtained in qualitative research method, one of the strengths of this method is the rich meanings and understanding of social phenomenon generated collectively from the insiders' viewpoints (Eastman, Bunch, Williams, & Carawan, 2007). In order to ensure all the social work undergraduates noticed and had equal chance to participate in the focus groups, the researcher sent invitation to all of them through universities' mass email system. Unfortunately, participants who joined the focus groups might be selective as they might be the groups with more concern about spousal abuse and interest about focus groups.

Though participants were not from a representative sample, their opinions in the focus groups may still reflect certain degree of reality. First, participants were in a close contact discussion. Each focus group was about two hours and three out of five groups of the participants were classmates who were familiar with each other. The

influences of the moderator were relatively limited. Responses generated in such a close contact discussion should reflect certain degree of the conceptualization of spousal abuse among social work undergraduates. Second, participants' responses were generated through dynamic interaction and logical discussion. They proposed, debated and finally came to consensus in regarding certain behavioral manifestations as spousal abuse. Meanwhile, consistent set of semi-structured open-ended questions was adopted throughout the five focus groups. This ensured that high degree of flexibility was given to participants to express their thoughts, yet their responses were confined within the studied topic.

Third, consistent patterns of responses were found throughout the five focus groups. Participants basically discussed the behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse in three commonly categorized types of abuse, including physical, psychological and sexual abuse. They provided thick descriptions on the behavioral manifestations of physical and psychological abuse. Such thick descriptions of the phenomenon indeed represent the shared stock of knowledge. Fourth, the quality of qualitative data does not depend on the number of participants. Instead, it depends on the themes that can be generated within the content of discussion. The qualitative data in the present study provided meaningful and interpretable themes of behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse. Moreover, these themes were comparable with those conceptualized within academic and legal fields. Finally, the quality of the qualitative data was evaluated based on the criteria proposed within the social work research field. Though the qualitative data may not represent the viewpoints of all social work undergraduates, they are qualitative data with credibility and accountability as rigorous data collection and analysis procedures were performed.

The conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse generated based on discussion from focus groups and previous literature, as well as the proposed psychosocial

correlates were then examined in the questionnaire survey with a representative sample of social work undergraduates. The representative sample was obtained through stratified random sampling. The sample recruited from each university was calculated based on the proportion of undergraduates' gender and year of study enrolled in each university among the 908 social work undergraduates in year 2006 to 2007. Previous studies on spousal abuse mainly adopted convenience sampling (Fyfe et al., 1997; Home, 1994; Tang & Tam, 2003; Tam & Tang, 2005), this study is one of the scarce studies which adopted random sampling to provide more solid base for the empirical evidence generated from inferential statistics. The sample of the questionnaire survey resembled the population of social work undergraduates in the distribution of gender, year of study and their enrollment in the six universities. It can be concluded that the sample of the questionnaire survey represents the population of social work undergraduates. Thus the results of the statistical analyses can be generalized to the population of social work undergraduates.

9.2 Psychometric properties of the measurement scales in the questionnaire survey

9.2.1 Constructed scales

9.2.1.1 Conceptions of spousal abuse

Four instruments were constructed and validated to measure social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse, as well as their identification with parents' attitudes toward gender stereotypes and violence approval.

The instrument of the conceptions of spousal abuse was developed based on the consentaneous behavioral manifestations discussed by the participants in focus groups. Preliminary categorization of the behavioral manifestations was conducted by the present researcher. Two external checkers were invited to review the categorization. The inter-rater and intra-rater reliabilities were high, bias in the categorization were

safeguarded. The detailed development of the items of conceptions of spousal abuse is summarized in Section 7.3 of Chapter 7. Shek, Tang, and Han (2005) revealed that social work researches adopting qualitative methods are not sensitive to the issue of quality. Thus they integrated 12 criteria for evaluating qualitative research with reference to previous literature. The qualitative data of the focus groups in the present study was also evaluated based on these 12 criteria. Eight out of the 12 criteria were fully fulfilled by the qualitative data in the present study (Refer to Section 7.5 and Table 7.14, Chapter 7).

Analyses and categorization of the conceptions were conducted with reference to existing spousal abuse scales developed within the academia. The physical assault sub-scale of the revised Conflict Tactics Scales was incorporated into the conceptions of physical abuse. Further factor analyses showed that the behavioral manifestations could be broadly categorized into physical and psychological abuse, and four indexes of spousal abuse were generated, including omnibus, wife/husband abuse, physical and psychological abuse indexes. The internal consistency of these indexes was high. This indicates that the constructed scales of conceptions of spousal abuse are reliable.

The development and validation of the four indexes of spousal abuse has great conceptual and practical significance. From a conceptual standpoint, these indexes help to broaden the conceptions of spousal abuse and understand people's conceptions of spousal abuse in terms of various behavioral manifestations. Moreover, measurements on both conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse were developed and validated. They not only enrich the existing conceptions of wife abuse, but also contribute to the inadequate understanding on the conceptions of husband abuse. Indeed, no existing studies have ever examined the conceptions of husband abuse in Western and Chinese samples.

From a practical standpoint, these indexes provide instruments to measure

individuals' conceptions of spousal abuse and compare the differences in conceptions between wife abuse and husband abuse. This study also provides the first measurement tool in assessing the behavioral manifestations of husband abuse. This contributes to social work practice and social work research. As discussed in Shek, Lam, and Tsoi's (2004) study, it is found that evidence-based practice in the social work field in Hong Kong is inadequate. Social work professional lacks indigenous measurements to document and evaluate the effectiveness of their clinical practices. The development of indexes on conceptions of spousal abuse provides validated measurements to assess social work professionals' conceptions of spousal abuse. Researchers and workers in the social work field could make use of these measurements to evaluate their knowledge and bias towards both wife abuse and husband abuse. Furthermore, these measurements are indigenous as they are developed based on findings from local social work undergraduates and with reference to Chinese cultural background. This avoids the problem of borrowing tools from Western culture to evaluate clinical practices of social work in Chinese community.

9.2.2 Beliefs about spousal abuse

Beliefs about spousal abuse were developed based on review of previous literature and findings from the focus groups. The detailed development of the items of beliefs about spousal abuse is summarized in Section 7.4 of Chapter 7. The 14 items covered beliefs that 1) spousal abuse is a private matter, 2) certain actions are not spousal abuse, 3) misbehavior, 4) provocation, and 5) stress is reasonable justification for spousal abuse, as well as 6) differences on motivation, frequency and forms between wife abuse and husband abuse. The internal consistency of the beliefs about spousal abuse was high in the main study and acceptable in the pilot study of

the questionnaire survey.

Similar to the conceptions of spousal abuse, the measurements on beliefs about spousal abuse consist of great conceptual and practical significance. From a conceptual standpoint, this measurement enriches our understanding on individuals' bias against spousal abuse. Moreover, this is the first scale developed to measure the beliefs about husband abuse. Individuals' bias towards wife abuse and husband abuse can be compared. From a practical standpoint, the development of this measurement unites several major beliefs about spousal abuse, which were dispersedly examined in previous studies. This helps to formulate a unified scale in measuring and comparing beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse systematically. These measurements could also be used to evaluate social work professionals' bias towards spousal abuse. Once more, this contributes to the development of measurements in the evidence-based practice within the social work field.

9.2.3 Identification with parents' gender stereotypes and violence approval

Four items about gender stereotypes were developed based on common beliefs about gender. Similarly, six items describing situations whether using violence is approved or disapproved were generated with reference to the Personal and Relationship Profile. Participants were asked to perceive their parents' agreement to gender stereotypes and violence approval as well as their agreement with their parents. The internal consistency of these scales was acceptable. Indeed, better methods could be adopted to examine the socialization influences from parents, such as inviting participants' parents to indicate their endorsement of gender stereotypes and violence approval on their own. However, parents might give socially desirable responses to such sensitive questions. Responses based on participants' perceptions (observer's data) might be more objective in revealing parents' attitudes. Furthermore, the present

method was the most time and resources saving in examining socialization influences from parents. In fact, based on this method, participants were successfully categorized into “conservative” versus “liberal” groups as well as “violence approval” and “violence disapproval” groups. These scales could effectively imply the influences from parents on participants’ endorsement of gender stereotypes and violence approval.

9.2.4 Scales based on previous studies

Three existing and validated scales were adopted in this study to examine participants’ attitudes toward gender, endorsement of Chinese traditionality and Chinese modernity.

The Gender Role Egalitarian Attitudes Test (GREAT) developed by Chang (1999) was adopted to examine participants’ attitudes toward gender in both work and domestic domains. In this study, the internal consistency of these two scales (Cronbach’s alpha = .73-.85) was similar to the original study (Cronbach’s alpha = .71-.74).

Multidimensional Scale of Chinese Individual Traditionality (Yang, Yu, & Yep, 1989) was adopted to examine participants’ endorsement of Chinese traditional values, in particular the values of Respect to Authority and Superiority of Male. In this study, the internal consistency of these sub-scales (Cronbach’s alpha = .74-.90) was similar to the original study (Cronbach’s alpha = .69-.80) and a recent study on sample from Mainland China conducted by Zhang et al. (2003) (Cronbach’s alpha = .63-.82). In fact, the present sample revealed a higher internal consistency of the traditionality scales.

Multidimensional Scale of Chinese Individual Modernity (Yang, Yu, & Yep, 1989) was adopted to examine participants’ endorsement of Chinese modern values.

especially the values of Egalitarianism and Openness as well as Gender Equality. In this study, the internal consistency of these sub-scales (Cronbach's alpha = .69-.87) was similar to the original study (Cronbach's alpha = .66-.76) and a recent study on sample from Mainland China conducted by Zhang et al. (2003) (Cronbach's alpha = .68-.83).

To sum up, the constructed scales and those based on previous studies possessed acceptable to good internal consistency. They were usable to examine the psychosocial correlates and the outcome variables, which also provided solid base for the statistical results. Moreover, the findings indicated that these scales are applicable in social work research and social work practice. These scales are validated and can be used in further practice settings within the social work field.

9.3 Profiles of participants' responses to the psychosocial correlates and the outcome variables

This section highlights participants' responses to the psychosocial correlates. Their responses to the outcome variables: conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are the answers to Research Questions 1 and 2, which are discussed in the next section.

9.3.1 Participants' attitudes toward gender

It was found that participants basically revealed egalitarian attitudes toward gender in both work and domestic domains. These are consistent with the general social shift from traditional to egalitarian attitudes toward gender (Myers & Booth, 2002). However, participants possessed relatively more egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the work domain than in the domestic domain. This demonstrated that participants endorsed more equal gender assignment in activities in the public sphere,

including being a leader, running a business, having successful career, having the highest education level, and making money. These activities were originally assigned to men, but women nowadays also have equal chances in performing these activities. This maybe related to the awareness of gender equality which has been highly promoted since waves of women's movements. Tenenbaum and Leaper (2002) commented that it is normal for women to have their own career and occupying higher ranks in business and government nowadays. According to the statistics of population by-censuses of Hong Kong 2006 (Census and Statistics Department, 2006), the percentage of male and female having college and advanced education was 38.9 percent and 36.7 percent respectively. Moreover, the percentage of male labor force was 69.2 percent while female labor force was 52.4 percent. The enrollment of male in the managerial level was 70 percent while female was 30 percent. The enrollment of male as professionals was 62 percent while female was 38 percent. These indicated that male and female are both receiving high education and participating relatively equal in the labor market. Though more professional and managerial positions are occupied by male, female are having more chances in pursuing these positions nowadays.

Though participants showed egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain, their attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain were traditional. This maybe related to the deeply rooted maternal image of women developed in Chinese society. Women's identities are indeed confined within the domestic or private sphere, family is "an integral part of women's identities" (Bowen, Wu, Hwang, & Scherer, 2007, p.271). With reference to Chinese traditional thinking, the division of labor is set as "nan zhu wai, nu zhu nei" (Shek and Lai, 2000), which meant that men handle all the external affairs while women take responses to the internal affairs of the family. The top most important task for women is to manage the family well (Reese, 2003).

In the present sample, “taking care of children” and “making meals at home” were the activities that participants regarded as particularly more important and appropriate to be performed by women than by men. Recently, the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (HKFYG, 2008) reported the youth trends of 2004 to 2006, they found that adolescents in Hong Kong still believes that mother should be responsible for taking care of young children and a few of them also support the traditional thought of men working outside while women staying at home. Consistent with these findings, this study also showed that adolescents in Hong Kong still endorse traditional attitudes toward gender, in particular to female gender.

Furthermore, Gunthner (1995) found both men and women revealed that it is unacceptable if women refuse to take care of the family. Women are allowed to develop their own career provided that they can manage the family well (Bowen et al., 2007). This is the reason that women having their own career suffer from double or triple day burden, which meant they have to work on double shift, one on work and the other on the family. Because of such double standard toward women, it is not surprising to find a sample of Latino community members (Lewis et al., 2005) and Portuguese-speaking women living in Canada (Barata, McNally, Sales, & Stewart, 2005) all reported “unequal burden”(men expect women to take responses to the household) as a form of wife abuse.

9.3.2 Socialization influences from participants’ parents on gender stereotypes and violence approval

The identification with parents’ gender stereotypes and violence approval could reflect certain influences from socialization of parents. According to participants’ report on their family living conditions, over 85 percent of the (310) participants were mainly living with their parents over the past years (See Table 8.1.3, Chapter 8).

Cichy, Lefkowitz, and Fignerman (2007) suggested that parents transmit their gender attitudes to their children through socialization and status inheritance. Moreover, children adopt their parents' attitudes toward gender through observation. Most researchers believe that the influences of parents on children's gender attitudes become less prominent when they grow up. However, research revealed inconsistent findings on the influences of parents' gender schemas on offspring's gender attitudes. According to the meta-analysis conducted by Tenebaum and Leaper (2002), some researches revealed that the influences from parents' gender schemas are still prominent even when their offspring are college students. The present sample was college undergraduates, the socialization influences from parents on their gender attitudes might still be influential.

In the present sample, over half of the participants were categorized into "liberal group" while only about one fourth of them were categorized into "conservative group" in their perceptions of parents' agreement to gender stereotypes (See Table 8.3.6, Chapter 8). This implied that most of the participants perceived their parents did not agree to gender stereotypes and they agreed with their parents' attitudes. According to the job status of participants' parents of this sample, about half of the participants were living in dual-income families (See Table 8.1.5, Chapter 8). Both fathers and mothers had full-time job in over one third of the participants' families. Fathers had full-time job and mothers had part-time jobs in about 15 percent of the participants' families. Participants' endorsement of gender stereotypes may be related to their family structure. Hoffman (1989) proposed that gender stereotypical thoughts were less likely to be transmitted in the dual-income families. The division of labor inclines to be more egalitarian when both parents are working outside. In the dual-income families, both father and mother share the roles and responsibilities, less stereotyping of occupational choices are found among the children (Fulcher et al,

2001 as cited in Tenenbaum & Leaper, 2002).

Another two interesting observations were found in the identification with parents' gender stereotypes. First, more mothers than fathers were perceived as having either liberal or conservative attitudes toward gender (See Table 8.3.6, conservative groups vs. liberal groups, Chapter 8). It is typical to find that women are liberated because of the promotion of gender equality by waves of feminists' movement. It was found in Fan and Marini's study (2000) that women endorsed less traditional gender attitudes than men. Friedman, Leaper, and Bigler (2007) found that mothers with gender egalitarian attitudes tended to use more counter-stereotypical comments during reading and discussing a gender-related story with their children. However, some women still showed conservative attitudes toward gender. Though women are having more chances to be educated, trained and employed, some of them just stop advancing their education and career because of the cultural and social pressure that it is difficult for women with a higher social status to find a husband (Bowen et al., 2007). A successful career means a trade-off to a harmonious family to women (Bowen, 2003). Therefore, under the cultural and social pressure, some of the women tend to keep their positions and stick to the conservative attitudes toward gender.

The second observation is that more fathers were considered as conservative (See Table 8.3.6, conservative parents only group, Chapter 8). This observation is consistent with previous findings that men were found to have more traditional gender attitudes than women (Brooks & Bolzwndahl, 2004; Shearer, Hosterman, Gillen, & Lefkowitz, 2005). Though the changes in women's status and development were drastic, the changes in men's were not that dramatic in the past few decades. The phenomenon that men help out the household chores happened only in the recent quarter of century (Tenenbaum & Leaper, 2002). Thus it is understandable that more fathers than mothers were perceived as conservative in their attitudes toward gender.

In the present sample, over half of the participants were categorized into “violence disapproval group” and about one third of them were categorized into “violence approval group” in their perceptions of parents’ violence approval (See Table 8.3.7, Chapter 8). This indicated that participants generally perceived that their parents would not approve violence under the situations proposed. As discussed previously, most of the participants were living in dual-income families, parents should have relatively more egalitarian attitudes toward gender. Thus they might show disapproval to violence in situations about hitting back others and slapping spouse. Furthermore, parents who adopted egalitarian attitudes might be less supportive to corporal punishment. In addition, with reference to parental abuse reported by participants (See Table 8.1.8, Chapter 8), nearly 80 percent of them reported their parents never and seldom physically and/ or psychologically abused against each other. This implied that violence was seldom or never practiced by participants’ parents. This may also be related to their lower endorsement of violence approval attitudes.

Apart from the above explanation, the measurement method may also be an obstacle in assessing parents’ socialization influences on participants’ attitudes toward gender stereotypes and violence approval. The measurement was based on participants’ perceptions on parents’ attitudes toward gender stereotypes and violence approval. Their perceptions may be biased and influenced by social desirability, which could not genuinely reflect their parents’ attitudes. Moreover, participants’ agreements with parents’ attitudes may also be related to the socially desirable practice that offspring should comply with their parents. It is certain that individuals would like to maintain good social images not only for themselves but also for their parents. Participants might tend to think that their parents are liberal and do not support violence. Meanwhile, they are good offspring by complying with their parents’

attitudes. Thus, more participants were classified into the liberal group and the violence disapproval group. As more participants were categorized in liberal group and violence disapproval group, such ceiling effect on one category may make it less sensitive to detect group differences on the outcomes variables. Furthermore, individuals' endorsement to gender stereotypes and violence approval not only depends on parental socialization, but also individuals' personal beliefs and developmental experiences. Socialization influences from external sources may only be part of the influences, individuals' acceptance of external influences and the integration with their personal experiences, such as education level, personal developmental history, religious beliefs and affiliation with social community and organizations may all contribute to their internalization of gender stereotypes and violence approval.

9.3.3 Participants' endorsement of Chinese traditionality

In the present sample, social work undergraduates generally did not endorse the Chinese traditional value of Respect to Authority. However, when take a closer look at the items endorsed, it is found that most of the participants agreed that primary and secondary school students should wear school uniform. This revealed that social work undergraduates tend to observe and stick to regulations. This may be related to the traditional Chinese education that emphasizes on strict discipline (O'Brain & Lau, 1995) and "guan" which means to teach and govern (Qiao & Chan, 2005), wearing school uniform is one of the ways to maintain discipline. Moreover, some of them agreed that children should show respect to people who are respected by their parents and preferred seeking parental advice over unresolved disputes. These demonstrated that parental authority is absolute in Chinese society (Ho, 1981). In fact, filial piety is the most stressed moral standard among Chinese. One of the ways to fulfill filial

obligations is to follow parents' comments and wishes (Hesketh, Hong, Lynch, 2000). Complaining parents is forbidden in Chinese society (Qiao & Chan, 2005). Concur with the report on youth trends 2004 to 2006 (HKFYG, 2008), youth in Hong Kong still agreed that "one should try their best to fulfill parents' wishes".

Regarding the Chinese traditional value of Superiority of Male, participants revealed strong resentment to the superior male and inferior female ideology. However, it should be noted that some participants still agreed that husband is the head of the household and everything should be decided by him. Half of the adolescents in the study of youth trend 2004 to 2006 (HKFYG, 2008) also revealed that decisions at home are basically made by their fathers. Both findings consistently indicated that adolescents in Hong Kong still regard father as the leader at home.

In short, social work undergraduates generally opposed to Chinese traditional values of Respect to Authority and Superiority of Male. Nevertheless, they still showed certain respect to discipline and authority, especially to their parents. It is worth noting that some of them still regard men as the heads of households. Findings in the present study replicate the general youth trends in Hong Kong.

9.3.4 Participants' endorsement of Chinese modernity

Participants generally endorsed the Chinese modern values of Egalitarianism and Openness. Most of them agreed that "public can openly criticize the chief executive officer if he or she committed mistakes", "if teachers make mistake, students can raise arguments to debate", and "parents should allow children to have religious beliefs that are different from theirs". These showed that participants generally emphasized on fair treatment based on rational arguments among various interpersonal relationships.

With regard to the Chinese modern value of gender equality, participants basically agreed that men and women have equal social status and women are not

inferior to men. They also agreed that husband should not object wife to pursue her own career and women can also be the chief government official. However, only half of them agreed that both men and women should have equal chance in having education and few of them agreed that men and women can take charge to the same position among various occupations. When concerning the marital roles of gender, few of them agreed that spouses should have independent characters, less than half of them proposed spouses should have their own friends, and over half of them disagreed that spouses should have some personal time to be alone and free from disturbance. These indicated that participants emphasized on mutual dependency between married couples. These replicates findings of youth trends in Hong Kong (HKFYG, 2008) that adolescents still adopt traditional view in marital relationship and support the traditional division of labor within the family.

In sum, participants chiefly endorsed Chinese modern values. They stressed on fair treatment and revealed that authority can be criticized. They generally supported equality between genders. Nevertheless, women's chances in obtaining higher education and positions in career were different from men. Lastly, they also stressed mutual dependency between spouses in marital relationship. Present findings are consistent with the general youth trends reported by the Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups (2008). Adolescents in Hong Kong are westernized to a certain degree that they asked for more freedom and individuality. However, when compared with youth in Western countries, they are relatively conservative in their attitudes toward family and gender roles. They still regard respect to parental authority, traditional gender roles and the integrality of a harmonious family as very important.

9.3.5 Participants' perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum

Participants in general perceived that training on knowledge of spousal abuse is inadequate in social work curriculum. They disagreed that the curriculum provided them enough training on the topic of spousal abuse. Most of them just had taken one course mentioned about spousal abuse and only a few of them had taken extra courses about spousal abuse outside the curriculum. They also reported that their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse were built based on information and influences outside social work curriculum. This showed that their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are more subject to influences from their external environment than their institution's curriculum.

As training on knowledge of spousal abuse is commented as inadequate, more requests for training are the predicted results. They regarded that a formal and systematic training provided by social work curriculum is important and necessary. Formal training includes knowledge about spousal abuse and the factual information on procedures in handling spousal abuse cases. Apart from formal training, participants also proposed that talks, visits, and placement practice provided by organizations that handle spousal abuse would be other channels to provide them with more information about spousal abuse. These showed that knowledge about spousal abuse can be provided through diversified channels to enrich social work undergraduates' understanding on spousal abuse.

In general, the training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum was commented as inadequate. Meanwhile, training on knowledge of spousal abuse is regarded as important and necessary by the social work undergraduates. Training helps to broaden conceptions and demystify biases against spousal abuse. More course content focus on spousal abuse and extra activities can be organized to enrich

students' knowledge on this topic. As about half of the participants expressed that they are willing to work in organizations that handle spousal abuse, improvement in training on knowledge of spousal abuse is a must in social work curriculum.

9.4 Findings for research questions and their corresponding hypotheses

9.4.1 Research Question 1: What are the conceptions of spousal abuse among social work undergraduates in Hong Kong? Are they different from the legal and academic experts' conceptions?

Regarding the first part of Research Question 1, participants revealed nearly unanimous agreement in conceptualizing the behavioral manifestations of physical abuse. However, they showed less certainty in conceptualizing the behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse. These findings were consistent with previous studies, particularly those examining the conceptions of wife abuse. The topic of wife abuse was being intensively investigated and attracted substantial international attention (Tam & Tang, 2005) but none of the studies examined the conceptions of husband abuse. Therefore, the comparison among present and previous findings could only be based on previous understanding on conceptions of wife abuse.

Sigler (1989) found that American participants generally defined wife abuse based on physical force while less of them defined neglect and psychological abuse constituted wife abuse. Correspondingly, Choi and Edleson (1996) revealed that the vast majority of Singaporean perceived wife abuse according to the severity of use of force, including using weapon against wife, hitting wife with fists, kicking wife, and banging wife against the wall. However, relatively fewer participants considered forcing wife to have sex, slapping wife, pushing or shoving wife as wife abuse. Yick (2000) also found that a sample of Chinese American was more likely to conceptualize wife abuse based on physical and sexual abuse while they tended not to

include psychological abuse in their conceptions of wife abuse. Consistently, Steinmetz and Haj-Yahia (2006) found that over 90 percent of the Jewish men from Israel regarded actions with physical contact as wife abuse, 60 percent of them regarded yelling and cursing as wife abuse, but only 50 percent of them regarded financial control as wife abuse. Consistent with social work undergraduates in Israel, who generally regarded using weapons, hitting, kicking, banging wife against the wall, slapping and shoving wife as wife abuse, but only less than half of them regarded smashing things as wife abuse (Haj-Yahia & Schiff, 2007). The above findings revealed that individuals from Western, Eastern, and Middle-Eastern countries all had a higher tendency to regard physical abuse as wife abuse but disregard psychological abuse as wife abuse.

Findings from present and previous studies both support people's uncertainty in defining psychological abuse in conjugal relationships. The uncertainty in conceptualizing psychological abuse may be related to the four major differences of psychological abuse from physical abuse. First, psychological abuse does not leave victims with tangible injuries, such as physical or bodily injuries (Tang, 1994). Second, psychological abuse does not result in immediate pain and pose life-threatening threats to the victims, albeit it leaves victims with psychological harm, such as depression and anxiety (Dorahy, Lewis, & Wolfe, 2007). Third, because of the first two reasons, it is complicated for victims to provide forensic evidence of psychological abuse. Fourth, the existing conceptions of psychological abuse in legal and academic perspectives are relatively unclear when compared with physical abuse. Legally, there are clear definitions of murder, manslaughter, wounding or inflicting bodily harm, and assault. In academia, people showed more convinced findings in conceptualizing physical abuse. The implicit nature of psychological abuse is an obstacle for victims and witnesses to conceptualize it. Though psychological abuse is

implicit in its nature, it indeed has a great variety of behavioral manifestations (Tam, 2003). This can be proved based on the greater number of responses in conceptualizing psychological abuse in the focus groups.

From a conceptual perspective, the results of the first part of Research Question 1 enhance our understanding on conceptions of spousal abuse. It was found that social work undergraduates conceptualized spousal abuse more in terms of physical than psychological abuse. Moreover, their conceptions of spousal abuse were incomplete as their conceptions of psychological abuse were unclear. Apart from expanding the existing conceptions of wife abuse, this is the first study to provide pioneer findings on the conceptions of husband abuse in the Chinese sample, which provides a more comprehensive understanding on spousal abuse.

From a practical standpoint, the development of the measurements on conceptions of spousal abuse provides indigenous measurement tools in assessing spousal abuse in Chinese community. This facilitates evidence-based research in the social work field. Reflected from the present measurements of spousal abuse, social work undergraduates revealed consentaneous and clear conceptions of physical abuse while vague conceptions of psychological abuse. This indicated that more training should be provided to enhance their awareness of psychological abuse, and their knowledge on different forms and impacts of psychological abuse. More research on psychological abuse should also be carried out in the future.

To answer the second part of Research Question 1, it is found that social work undergraduates in the present sample provided analogous conceptions of physical abuse when compared with legal and academic experts' conceptions. In the focus groups, participants provided both overt and covert behavioral indicators of physical abuse. The overt behavioral indicators included physical assaults through direct body contact as well as physical assaults by weapons and other hard objects. These

indicators of physical assault were parallel with the items in the physical assault sub-scale of the revised Conflict Tactics Scales (CTS2: Straus & Hamby, 1996). The indicators of covert physical assaults included physical control with force and physical actions that harm partner's well-being. In the questionnaire, participants showed strong agreement in regarding the overt physical abuse as spousal abuse. They also showed higher level of agreement in regarding the covert physical abuse as spousal abuse, albeit some of the items were removed from the physical abuse index based on factor analyses (Refer to Table 8.3.1 and 8.3.2, Chapter 8).

With regard to psychological abuse, participants in the focus groups provided more extensive and elaborate behavioral manifestations than the legal and academic experts' perspectives. Participants found that it was difficult to conceptualize psychological abuse and they brainstormed various forms of psychological abuse and discussed in the focus groups. They conceptualized psychological abuse more on the behavioral level while the conceptions among legal and academic experts were more on the conceptual level. This was the reason that participants' conceptions were more elaborate. However, social work undergraduates in the questionnaire survey showed uncertainty in constituting the behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse. Over half of the participants did not agree that "rebuking partner", "calling partner fat or ugly", "non-stop phone calling partner", "following ex-partner", "checking partner", and "asking detective to follow partner" as spousal abuse. Furthermore, over half of the participants did not agree that "scolding husband" is husband abuse. In fact, rebuking, scolding, and calling partner fat or ugly are regarded as verbal abuse in the revised Conflict Tactics Scales. Non-stop phone calling partner, following ex-partner, checking partner, and asking detective to follow partner are stalking, which is regarded as spousal abuse in both legal and academic experts' conceptions. Compared with the legal and academic experts' perspectives, social work undergraduates still

possessed more layman perspectives, in particular the conceptions of psychological abuse in conjugal relationships.

It can be concluded that participants in the focus groups suggested extensive behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse when compared with legal and academic experts' perspectives. However, these behavioral manifestations were not completely regarded as psychological abuse based on results from the questionnaire survey. From a conceptual standpoint, the findings of the second part of Research Question 1 enhance our understanding on conceptions of spousal abuse from the lay perspective. The lay perspective on physical abuse was comparable with the legal and academic experts' conceptions. They all conceptualize spousal abuse more in terms of physical abuse by focusing on overt physical force, presence of weapons and bodily injuries. However, they all overlook and underestimate psychological abuse. Though definitions of psychological abuse from legal and academic experts' perspectives are incomplete, the conceptions in lay perspective are even unclear. The practical implications of such findings are that more public education and promotion on psychological abuse in conjugal relationships should be provided. More academic research on psychological abuse should be carried out in order to enhance understanding on various forms of psychological abuse and their impacts on victims. Reform should also be performed in refining the conceptions of psychological abuse within the legal system. As mentioned in Chapter 2 that lay, legal, and academic experts' perspectives are inter-related, improvement in conceptions of psychological abuse should be conducted within these three perspectives in order to attain a complete understanding of spousal abuse.

In sum, with regard to Research Question 1, two major findings could be highlighted. First, consentaneous agreement in constitute physical abuse while uncertainty in constitute psychological abuse were found in the conceptions of

spousal abuse in a representative sample of social work undergraduates. This observation is consistent with previous studies on wife abuse. Second, comparable behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse were found among legal, academic experts, and social work undergraduates who had participated in the focus groups. However, some of the behavioral manifestations were not completely endorsed by the representative sample in the questionnaire survey. Some of them even did not consider behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse defined in legal and academic experts' perspectives as spousal abuse. This revealed that some social work undergraduates did not have comprehensive conceptualization of spousal abuse, in particular psychological abuse when compared with the legal and academic experts' perspectives. These findings indeed sharpen our knowledge of spousal abuse academically and practically.

9.4.2 Research Question 2: What are the beliefs about spousal abuse among social work undergraduates in Hong Kong?

Regarding Research Question 2, it was found that social work undergraduates generally did not agree to the 14 biased beliefs about spousal abuse. About 95 percent of the participants did not agree that spousal abuse is a private family matter (privacy belief). Concur with this finding, a recent study conducted with Arab Israeli social workers also showed that most of them disagreed that spousal abuse is a family matter (Eisikovits, Griffel, Grinstein, & Azaiza, 2000). This is a great leap forward in beliefs about spousal abuse. It is because previous studies always found that participants perceived wife abuse as a private family matter (Gilmartin, 1990; Haj-Yahia, 2002, 2003; Meng, 1999, Yick, 2000). Such a change may be related to the heightened awareness of spousal abuse because of its increasing number of cases, intensified severity and impact over the past few years. For example, in Hong Kong, the Tin Shui

Wai domestic violence tragedy happened in 2004 had aroused numerous reflections on professionals' responses to spousal abuse. Concern and various reforms on handling spousal abuse were also carried out, thus promoting the belief that spousal abuse is not a private family matter.

Furthermore, participants basically did not agree that victims deserve to be beaten if they provoked the perpetrators (provocation belief). This is contrary to previous findings that people usually attributed less responsibility to the perpetrators if they were provoked in the abuse case (Ewing & Aubrey, 1987; Foshee & Linder, 1997; Harris & Cook, 1994). They also did not justify violence when spouse misbehaved, such as having extra-marital affair (misbehavior belief), as well as when spouses are under stress (reasonable justification belief). These replicate findings from Israeli social work undergraduates who also disapproved wife abuse when husband is frustrated from work and when wife is sexually involved with another man (Haj-Yahia, & Schiff, 2007). These findings demonstrated that social work undergraduates had a high tendency to disapprove biased beliefs about spousal abuse. Although they disapproved the use of violence between spouses when either spouse is under stress, being provoked, and misbehaved, some participants still believed that spouses use violence when they cannot stand each other, which is understandable and should be forgiven. This finding is consistent with previous findings that individuals tended to show less condemnation of violence when it happens between intimate couples (Summers & Feldman, 1984) and show less concern when abuse happens in marital relationships (Fyfe, Klinger, & Flavin, 1997). This indicated that certain social work undergraduates showed leniency and underestimated the problem of spousal abuse.

Regarding the "no big deal" belief, however, some of the participants expressed that it is not a problem if either spouse does the following in conjugal relationships,

nagging, neglecting, teasing spouse as no use, does not allow spouse to sleep by continuously making noise, and does not allow spouse to do things on his or her preference. In contrast, most of the participants agreed that slapping and threatening spouse with sharp objects are matters to be concerned. These findings indeed concur with the conceptions of social work undergraduates. As discussed before, participants showed consentaneous agreement regarding physical abuse as spousal abuse.

Nevertheless, they showed uncertainty in conceptualizing psychological abuse as spousal abuse. As suggested, slapping and threatening spouse with weapon show explicit use of force and physical contact, thus they are regarded as problems.

However, nagging, neglecting teasing spouse, and controlling spouse possess the implicit nature of psychological abuse, which are without tangible injuries and do not pose life-threatening hurts to the victims. Therefore, participants tended to overlook these actions and consider that they are not problems to be concerned.

In short, most of the social work undergraduates generally did not endorse the biased beliefs about spousal abuse. However, similar to the findings in the conceptions of spousal abuse, some of them still believed that certain actions of psychological abuse were not problems to be concerned. Moreover, some of them inclined to be lenient to spousal abuse. They also adopted different beliefs toward wife abuse and husband abuse, which are discussed under Research Question 5.

From a conceptual standpoint, the findings of Research Question 2 enhance our understanding of beliefs about spousal abuse. Moreover, it is the first study to examine beliefs about husband abuse in the Chinese community. By comparing individuals' beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse, it provides a more comprehensive understanding of individuals' bias against spousal abuse. Practically speaking, the development of measurements on beliefs about spousal abuse provides indigenous tools in assessing people's bias against spousal abuse. It facilitates

evidenced-based research in both social work research and social work practice.

Professionals can use these measurements to do self-assessment on their beliefs about spousal abuse. In addition, they can also use these measurements to screen appropriate candidates for field placement. Furthermore, the findings revealed that social work undergraduates still possess certain biased beliefs about spousal abuse, therefore training should be designed to highlight the awareness of spousal abuse and the impacts of psychological abuse in order to demystify their bias against spousal abuse.

9.4.3 Research Question 3: Do social work undergraduates have different conceptions between wife abuse and husband abuse?

With reference to Research Question 3, it was hypothesized that social work undergraduates would have broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse because of the wider media and academic research coverage on wife abuse. This hypothesis was supported among the omnibus, wife/husband abuse, and physical abuse indexes, but it was not supported under the conceptions of psychological abuse. The wider media and academic research coverage on wife abuse is a predictable tendency because the reported cases of wife abuse are far more than that of husband abuse. Wife abuse cases shared about 80 to 89 percent while husband abuse shared 11 to 20 percent of spousal abuse cases over the past five years in Hong Kong (Refer to Table 2.1, Chapter 2). The present results confirmed that social work undergraduates also followed the media and academic trend by possessing broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, physical abuse in particular. However, no differences were found in the conceptions between psychological wife abuse and psychological husband abuse. This once again showed the implicit nature of psychological abuse, which is difficult to be defined and measured. In academia, researchers have not yet come to a consensus on the conceptions of psychological abuse. Psychological abuse

was commented as too complicated for empirical investigation (Bowker, 1993). The present results reflected that social work undergraduates did not have adequate understanding on the conceptions of psychological abuse and husband abuse.

From the theoretical standpoint, the comparison on conceptions between wife abuse and husband abuse provides pioneer findings, which enhances understanding on differences between wife abuse and husband abuse. The broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse endorsed by the social work undergraduates follows the major trend of focusing on wife abuse within our society and the academia. This reflected our society shows higher resentment toward wife abuse especially in physical wife abuse but less sensitivity to husband abuse. Practically speaking, more training on husband abuse should be provided in social work education. Public education that heightens people's knowledge of psychological abuse and awareness of husband abuse should also be provided.

9.4.4 Research Question 4: Are the conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse related to social work undergraduates' gender?

Based on Research Question 4, it was hypothesized that because of same sex favoritism, female social work undergraduates would have broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, while male social work undergraduates would have broader conceptions of husband abuse than wife abuse. Results fully supported this hypothesis when omnibus and wife/husband abuse indexes were considered. It was found in previous studies that male observers tended to be more lenient to male abusers and assign more blame to female victims. However, female observers tended to take side to female victims and regard male abusers should have more responsibilities (Feather, 1996; Foshee & Linder, 1997; Hillier & Foddy, 1993; Home, 1994). When the breadth of conceptions of spousal abuse is considered in this study,

male social work undergraduates considered more behavioral manifestations of abuse as husband abuse than wife abuse, while female social work undergraduates considered more behavioral manifestations of abuse as wife abuse than husband abuse based on the same list of behavioral manifestations. This study replicates the effect of same sex favoritism on the breadth of conceptions of spousal abuse.

However, it is found that same sex favoritism worked differently according to the types of abuse: physical versus psychological abuse. When physical abuse index is considered, only female participants confirmed this hypothesis while male participants did not have significant differences in their conceptions between physical wife abuse and physical husband abuse, albeit the results generally followed the predicted direction. Historically, women were usually the victims of spousal abuse. Such asymmetrical problem of men's violence against women is reflected based on far more number of reported wife abuse than husband abuse cases. Moreover, a recent meta-analysis on research among spousal abuse and violence against women also confirmed this asymmetrical problem of men's violence against women (Dobash & Dobash, 1988). Thus females usually showed a high tendency in identifying themselves with victim roles. In addition, men when compared with women are usually perceived as the stronger sex (Sanbonmatsu, Akinoto, & Gibson, 1994) and the more physically aggressive sex (Lehmann & Santilli, 1996). Thus men's use of physical violence causes more severe impacts on women victims. It is hard for women to defend themselves from physical violence exerted by their powerful male partners. Therefore, by integrating the high tendency of female in identifying themselves with victim roles and the sever impacts of physical abuse on women victims, it is normal for female social work undergraduates to have broader conceptions of physical wife abuse than physical husband abuse. This is also consistent with the rationale of same sex favoritism that female tend to show more concern and support on issues that are

more critical to their own gender.

When psychological abuse index is considered, only male participants confirmed this hypothesis while female participants did not have significant differences in their conceptions between psychological wife abuse and psychological husband abuse, albeit the results generally followed that predicted direction. To male participants, the impacts and threats of psychological abuse may be greater than that of physical abuse. As discussed, men are physically stronger than women who should be capable to defend themselves from physical abuse. Thus they may regard physical abuse as less threatening to their gender. However, the exertion of psychological abuse is not related to one's physical strength. Both men and women are capable to exert psychological abuse. Consistent with the same sex favoritism rationale, male participants showed more concern to issues that are more threatening to their gender.

Apart from the interacting effect between victims' and participants' gender on the conceptions of spousal abuse, in general it was found that social work undergraduates had broader conceptions of physical wife abuse than physical husband abuse while broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse than psychological wife abuse. As mentioned before, physical abuse exerted by male is more influential than that exerted by female. Moreover, physical abuse exerted by female is often regarded as milder and less consequential (Iliesmann & Guerra, 1997). Therefore, participants tended to consider more behavioral manifestations of physical abuse as wife abuse than husband abuse. The broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse than psychological wife abuse may reflect participants' belief that psychological abuse is also common in husband abuse than wife abuse as women are also capable to exert psychological abuse. Thus more behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse were regarded as husband abuse than wife abuse.

In sum, the effects of same sex favoritism were applied to the conceptions of

spousal abuse. However, the effect of female same sex favoritism was stronger in physical spousal abuse and male same sex favoritism was stronger in psychological spousal abuse. This reflected that male and female showed different concern on different types of spousal abuse. Despite the effect of same sex favoritism, participants possessed broader conceptions of physical wife abuse than physical husband abuse as well as psychological husband abuse than psychological wife abuse.

From the conceptual standpoint, the results of Research Question 4 enhance our understanding that the breadth of conceptions of spousal abuse depends on both victims' and perceivers' gender. Same sex favoritism is influential in the conceptions of spousal abuse. When the types of abuse are considered, the influences of same sex favoritism become more complex. Female tend to take side and be more empathic to wife physical abuse while male tend to take side to husband psychological abuse. These provided bases for different theoretical model in studying spousal abuse between female and male samples. Furthermore, the effects of same sex favoritism should be more differentiated in studying spousal abuse. Practically speaking, training and public education focusing on equal understanding and fair treatment toward both female and male victims of spousal abuse should be provided. Researchers in the future can set different theoretical models in examining the conceptions of spousal abuse between female and male samples.

9.4.5 Research Question 5: Are the beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse related to social work undergraduates' gender?

Based on Research Question 5, it was hypothesized that because of same sex favoritism, female social work undergraduates would endorse fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse than husband abuse, while male social work undergraduates would endorse fewer biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse. Results did not

support this hypothesis, which meant same sex favoritism did not have an effect on participants' beliefs about spousal abuse. Nevertheless, it was found that social work undergraduates endorsed more biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse. Furthermore, male social work undergraduates endorsed more biased beliefs about spousal abuse than their female counterparts.

Consistent with the results of Research Question 1, participants not only had broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, but also possessed fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse than husband abuse. One possible explanation for this is that both academia and general public have certain knowledge and understanding of wife abuse but limited knowledge and more myths about husband abuse. As discussed above, men are perceived as stronger and more aggressive who are capable to protect themselves and take control over the abuse episode. Moreover, husbands are perceived as having more resources in changing the conditions of being abused, such as leaving their female partner as they are financially independent. Concur with these perceptions on husbands, Lehmann and Santilli (1996) found that participants of both gender tended to blame male more than female victims in spousal abuse scenarios. In addition, husband abuse is trivialized because women's use of violence is always perceived as less consequential (Broussard, Wagner, Kazelskis, 1991), acceptable (Bethke & Dejoy, 1993, Stewart-Williams, 2002), and even humorous (Lehmann & Santilli, 1996). Buzawa and Austin (1993) revealed that abused husbands were not seriously treated.

In general, husbands are seldom regarded as victims in spousal abuse cases. Because of the misconceptions on men, myths about husband abuse are also unavoidable. It is certain that our understanding of husband abuse is in the infancy level, similar to our understanding on wife abuse several decades ago, we also possessed many myths about wife abuse. This study shed the light on our

understanding of myths about husband abuse. It is believed that myths would be clarified as long as efforts are put in exploring this topic.

Male social work undergraduates possessed more biased beliefs about spousal abuse than their female counterparts. This is consistent with previous finding that men are more likely than women to blame and attribute more responsibility to female victims in wife abuse, regardless of same sex favoritism (Bryant & Spencer, 2005; Harris & Cook, 1994). Locke and Richman (1999) also commented that men may not understand what constitutes abuse and tend to blame the male abusers less. Furthermore, Stewart-Williams (2002) found that men rated aggression as more acceptable because they saw less aggression than women do in the same violent act. Possible explanation to this gender difference may be related to the strong emphasis put on understanding wife abuse. Wife abuse is an issue that is more critical to women, men may show less concern on it. Thus, they may have limited understanding and endorse more biased beliefs about spousal abuse.

Although participants' beliefs about spousal abuse were not related to same sex favoritism, social work undergraduates had salient different beliefs between wife abuse and husband abuse. First, they generally believed that more physical abuse happened in wife abuse than husband abuse. Meanwhile, they believed that more psychological abuse happened in husband abuse than wife abuse. The acceptance of these beliefs was consistent with the previous discussion on conceptions of spousal abuse of Research Question 4. Husband is regarded as stronger and physically aggressive who tends to use violence to attain his goals. Thus, physical abuse is more likely to be exercised by husband in wife abuse. However, in husband abuse cases, husband should be capable to exercise physical defenses. Therefore, wife may exert psychological abuse instead.

Second, wives' use of violence is more justified than husbands' use of violence

when spouse involved in extra marital affairs. Although it was found that social work undergraduates in general resented the misbehavior beliefs about spousal abuse, few of them still considered infidelity as a justification for violence against spouse, especially in husband abuse.

In short, participants' beliefs about spousal abuse were not related to same sex favoritism. It is observed that participants endorsed more biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse. This may be related to the general perception that wife abuse is more socially unacceptable than husband abuse and the tendency of not regarding husbands as victims in spousal abuse. Further research should be conducted to explore more about the experiences of abused husbands. In addition, male social work undergraduates endorsed more biased beliefs about spousal abuse than their female counterparts. Men may show less concern over spousal abuse as the general perception of regarding wife abuse as spousal abuse, which is purely a women's issue.

From the conceptual perspective, the results of Research Question 5 enrich our understanding that beliefs about spousal abuse are different from conceptions, which are not influenced by the effect of same sex favoritism. Such differences contribute theoretical insights in differentiating conceptions and beliefs. However, it does not mean that female and male have equal agreement to beliefs about spousal abuse. Similar to their narrower conceptions of husband abuse than wife abuse, social work undergraduates also had more biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse. This further shows that people in general equalize wife abuse with spousal abuse and their understanding on husband abuse is limited. From a practical viewpoint, more research on husband abuse is necessary so as to clarify people's bias against it. As male social work undergraduates revealed more biased beliefs about spousal abuse than their female counterparts, training and public education on knowledge of spousal abuse should be tailor made in targeting male audience. Their knowledge and

awareness about both wife abuse and husband abuse should be enriched and heightened.

9.4.6 Research Question 6: Are participants' attitudes toward gender related to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?

Regarding Research Question 6, it was hypothesized that participants who have a higher level of egalitarian attitudes toward gender would have broader conceptions of spousal abuse and endorse fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. The statistical results from the questionnaire survey supported these hypotheses when attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain were considered. No relationships were found between attitudes toward gender in the work domain with the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

In fact, the findings replicate previous studies on wife abuse. Attitudes toward women were found as salient predictors of conceptions of wife abuse (Tam & Tang, 2003) and attribution of wife abuse (Kristiansen & Giulietti, 1990; Willis, Hallinan, & Melby, 1996). It was found that people with more positive attitudes toward women tended to have broader conceptions of wife abuse and attributed less blame to the female victims. This study confirmed such relationship and revealed that this relationship is also applied to the conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse. However, it is worth noting that no such relationship was found between attitudes toward gender and conceptions of physical spousal abuse. This implied that participants' conceptions of physical abuse are not related to their attitudes toward gender. Because of the influential impacts of physical abuse on victims' well-being, physical abuse is regarded as highly unacceptable in conjugal relationships. Therefore, participants' conceptions of physical abuse may not be influenced by their attitudes toward gender. Furthermore, attitudes toward gender in the work domain showed no

salient relationships with the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. The battlefield of spousal abuse is mainly within the domestic, thus the attitudes toward gender within the domestic sphere should have more effects on peoples' conceptualizations of spousal abuse.

Theoretically, the findings of Research Questions 6 support the existing findings that attitudes toward women are the salient correlates of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. This provides syntheses of previous literature. It also shows that same phenomenon happens in Chinese society. Egalitarian attitudes toward female gender not only related to broader conceptions and fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse but also husband abuse. This further confirmed that attitudes toward gender at the individual level within the proposed ecological model contribute to people's conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. However, it should be noted that conceptions of physical abuse were not related to attitudes toward gender. It is an encouraging phenomenon that people recognize physical abuse as an issue to be concerned independent from their attitudes toward gender. From a practical standpoint, egalitarian gender attitudes, especially to female gender should be highly educated and promoted. It is because these attitudes help to broaden people's conceptions and eliminate their bias against spousal abuse.

9.4.7 Research Questions 7 & 8: Is participants' socialization of gender stereotypes and violence approval related to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?

With regard to Research Questions 7 and 8, it was hypothesized that participants who are highly socialized to gender stereotypes and violence approval would have narrower conceptions and more biased beliefs about spousal abuse. The results showed that no such relationships were found among the socialization of gender stereotypes and violence approval as well as the outcome variables of spousal abuse.

There are several possible explanations for such findings. First, the socialization influences on gender stereotypes and violence approval from parents may not be the strongest influencing factors on participants' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. There are other influential agents or sources of influences. Second, the socialization influences of gender stereotypes and violence approval may depend on the combined sources of influences. Individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are affected by the overall attitudes on gender stereotypes and violence they adopted from various sources of socialization agents. Third, the socialization of parents' influences can be in twofold. On one hand, individual may copy their parents' behavior and thoughts from modeling. On the other, they may perform the opposite behavior and thoughts through counter-modeling. Therefore, the direction of socialization is difficult to predict. Furthermore, as mentioned in Section 9.3.2, the poor operationalization of the socialization influences from parents may hinder the examination of the genuine relationship between socialization influences and the outcome variables. Lastly, as discussed before, the ceiling effect of more participants in one group made it less sensitive to detect differences.

Concerning the first possible explanation, peers and media may be the other sources of socialization on gender stereotypes and violence approval. "Peers" is found as one of the major sources of influences on beliefs about gender stereotypes and violence approval. Banerjee and Lintem (2000) found that the presence of same sex peers always reinforced the gender-typed behavior among young children. This indicated that same sex peers indirectly helped to reinforce children's gender stereotypical thoughts. Guo, Hill, and Hawkins (2002) and Hoge, Andrews, and Leschied (1998) revealed that juveniles form friendships with pro-social peers tend to resent involvement in delinquent behavior, such as violence. Lohman (2008) showed that adolescents who have early involvement and increase in involvement with

antisocial peers tend to have higher possibility in perpetrating dating violence. Based on these research findings, the influences from peers on gender stereotypes and violence approval should never be underestimated.

Apart from peers, media is another powerful source of influence on gender stereotypes and violence approval. Fung and Ma (2000) examined the influences of television programs on gender stereotypes in Hong Kong. They found that both information and entertaining programs reinforced gender stereotypes. Bretthauer, Zimmerman, and Banning, (2007) also revealed that beliefs on men's power over women, objectification of women, and violence against women were reflected in lyrics of American pop music. These indicated that individuals receive messages of gender stereotypes from different sources in their daily life. In addition, Carlyle, Slater, and Chakroo (2008) recently revealed that the presentation of intimate partner violence in newspapers tended to be trivialized and regarded as isolated and single case which does not require social concern. These messages from newspapers indirectly underestimate the risk factors of violence in intimate relationships. Equivalent with the influences of peers, media can never be underestimated as a powerful socialization agent on gender stereotypes and violence.

The second explanation of present findings is that the socialization influences on gender stereotypes and violence approval may be the combined influences of various sources of socialization agents. Fung and Ma (2000) found that participants were not aware of the gender stereotypes they viewed in the television. They suggested that the messages of gender stereotypes may be diffused into the programs and audience absorbed these messages through their daily exposure to television viewing. Such explanation inspired the present researcher to propose that the socialization influences on gender stereotypes and violence may also be diffused among various sources of socialization agents of social work undergraduates. Therefore, the present findings

showed no relationship between parents' socialization influences and the outcome variables. The influences may be from various sources of socialization agents, including peers and media as well. As discussed previously, the socialization influences maybe further filtered with individuals' personal developmental experience. Thus it could be relatively difficult to measure the socialization influence with only one single source and indicator (measurement tools of gender stereotypes and violence approval).

Theoretically, though significant relationships between socialization influences from parents and the outcome variables were not found, participants' identification with external sources of influences on gender stereotypes and violence approval was indicated. This suggested that other sources of socialization influences or the integrated effect of socialization influences from various sources may affect people's conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. From a practical viewpoint, further research on socialization influences on gender stereotypes and violence approval as well as their relationships with conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are worth to be conducted. As unresolved puzzle was found in this study, further exploration is needed. However, this study still supported that peoples' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are complex issues, which influenced by various sources of individual and environmental factors.

9.4.8 Research Question 9: Is participants' endorsement of Chinese traditionality related to their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?

Regarding Research Question 9, it was hypothesized that participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese traditionality would have narrower conceptions and more biased beliefs about spousal abuse. Concerning the conceptions of spousal abuse, results indicated that higher endorsement of Chinese traditionality was related to

narrower conceptions of wife abuse, physical wife abuse and physical husband abuse. Further examination on the sub-scales revealed that higher endorsement of respect to authority was related to narrower conceptions of physical abuse. Higher endorsement of superiority of male was related to narrower conceptions of wife abuse, physical wife abuse and physical husband abuse. The hypothesis was more supported in the conceptions of wife abuse and physical abuse. The hypothesized relationship between Chinese traditionalism and psychological abuse was not found.

These findings replicate previous examination on the relationship between patriarchy and wife abuse. Indeed, Chinese traditional values are the reflection of patriarchy, which emphasizes older males as the authority figures and male superiority over female. Patriarchal culture is supported not only in Chinese culture, but also in Western culture, albeit it is commented that patriarchal culture in Western countries is weakening (Mintz, 1998). The influences of patriarchy on spousal abuse are still found worldwide. Patriarchal beliefs are related to justification of wife abuse in the Middle-East (Haj-Yahia, 1998) and violence against women in the West (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Smith, 1990). In this study, results also showed similar trend in Chinese. Within Chinese tradition, men are regarded as the authority who can use violence to discipline the young and women. Thus respect to authority means justification of physical violence against women. Such violence is not regarded as abuse, instead it is a form of punishment or discipline on women. Therefore, it is found in the present study that higher endorsement of respect to authority results in narrower conceptions of physical wife abuse.

Furthermore, Chinese traditionally regard men as superior over women in both work and domestic domains. Men are the heads of the households who can use violence to attain their goals within the family. Therefore, the support of superiority of male means indirectly support of violence against women. Thus, it is found in the

present study that higher endorsement of superiority of male results in narrower conceptions of wife abuse. It is worth noting that support to superiority of male is also related to the narrower conceptions of physical husband abuse. Possible explanation to this may be that violence against husband means a challenge to their superior status rather than abuse. This may also imply that husband abuse is regarded as impossible in Chinese society.

No relationship was found between the endorsement of Chinese traditionality and the conceptions of psychological abuse. This may again be related to the implicit nature of psychological abuse. Psychological abuse when compared with physical abuse fails to express the messages of authority and superiority. However, physical abuse explicitly expresses the superiority of the perpetrators over the inferiority of the victims. Finn (1986) showed that traditionally men have the right to use physical force to maintain their superior status.

The hypothesized relationships among the two sub-scales of Chinese traditionality and beliefs about spousal abuse were all supported. It was found that Chinese traditional values condoned wife abuse (Tang, 1994), by regarding wife abuse as a family matter and justifying it because of the superior status of husbands over wives. It is worth noting that the endorsement of Chinese traditionality is also found to be contributed to the biased beliefs about husband abuse. It is possible that the endorsement of Chinese traditionality reinforces the beliefs that men are the heads of households who should be capable to handle affairs on their own, even husband abuse. Thus participants who endorsed high level of Chinese traditionality might believe in myths about husband abuse, such as husband abuse is a private family matter and husband can withstand and handle abuse.

Theoretically, the results of Research Question 9 enhance our understanding that the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are influenced by external cultural

factors. This provides foundation for the ecological model in examining people's conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Furthermore, this showed that the issues of spousal abuse are relatively complex, thus multi-faceted sources of psychosocial correlates are worth to be considered and studied. From the practical standpoint, identification with traditional values is the hindrance to the complete understanding of spousal abuse. It does not mean that all the traditional values should be discarded, instead restructuring traditional values is necessary. Traditional values which promote moral standard, such as filial piety should be retained as precious Chinese traditional value. However, those promote inequality and unfair treatment among human beings should be discarded.

9.4.9 Research Question 10: Is participants' endorsement of Chinese modernity related to their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse?

Regarding Research Question 10, it was hypothesized that participants who have a higher endorsement of Chinese modernity would have broader conceptions and fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. The results support this hypothesis, a higher endorsement of Chinese modernity was related to broader conceptions of the four indexes of wife abuse and husband abuse, as well as fewer biased beliefs about both wife abuse and husband abuse. Further examination on the sub-scales showed that higher endorsement of egalitarianism and openness was related to broader conceptions of spousal abuse, in particular physical abuse. A higher endorsement of gender equality was related to broader conceptions of the four indexes of wife abuse and husband abuse, as well as fewer biased beliefs about both wife abuse and husband abuse. This reflected that the endorsement in gender equality has salient influences on the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. This replicates previous findings that endorsement of egalitarian gender attitudes contributed to less approval of marital

violence (Crossman, Stitch, & Bender, 1990), egalitarian gender-role attitudes were the most salient predictors of the definitions of physical and psychological wife abuse (Tam & Tang, 2003).

Previous studies mainly focused on examining the relationships between patriarchy and wife abuse. They found that patriarchal beliefs proposed the ideology of superior male and inferior female. This greatly supported wife abuse and sustained myths about it. However, previous studies usually measured patriarchy in a single dimension with traditional as one end and egalitarian as the other. In this study, egalitarianism and gender equality are regarded as two independent dimensions. Under Chinese modernity, gender equality is emphasized, which suggest that men and women have equal rights and chances to develop themselves. Under modern culture, women can embody masculine image of power and be the abusers, while men can embody feminine image of submissive and be the victims in spousal abuse. Thus broader conceptions and fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse are related to higher endorsement of gender equality. Compared with traditional beliefs, modern beliefs help people to realize spousal abuse more and conceptualize spousal abuse with fewer myths. This in turn helps us to improve our understanding and assist victims and abusers of both genders in spousal abuse. Respecting traditional values is certain, however, the spread of message of gender equality is more important in identifying and clarifying myths about spousal abuse.

From a theoretical standpoint, findings of Research Question 10 are similar to those of Research Question 9, which also enhance our understanding that the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are influenced by external cultural factors. Chinese modern values as a construct independent from Chinese traditionality are related psychosocial correlates within the ecological model. Practically speaking, Chinese modern values that stress on egalitarianism and gender equality should be

greatly promoted as they are important correlates in broadening individuals' conceptions and eliminating bias against spousal abuse. Spousal abuse is related to the deeply rooted schema of gender inequality, these deeply rooted gender schemas should be reformed subtly within our culture through school education and civil education.

9.4.10 Research Question 11: What are the salient predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse amongst the psychological correlates organized in the proposed ecological model?

The proposed ecological model was organized into three levels, with 1) individual level: participants' gender and attitudes toward gender; 2) interpersonal level: socialization of gender stereotypes and violence approval from parents and 3) cultural level: Chinese traditionality and Chinese modernity. Results revealed that identical salient predictors were found among the conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse. Egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and Chinese modern value of gender equality were the salient predictors of the conceptions of spousal abuse. These findings are consistent with previous findings in wife abuse that egalitarian gender attitudes were the correlates of broad conceptions of wife abuse.(Finn, 1986; Kristiansen & Giulietti, 1990; Levinson, 1989; Tam & Tang, 2005). This study revealed extra finding that endorsement of gender equality from Chinese modern culture was also correlated with broader conceptions of spousal abuse.

This study further revealed that different predictors were found depending on the types of abuse. Chinese traditional value of superiority of male and Chinese modern value of gender equality were the salient predictors of the conceptions of physical abuse, while egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and Chinese

modern value of gender equality were the salient predictors of the conceptions of psychological abuse. The endorsement of superior male over inferior female ideology still condones physical wife abuse. Such value justifies men's use of violence against women thus associates with narrower conceptions of physical wife abuse. It is worth noting that the endorsement of superiority of male was also associated with narrower conceptions of physical husband abuse. As discussed before, this may be related to the lower awareness of husband abuse in Chinese society and the tendency to regard women's use of violence as challenges to men's superior status instead of abuse. This again showed the limited recognition of husband abuse among Chinese. Chinese modern value of gender equality proposes that men and women share equal rights and roles in the society, which conveys the message that individuals' development should not be limited by their genders. This contributes to the identification that both men and women have the ability to inflict physical and psychological abuse against their intimate partners, thus this is a salient correlate of both physical and psychological abuse.

Hierarchical regression analysis is good at revealing the relationships among the psychosocial correlates with the dependent variables, but it cannot reveal the processes of effects among the correlates overtime. The researcher had tried structural equation modeling, but the sample size was not big enough to safeguard the number in each cell according to the proposed ecological model. Sobel tests were carried out but no significant findings were reported. This indicated that there were no mediation effects between the correlates at the cultural (Chinese traditionality and Chinese modernity) and the individual (attitudes toward gender) levels. Indeed, mediation effect was not established because gender equality in Chinese modernity could not predict attitudes toward gender. Though superiority of male of Chinese traditionality predicted traditional attitudes toward gender, the measurement items of these two

variables were relatively in similar direction. Thus they were found as two independent predictors of the dependent variables (conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse). This observation may be related to the operationalization of Chinese traditionality. There are three other sub-dimensions of Chinese traditionality in its measurement tools developed by Yang et al. (1989), such as filial piety. Future study could examine Chinese traditionality in a more comprehensive way by adopting measurement tools on all the five dimensions of Chinese traditionality.

As discussed in Section 3.9.3 of Chapter 3, no empirical studies had shown the direction or processes of effects among different levels of factors within the ecological model. Culture factors were typically and automatically put at the macro level, but cultural values could actually be internalized by individuals. As suggested by the ecological model, the processes of effects are in a circular mode. Therefore, the possible direction of the correlates could be working from the opposite direction that individuals' attitudes toward gender affect their endorsement of Chinese cultural values. This further showed the problem of applying ecological model in studying social phenomenon. As proposed by Wakefield (1996), ecological framework just provides a broad spectrum of correlates of social phenomenon, but it fails to indicate a clear and causal pattern of relationships among the correlates.

Although the processes of effects among the psychosocial correlates within the ecological model were not found, correlates at the individual and cultural levels were found to contribute to the conceptions of spousal abuse. This indicated that individuals' conceptions of spousal abuse are formulated based on multidimensional sources of influences. This proved the advantage of applying ecological theory as discussed in Chapter 3: The proposed ecological framework in the present study helped to discover culture-specific elements of spousal abuse. It also helped to provide complete understanding on both intra- and extra- personal predictors of

conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Therefore, it is worth using ecological model to examine the multi-facet of spousal abuse and other social phenomena continuously.

Regarding the beliefs about spousal abuse, female gender, egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and Chinese traditional value of superiority of male were the salient predictors of beliefs about spousal abuse. One salient predictor was added in the beliefs about wife abuse, which was Chinese traditional value of respect to authority. These findings replicate previous findings of wife abuse that female, egalitarian attitudes toward gender, and endorsement of patriarchy were the salient predictors of biases about wife abuse (Haj-Yahia, 1998; Haj-Yahia & Schiff, 2007; Spence & Hahn, 1997). It is worth noting that endorsement of both Chinese traditional values of superiority of male and respect to authority were the salient predictors of biased beliefs about wife abuse. This further showed the influences of Chinese traditional values in legitimizing wife abuse. However, only superiority of male was the salient predictor of biased beliefs about husband abuse. As discussed in Research Question 9, the belief in superior male may pose more expectations on men to handle abuse on their own because of their powerful and resourceful status, thus more biased beliefs about husband abuse may be resulted.

Similar to the conceptions of spousal abuse, the processes of effects among correlates were not found. It was because Sobel tests also did not support the mediation effects between correlates at the cultural and individual levels. However, the findings from hierarchal regression analyses still revealed that both individual and cultural factors are related to individuals' beliefs about spousal abuse. In addition, regression analyses showed that different sets of psychosocial correlates may be differently related to wife abuse and husband abuse. In fact, it should be noteworthy that this is the first study to examine beliefs about husband abuse and our

understanding of husband abuse is dreadfully limited. Furthermore, the psychosocial correlates are proposed based on review on previous studies on wife abuse. It is predictable that the model of psychosocial correlates would explain higher percentage of variance of beliefs about wife abuse than husband abuse.

Taken together, endorsement of gender equality from the Chinese culture was the most salient predictor of the conceptions of spousal abuse. Egalitarian attitudes toward gender were the salient predictors of the conceptions of spousal abuse and psychological abuse. The Chinese traditional value of superiority of male showed its influence on physical abuse. Female gender, egalitarian attitudes toward gender, endorsement of Chinese traditional values generally predict fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. The psychosocial correlates in the proposed ecological model were equally useful in predicting the conceptions of spousal abuse, while they explained more in the variance of beliefs about wife abuse than husband abuse. However, because mediation effects were not found among the psychosocial correlates, further examination of the process of effect should be conducted in the future.

From a theoretical standpoint, the results of Research Question 11 shows that individual and environmental correlates predict individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. This deepens our understanding that there are both individual and cultural influences on the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. This is a fruitful input to the theoretical model building. The present study just generally examined the psychosocial correlates of spousal abuse but fail to provide specification on the relationships between psychosocial correlates. Further study should be conducted to test the mediating and moderating relationships among the psychosocial correlates.

9.4.11 Research Question 12: Would the predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse be different based on victims' and participants' gender?

The proposed ecological models on the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse were examined separately on female and male samples. Regarding wife abuse, the model was more usable in predicting conceptions of spousal abuse in the female sample than the male sample. Egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and Chinese modern value of gender equality were the two salient predictors in the female sample, but no salient predictor emerged in the male sample. This revealed that the proposed psychosocial correlates may not be applied in predicting conceptions of wife abuse in the male sample.

However, when different types of wife abuse were considered, salient predictors were found in both female and male samples. The model explained higher percentage of variance in the conceptions of physical wife abuse in the male sample than the female sample. The salient predictors basically replicated those emerged from the total sample, with slight differences among the female and male samples. In the female sample, Chinese traditional value of superiority of male and Chinese modern value of gender equality were the salient correlates of physical wife abuse. However, only superiority of male was the salient correlate of physical wife abuse in the male sample. This indicated that female participants were more influenced by both Chinese traditional and modern values while male participants were only influenced by the Chinese traditional value in conceptualizing their conceptions of physical wife abuse.

Egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and Chinese modern value of gender equality were the salient correlates of psychological wife abuse in the male sample, while only egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain was the salient correlate in the female sample. This showed that male participants were more influenced by Chinese modern value in conceptualizing psychological wife

abuse. Taken together, the endorsement of Chinese traditional and modern values had greater influence on the conceptions of wife abuse in the male sample than in the female sample.

Regarding the beliefs about wife abuse, egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain, endorsement of both Chinese traditional and modern values were the salient predictors in the female sample. However, identification with father's violence disapproval attitudes and Chinese traditional value of superiority of male were the salient predictors in the male sample. The predictors of beliefs about wife abuse in the female sample basically replicated previous findings on wife abuse. Egalitarian attitudes toward women, lower endorsement of patriarchal culture contributed to fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse. Previous studies typically regard endorsement of patriarchal culture measured in two poles with traditional as one end and egalitarianism as the other. Present study measured the endorsement of Chinese modern values as an independent construct, which successfully revealed that Chinese modern values were significant predictors of beliefs about wife abuse in the female sample.

It is also worth noticing that in the male sample, identification with father's violence disapproval attitudes contribute to fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse. This shows parents' socialization influences and boys typically have a tendency to identify themselves with same sex parents. Male offspring tend to have fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse when they identified with their father's violence disapproval attitudes. Similar to the conceptions of physical wife abuse, superiority of male was associated with more biased beliefs about wife abuse in the male sample. This again supports that patriarchal culture legitimizes and mythicizes wife abuse.

Regarding husband abuse, egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain and Chinese modern value of gender equality were the salient predictors of

the conceptions of husband abuse. This replicates findings of conceptions of wife abuse. Chinese traditional values of respect to authority and superiority of male were the additional salient predictors in the female sample. Contrary to our expectations, female participants with higher level of respect to authority and superiority of male expressed broader conceptions of husband abuse. In the conceptions of wife abuse, individuals who have a higher level of traditional values normally showed narrower conceptions. Indeed, the conceptions of husband abuse are undetermined based on limited understanding on it. As discussed in Chapter 4, the endorsement of Chinese traditional values may lead to either narrow or broad conceptions of husband abuse. The endorsement of traditional value may on the one hand discard the happening of husband abuse because male are superior and impossible to be abused, thus leading to narrow conceptions of husband abuse. On the other, it may regard men as being impossible to be disrespected and hurt by their female partners because of their superior status, thus leading to broad conceptions of husband abuse. Female participants may follow the later explanation in conceptualizing husband abuse.

Regarding physical husband abuse, totally different salient predictors were found between the female and male samples. Chinese traditional values of respect to authority and superiority of male, as well as Chinese modern value of gender equality were the salient predictors in the female sample, while only the Chinese modern value of egalitarianism and openness was the salient predictor in the male sample. Similar to the conceptions of husband abuse, female participants endorsed higher level of respect to authority also expressed broader conceptions of physical husband abuse. However, their broader conceptions of physical husband abuse were associated with lower endorsement of superiority of male. This further showed that the influences of Chinese traditional values on the conceptions of husband abuse were in two flows, which either broaden or narrow the conceptions of spousal abuse. Different from

female participants, male participants were more influenced by their endorsement of equal and fair treatment among intimate dyad in relating to their conceptions of physical husband abuse.

Regarding psychological husband abuse, it is worth noting that the ecological model explained higher percentage of variance in the male sample than in the female sample. Egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain were the salient correlates among both female and male samples. However, identification with mother liberal attitudes toward gender, higher endorsement of Chinese traditional value of superiority of male and Chinese modern values of gender equality were the additional salient predictors in the male sample. Consistent with the total sample, egalitarian attitudes toward gender and Chinese modern value of gender equality were the two salient predictors of psychological husband abuse. Similar to female participants, male participants who endorsed more superiority of male also showed broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse. This indicated that both genders were affected by the two directions of influences of Chinese traditionality on their conceptions of husband abuse. Socialization of mother's anti-gender stereotypes also contributed to the broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse. It is because women always belong to the disadvantaged groups under gender stereotypes, they may express more dispel to gender stereotypes when compared with men. Therefore, it is normal to find that mother may have a high tendency to dispel gender stereotypes and pass down to their offspring.

Regarding the beliefs about husband abuse, endorsement of Chinese traditional value of superiority of male was the salient predictor in both male and female samples, while egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain were the additional predictor in the female sample. Consistent with the total sample, higher endorsement of superiority of male results in more biased beliefs about husband abuse. This

indicated that the ideology that male is superior over female contributes bias about both wife abuse and husband abuse.

From a theoretical standpoint, the results of Research Question 12 enrich our understanding on the complexity of individuals' conceptualization about spousal abuse. Different dominant predictors are found among different types of spousal abuse between male and female samples. Findings provide syntheses with previous studies, which show that attitudes toward gender are the salient predictors of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Furthermore, spousal abuse is proved to be a gendered issue that individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are affected by their own gender and victims' gender. In the male sample, salient correlates were found only when the types of spousal abuse were specified. This indicated that people may have different degree of sensitivity towards different types of spousal abuse, and different ecological model may be required in studying their related psychosocial correlates. This also implied that components within the ecological models are needed to be differentiated when studying different types of abuse with different samples. Puzzles on socialization influences on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse required further examination.

Practically speaking, the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse should be studied in in-depth manner with separated male and female samples in order to find out the dominant predictors exclusively for different genders. It is because the influences of Chinese traditional values on conceptions and beliefs about husband abuse were unclear, more study on husband abuse should be conducted, especially in examining the relationships between Chinese traditional values and individuals' conceptions and beliefs about it.

9.4.12 Research Question 13: What are social work undergraduates' perceptions of coverage on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work training?

In general, social work undergraduates perceived that the training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum was inadequate and the curriculum could not provide them enough knowledge about spousal abuse. Most of the participants only took one course about spousal abuse. Moreover, only half of them expressed that they learned spousal abuse in social work curriculum. This indicated that there are other sources of influences affecting their conceptualization of spousal abuse. Though the training on knowledge of spousal abuse within social work curriculum was commented as inadequate, participants who perceived themselves as having adequate training revealed broader conceptions of spousal abuse, in particular psychological abuse. This showed the importance of training in broadening social work undergraduates' conceptions of spousal abuse.

The training on knowledge of spousal abuse was commented as inadequate, social work undergraduates showed great urge to have more training on knowledge of spousal abuse within the curriculum. Meanwhile, participants who requested to have more training revealed broader conceptions and fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. This showed some of the social work undergraduates possess certain knowledge about spousal abuse. Furthermore, this also implied that social work undergraduates believe that more training on knowledge of spousal abuse is useful. They proposed that visiting organizations which handle spousal abuse would be useful in providing more information about spousal abuse.

Two observations are found concerning participants' willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future. First, it was found that participants who expressed more willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future revealed broader conceptions and fewer biased beliefs about wife abuse. However, no significant relationships were

found between their willingness and the outcome variables of husband abuse. This showed social work undergraduates' knowledge and intention to offer help focused more on wife abuse than husband abuse. This implied that training on knowledge of spousal abuse should be more comprehensive by including knowledge on both wife abuse and husband abuse. Training should also highlight social work undergraduates' awareness of husband abuse and the fair treatment toward both female and male victims of spousal abuse. Second, those who expressed willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future also showed more urge to have training on knowledge of spousal abuse. This indirectly showed that social work undergraduates concerned about knowledge base of being a social work professional. Taken together, formal and systematic training on knowledge of spousal abuse provided by social work curriculum is the major component of the knowledge-based professional.

From a theoretical perspective, it is gloomy to find that training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum is inadequate. Social workers as frontline service professional to spousal abuse should have rich knowledge and information about spousal abuse. The inadequacy of training on knowledge of spousal abuse may be related to the nature of undergraduate training that aims at providing general training. Training on knowledge of spousal abuse may be more specific and provided through in-house training in individual organizations. Nevertheless, this study reveals that the request for training on knowledge of spousal abuse is high. Practically speaking, results provide various insights in improving social work training on knowledge of spousal abuse. The fundamental issue is that training on knowledge of spousal abuse must be improved in terms of both quantity and quality. More knowledge and information about spousal abuse should be provided through enriching the course content of spousal abuse, organizing talks and visits, as well as arranging placement practice with concerned organizations. Moreover, the content on spousal

abuse should be more comprehensive by including both wife abuse and husband abuse, heightening students' sensitivity to gender issues and influences of Chinese culture on their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

9.5 Significance and implications of this study

9.5.1 Academic significance and implications

From an academic standpoint, this study generates knowledge on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. In this study, conceptions and beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse were examined and compared. The findings not only enrich our knowledge on the existing scope of wife abuse, but also provide pioneer findings on husband abuse. This is an important step as far as accumulation of research findings is concerned.

Moreover, this study broadens our conceptual understanding on spousal abuse through examination of the behavioral manifestations of spousal abuse. Results indicate that there are consistent conceptions of physical abuse across different perspectives, but the conceptions of psychological abuse are rather inconsistent. Furthermore, the conceptions of wife abuse are broader than husband abuse. In addition, same sex favoritism is a vital influence on individuals' conceptions of spousal abuse. Results also show that there are more biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse and male participants have more biased beliefs about spousal abuse. Contrary to the conceptions of spousal abuse, same sex favoritism shows no effect on beliefs about spousal abuse. This demonstrates that conceptions and beliefs are two different constructs. Furthermore, when the gender of victims and perceivers are considered, complex results on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are generated. Taken together, more theoretical differentiation is necessary in studying spousal abuse, especially when spousal abuse is not only a women's issue but a

gendered issue.

Apart from conceptual enrichment, this study also has contribution on the methodological level, which provides some pointer to the research design in studying spousal abuse. This study adopted qualitative and quantitative mixed methods, which deepens our understanding on conceptualization of spousal abuse from the participants' viewpoints. This also implies that qualitative method is usable in studying spousal abuse.

This study also develops measurement tools on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. These are useful tools in examining and comparing conceptions and beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse systematically. Professionals can use these measurement tools to evaluate their conceptions of spousal abuse. The development of these indigenous measurement tools on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse facilitate social work research and social work practice, especially evidence-based social work practice. However, further replication and validation of the measurements are necessary.

In short, this study contributes to knowledge accumulation and conceptual enhancement on spousal abuse, as well as methodological enhancement and measurement development in studying spousal abuse.

Based on the above findings and significance on the academic level, several conceptual and practical implications are derived. First, researchers should put more effort in examining the behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse and their impacts on both male and female victims. The recognition of psychological abuse is critical as psychological abuse is always the prerequisite of psychological impairments and other forms of abuse, such as physical abuse. Therefore, recognition of psychological abuse increases the chances of early detection and intervention into spousal abuse cases. Second, researcher should redirect and engender a balanced

focus on both wife abuse and husband abuse. In fact, this is the first study to explore husband abuse among Chinese sample. Research on its conceptions and beliefs among other groups, etiology and impacts on male victims are all worth to be studied in order to clarify the existing myths about husband abuse. Third, qualitative research method succeeded in enriching our understanding of spousal abuse from the participants' viewpoints. Future research can make use of qualitative research method in studying spousal abuse. More research on psychological abuse and husband abuse should be conducted in the future. Training on social work professional and public education should focus on heightening individuals' recognition of psychological abuse and awareness of husband abuse. The conceptions of psychological abuse in the legal and academic experts' perspectives should be broadened to increase the chances of recognition of psychological abuse in conjugal relationships.

9.5.2 Theoretical significance and implications

This study is the first study to examine the lay conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse and compare lay perspectives with legal and academic experts' perspectives. This highlights that lay perspective is also important in the conceptualization of spousal abuse in addition to legal and academic experts' perspectives. General public could also contribute to the detection and disclosure of spousal abuse. Rich knowledge and clear understanding about spousal abuse from the laymen perspective helps to increase the recognition and early intervention in spousal abuse cases. This study provides the leading role in examining the lay perspective of sensitive issues of the society. The exploration of lay perspective could also be applied to various sensitive social phenomena, such as child abuse and elder abuse.

This study is the first to adopt an ecological model in examining individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse in the Chinese context. Previously,

ecological model with its emphasis on the multidimensional factors was adopted in studying the causes of child abuse and wife abuse. This study shows individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are also affected by multidimensional factors. Sources of influences can be from individual, interpersonal, and cultural levels. It is a fruitful step in examining environmental influence on individuals' conceptions and beliefs. This helps to identify the sources of influences. Individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse can only be modified if their sources of influences are identified.

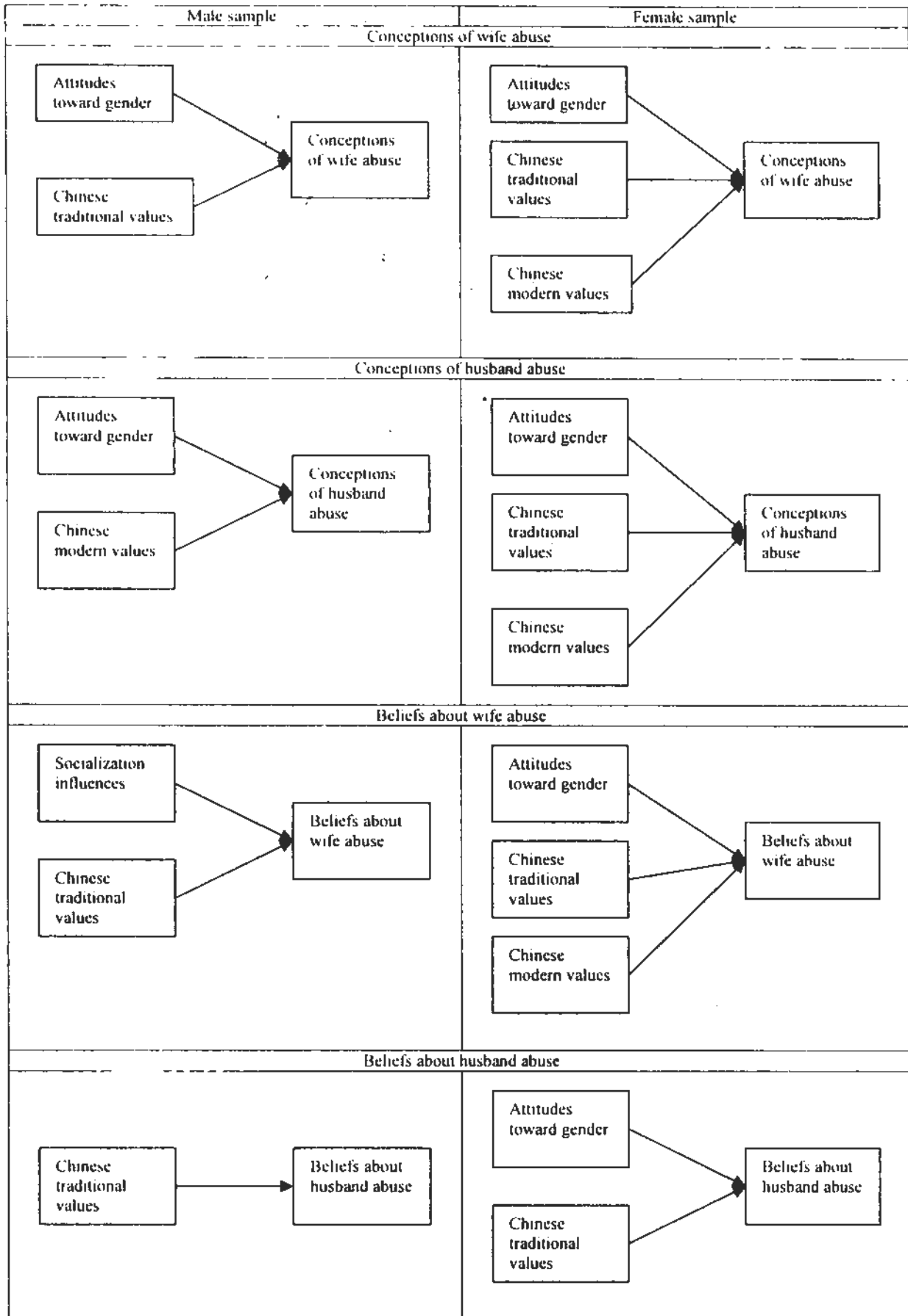
The three levels of the psychosocial correlates in the ecological model all contributed to the studied topics, albeit the influences of socialization on gender stereotypes and violence approval from parents may not be that prominent. Moreover, mediation effects among the salient psychosocial correlates were not found. Present findings still demonstrate that both individual and environmental factors work together in influencing individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

Several theoretical and practical implications are derived based on the above findings and significance. First, the examination of lay perspective on spousal abuse should be extended to social workers and other frontline service professionals of spousal abuse and their trainees. Their lay perspectives assist them to have self-reflection on their understanding on spousal abuse. This indirectly enhances their understanding and clarifies their bias against spousal abuse. Second, the examination of lay perspectives could also be extended to other sensitive social issues, including child abuse and corporal punishment, elder neglect and abuse, as well as abuse between homosexual partners. Lay perspective is an important component in conceptualization of social issues, which should be explored in the future. Third, researchers should consider both individual and environmental correlates in examining spousal abuse and other social issues. Ecological models with different

salient psychosocial correlates on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse between male and female samples were generated in this study. Thus the components of the ecological models studying wife abuse and husband abuse among different samples should be further fine-tuned.

Practically speaking, more research examining the lay perspectives of spousal abuse should be conducted with social workers and other frontline service professionals, such as police officers, nurses and doctors. Researchers can also extend the examination of lay perspectives to other sensitive issues of the society. Ecological models constructed with carefully examined domain specific theories could further be applied in examining spousal abuse and other social issues. Last but not least, there are several proposed models generated based on present results that could be further tested in future research. The proposed ecological models of conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are summarized in Figure 9.1.

Figure 9.1: Proposed model of studying conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse for male and female samples



9.5.3 Educational significance and implications

This study is the first comprehensive study on social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse in the Chinese culture. This contributes to our understanding on the intensity of and generates implications in improving training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum. It was found that training is inadequate. As adequacy help to broaden conceptions and eliminate biased beliefs about spousal abuse, as well as increase willingness to handle spousal abuse in the future, improvement in training on knowledge of spousal abuse is critically required. The training on knowledge of spousal abuse should put more focus on equipping social work undergraduates about the conceptions of psychological abuse and eliminating their myths about both wife abuse and husband abuse. Practically speaking, more research on evaluating existing training on knowledge of spousal abuse should be conducted. The training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum should be improved in quantity and quality.

Training on knowledge of spousal abuse can be improved in two directions. First is to input more materials on gender issues. It is because attitudes toward gender were found as the salient predictors of broader conceptions and fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. Awareness on gender stereotypes, in particular female stereotypes should be highlighted and clarified in social work training. Furthermore, same sex favoritism was found as a critical factor influencing in individuals' breadth of conceptions of spousal abuse. Female social work undergraduates are more empathic to female victims while male are more empathic to male victims. Training and modification on such asymmetrical empathic responses should be provided. Social work undergraduates should be trained to notice the influences of same sex favoritism when they come across spousal abuse cases in the future.

Second is to input more materials on addressing the influences from Chinese

culture. The endorsement of traditional culture contributes to narrower conceptions and biased beliefs about spousal abuse. It does not mean that we have to discard all the traditional Chinese values, instead we have to be sensitive to the cultural norms and point out to social work undergraduates that certain condoned behavior between couples under traditional culture are unacceptable nowadays. Gender equality as a Chinese modern value should be greatly encouraged in social work training. Follow the ongoing shift from traditional to egalitarian development, gender stereotypes that prescribe roles and abilities of male and female should be abolished. The beliefs in traditional values include superiority of male and respect to authority only helped to condone wife abuse while at the same time deny the happening of husband abuse. However, the endorsement of gender equality helps individuals to broaden their conceptions and demystify the biases about spousal abuse. Therefore, materials about Chinese modernity should be added in the social work training in order to highlight their sensitivity to the happening of spousal abuse, especially husband abuse.

9.5.4 Professional and public significance and implications

The present study also provides significance and insights in social work professional and public education on the issue of spousal abuse. This study helps to further stimulate social workers and other frontline professionals of spousal abuse to reflect on themselves about their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. In particular, those who are instructors of the trainees have to reflect on themselves that how their conceptions and beliefs influence their followers in viewing spousal abuse. Indeed, similar study can be carried out with other professionals and their trainees in order to find out their lack in the understanding on spousal abuse.

In addition, community education is one of the useful strategies to heighten public awareness of spousal abuse, this study provides ideas for the direction of

community education. Once again, psychological abuse, husband abuse, as well as ideology of gender equality are the prominent messages that should be promoted to the general public. Government and concerned organizations typically emphasize women as the victims and physical abuse as the major form of abuse in spousal abuse cases. They should now replace these typical portrayals by emphasizing both male and female have the probability to be victims and various psychological forms of abuse can happen in spousal abuse.

In short, professionals of spousal abuse can make use of the measurement tools generated in this study to evaluate their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse and reform their services accordingly. Moreover, counselors providing pre-marital counseling could also make use of the measurement tools in order to detect couples with high proclivity for accepting and exercising violence in marriage. This facilitates early prevention and detection of spousal abuse. Furthermore, in order to heighten general publics' awareness about husband abuse and psychological abuse. More public campaign and civil education on spousal abuse should be provided by government and other non-governmental organizations. The pace of social development is incredibly rapid that we have to keep reflecting and reforming our conceptions and beliefs toward certain social phenomena. Only regular reflections of professionals and reforms on policy and services can genuinely help victims and perpetrators of both genders in spousal abuse. Table 9.1 integrates the major research findings, contributions, theoretical and practical implications of the present study.

Table 9.1: Major research findings, contributions, theoretical and practical implications of this study

Major findings of research questions	Contributions	Theoretical implications	Practical implications
Conceptions of spousal abuse:			
RQ1: What are the conceptions of spousal abuse?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 major dimensions of abuse (physical vs. psychological) • Simultaneous conceptions of physical abuse vs. blunt conceptions of psychological abuse • Highly consistent conceptions of physical abuse among lay, legal, and academic experts' perspectives • Less comprehensive conceptions of psychological abuse in the lay perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhances understanding on conceptions of spousal abuse • Enhances understanding on laymen's perspective of conceptions of spousal abuse • Provides pioneer findings on conceptions of husband abuse in Chinese society • Clarifies conceptions of spousal abuse with two major domains (physical and psychological) • Shows social trend that physical abuse is less acceptable than psychological abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical abuse and psychological abuse should be distinguished in spousal abuse • Further clarification of the behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse is required • Revisions on conceptions of spousal abuse in legal and academic experts' perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More research on psychological abuse are necessary • Training in social work heightening individuals' recognition of psychological abuse is required • Professional education on psychological abuse should be reformed • Community campaign and civil education on psychological abuse are necessary
Application of qualitative and quantitative mixed methods in studying conceptions of spousal abuse			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriches research design in studying spousal abuse • Qualitative method deepens understanding on conceptions of spousal abuse • Develops measurement tools on conceptions of spousal abuse from the lay perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enriches research design in studying spousal abuse • Qualitative method deepens understanding on conceptions of spousal abuse • Develops measurement tools on conceptions of spousal abuse from the lay perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative method is usable in studying spousal abuse • Lay perspectives of conceptions of spousal abuse should be further studied among social workers and other frontline service professional of spousal abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further replication and validation of the measurements of conceptions are needed. • Professionals can use the measurement tools to evaluate their conceptions of spousal abuse

Table 9.1: Major research findings, contributions, theoretical and practical implications of this study (Cont.)

Major findings of research questions	Contributions	Theoretical implications	Practical implications
Conceptions of spousal abuse:			
RQ3: How are the conceptions different between wife abuse and husband abuse?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows social trend that wife abuse is less acceptable than husband abuse Reflects limited understanding and awareness on husband abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redirect and engender a balanced focus on both wife abuse and husband abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More research on husband abuse are necessary Training in social work heightening individuals' recognition of husband abuse is required Professional education on husband abuse should be reformed Community campaign and civil education on husband abuse are necessary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, especially physical abuse No differences in the conceptions of psychological wife abuse and psychological husband abuse 			
RQ4: Are the conceptions different based on victims' and participants' gender?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarifies that the breadth of conceptions of spousal abuse depends on victims' and perceivers' gender Shows that same sex favoritism is influential Highlights the fact that the effect of gender on conceptions of spousal abuse is complex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender of victims and perceivers should be considered in examining conceptions of spousal abuse More theoretical differentiation for the conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse is needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More research to examine if same sex favoritism is an universal effect on spousal abuse in other professionals Training and modification on asymmetrical responses to spousal abuse should be provided
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same sex favoritism influenced the conceptions of spousal abuse Female revealed broader conceptions of physical wife abuse while male revealed broader conceptions of psychological husband abuse 			

Table 9.1: Major research findings, contributions, theoretical and practical implications of this study (Cont')

Major findings of research questions	Contributions	Theoretical implications	Practical implications	
Beliefs about spousal abuse:				
RQ2: What are the beliefs about spousal abuse?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances understanding on beliefs about spousal abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender of the perceivers should be considered in studying beliefs about spousal abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More research on husband abuse is necessary 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social work undergraduates generally did not endorse the biased beliefs Certain biased beliefs in conceptualizing spousal abuse were still endorsed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarifies that people generally equalize wife abuse with spousal abuse and their understanding of husband abuse is limited Shows beliefs about spousal abuse depends on perceivers' genders Provides pioneer findings on beliefs about husband abuse in Chinese society Develops measurement tools on beliefs about spousal abuse Highlights the fact that the effect of gender on conceptions of spousal abuse is complex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More theoretical differentiation for beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse is needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Training and public education about spousal abuse should be tailor made to target male audience Lay perspectives of beliefs about spousal abuse should be further studied among social workers and other frontline service professional of spousal abuse 	
RQ5: Are the beliefs different based on victims' and participants' gender?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same sex favoritism showed no effect on beliefs about spousal abuse More biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse Male possessed more biased beliefs about spousal abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shows beliefs about spousal abuse depends on perceivers' genders Provides pioneer findings on beliefs about husband abuse in Chinese society Develops measurement tools on beliefs about spousal abuse Highlights the fact that the effect of gender on conceptions of spousal abuse is complex 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further replication and validation of the measurement tools of beliefs are needed Professionals can use the measurement tools to evaluate their beliefs about spousal abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further replication and validation of the measurement tools of beliefs are needed Professionals can use the measurement tools to evaluate their beliefs about spousal abuse
Proposed correlates of the ecological model:				
RQ6: Attitudes toward gender	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain related to the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Both individual and environmental factors are needed to be considered in studying spousal abuse and other social issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In order to broaden the conceptions and eliminate the bias against spousal abuse: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Egalitarian attitudes toward gender should be highly educated and promoted 	
RQ7&8: Socialization influences of gender stereotypes and violence approval from parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No salient correlations between socialization influences from parents and the outcome variables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Socialization influences need further fine-tuning Other sources of socialization influences and /or the combined socialization influences on spousal abuse should be further examined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Further research on socialization influences on the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse are worth to be conducted 	
RQ9: Chinese traditional Chinese traditional values and beliefs about spousal abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chinese traditional values influence conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse Multi-faceted sources of influences on spousal abuse, provides foundation for ecological model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restructuring Chinese traditional values is necessary Chinese modern values of egalitarianism and gender equality should be greatly promoted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restructuring Chinese traditional values is necessary Chinese modern values of egalitarianism and gender equality should be greatly promoted 	
RQ10: Chinese modernity Chinese modern values related to conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chinese modern values related to conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse 			

Table 9.1: Major research findings, contributions, theoretical and practical implications of this study (Cont')

Major findings of research questions	Contributions	Theoretical implications	Practical implications
Application of the ecological model:			
RQ11:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Psychosocial correlates at the individual and cultural levels were salient in predicting the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse though the process of effect among the two levels of psychosocial correlates was not found ● Correlates at the interpersonal level were not salient in predicting the outcome variables ● The model explained more variance of beliefs about wife abuse than husband abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deepens understanding that various influences on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse ● Contributes pioneer findings to theoretical model building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ecological models are usable in examining spousal abuse and other social issues ● Correlates of socialization influences should be further examined --Either other sources or the combined sources of socialization influences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Explores the application of ecological models in practice ● Ecological model with further fine-tuned psychosocial correlates should be replicated in studying spousal abuse
RQ12:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ecological models with different psychosocial predictors were found between wife abuse and husband abuse with female and male samples ● Enriches understanding on the complexity of individuals' conceptualization of spousal abuse ● Shows that spousal abuse is a gendered issue ● Reveals that people have different degree of sensitivity towards different types of spousal abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Enriches understanding on the complexity of individuals' conceptualization of spousal abuse ● Shows that spousal abuse is a gendered issue ● Reveals that people have different degree of sensitivity towards different types of spousal abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ecological models with different psychosocial correlates are needed in studying wife abuse and husband abuse ● Ecological models with different psychosocial correlates are needed in studying spousal abuse among male and female samples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Separated in-depth studies on individuals' conceptualization of wife abuse and husband abuse are necessary ● In-depth study on spousal abuse with separated male and female samples are needed
Perceptions of training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum:			
RQ13:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Inadequate training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum ● Request for training on knowledge of spousal abuse is high ● Adequate training helps to broaden conceptions and eliminate bias against spousal abuse ● A positive relationship between willingness to handle spousal abuse and request for more training on knowledge of spousal abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contributes to understand training on knowledge of spousal abuse in social work curriculum ● Provides directions of reforms on training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Role of knowledge on conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse should be clarified ● Understanding on the consequences of having inadequate knowledge of spousal abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● More research on evaluating existing training on knowledge of spousal abuse should be conducted within social work curriculum ● The training on knowledge of spousal abuse within social work curriculum should be improved in both quantity and quality

CHAPTER 10: CONCLUSION

This is the conclusion chapter of this study. The whole study is first summarized and it goes on to discuss its limitations and suggestions for further studies.

10.1 Summary of the present study

This study aimed at examining the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse as well as their psychosocial correlates among social work undergraduates in Hong Kong. The conceptions of spousal abuse were generated based on discussions with social work undergraduates in focus groups. The beliefs were basically reviewed from previous literature and with reference to findings from focus groups. The psychosocial correlates were organized in an ecological model with three levels, in which participants' gender and attitudes toward gender were at the individual level, socialization influences on gender stereotypes and violence approval from participants' parents was at the interpersonal level, and endorsement of Chinese traditionality and Chinese modernity was at the cultural level. The adoption of the ecological model assumed that individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse were the complex interplay of both individual and environmental factors.

This study adopted a qualitative less dominant and quantitative dominant mixed methods as the research design. Focus groups were conducted in the qualitative research. The rigor of the qualitative study is evaluated based on the twelve criteria proposed and discussed in Shek, Tang, and Han's (2005) study. The quality of the qualitative findings is ensured. Questionnaire survey was conducted in the quantitative research, in which stratified random sampling was adopted. This study is one of the scarce studies in adopting random sampling in examining individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Moreover, validated scales based on previous studies and self-constructed scales were adopted. The reliability of the

measurement scales was carefully scrutinized. These all provided solid support to the statistical results and the power of generalizability. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods in studying spousal abuse is innovative. The utilization of mixed method helps to integrate both participants' and researcher's viewpoints so as to avoid bias in the process of knowledge building.

In the questionnaire survey, two dimensions of conceptions of spousal abuse were examined, included physical and psychological abuse. It was found that social work undergraduates generally showed consensus on the conceptions of physical abuse. The behavioral manifestations of physical abuse they endorsed were highly consistent with those defined in the legal and academic experts' perspectives. However, their conceptions of psychological abuse were unclear and less consistent with those defined in the legal and academic experts' perspectives. This showed that social work undergraduates tended to view the conceptions of spousal abuse, especially psychological abuse, from the laymen perspectives. Moreover, it was also found that they had broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, especially the conceptions of physical abuse. Furthermore, their conceptions of spousal abuse were influenced by same sex favoritism. They tended to take side with their own gender, in which female endorsed broader conceptions of wife abuse than husband abuse, while male endorsed broader conceptions of husband abuse than wife abuse. Regarding the types of abuse, female social work undergraduates showed same sex favoritism in conceptualizing broader physical wife abuse than physical husband abuse. However, male social work undergraduates showed same sex favoritism in conceptualizing broader psychological husband abuse than psychological wife abuse. These may be related to the gender differences in the perceptions of victims and perpetrators between wife abuse and husband abuse.

Social work undergraduates generally did not agree to the biased beliefs about

spousal abuse. They did not support the beliefs that spousal abuse is a private family matter; spousal abuse is justified if victims had provoked the perpetrators or misbehaved, as well as if the perpetrators are under stress. However, some of them still believed that certain behavioral manifestations of psychological abuse, such as nagging, neglecting, teasing spouse, and controlling spouse are not spousal abuse. Some of them are also inclined to be lenient to abuse in marital relationships.

Identical significant psychosocial correlates were found in the conceptions of wife abuse and husband abuse. They were egalitarian attitudes toward gender in the domestic domain at the individual level and the Chinese modern value of gender equality at the cultural level. This indicated that the proposed ecological model was usable to examine the multidimensional sources of influences on the conceptions of spousal abuse. Regarding the beliefs about spousal abuse, the ecological model showed that female gender, egalitarian attitudes toward gender, lower endorsement of Chinese traditional values were associated with fewer biased beliefs about spousal abuse. Different combination of psychosocial correlates of conceptions and beliefs about wife abuse and husband abuse between female and male samples were also revealed.

Finally, this study showed that training on knowledge of spousal abuse was commented as inadequate in social work curriculum and request for more coverage on spousal abuse in the curriculum was high. Social work undergraduates suggested diversified channels to enrich their knowledge and information about spousal abuse can be arranged by the curriculum.

Taken together, this study revealed that the breadth of conceptions of spousal abuse among social work undergraduates depends on the types of abuse (physical versus psychological), victims' gender (abused wives versus abused husbands) and participants' gender (female versus male social work undergraduates). The beliefs

about spousal abuse were not influenced by same sex favoritism. However, it was found that social work undergraduates endorsed more biased beliefs about husband abuse than wife abuse. Moreover, male social work undergraduates endorsed more biased beliefs about spousal abuse than their female counterparts. The ecological model with three levels of psychosocial influences was found to be a usable framework in predicting social work undergraduates' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. The findings also support that the coverage on knowledge and information about spousal abuse within social work curriculum should be improved in terms of quantity and quality. More comprehensive training on knowledge of spousal abuse should be provided within the curriculum.

10.2 Limitations and suggestions for further studies

The measurements on conceptions of spousal abuse were developed based on the qualitative data of focus groups. It may lower the generalizability of present findings. The participants in the focus groups were not a representative sample of the population of social work undergraduates. Thus their responses may not be representative. Nevertheless, the present researcher had tried her best to ensure the credibility and accountability of the qualitative data by comparing them with the existing conceptions in the legal and academic experts' perspectives. Furthermore, the quality of the qualitative data was evaluated based on rigorous criteria set within the social work research field. Further studies can focus on validating the reliability and validity of the measurement tools on conceptions of spousal abuse developed based on the qualitative data in this study.

This study only focused on examining physical abuse and psychological abuse of spousal abuse. It was obvious that sexual abuse was neglected. However, sex is always a taboo especially in Chinese society, which is not supposed to be disclosed

and discussed openly. In the focus groups, discussions on behavioral manifestations of sexual abuse were few, which generated insufficient responses on sexual abuse. Participants in the focus groups generally believed that sexual abuse could only happen in wife abuse but never in husband abuse. The present research deliberately avoided the examination of sexual abuse based on the general perception that sexual abuse is not being regarded as husband abuse. However, the main focus of this study was more on comparing conceptions and beliefs between wife abuse and husband abuse. Furthermore, the qualitative research in this study was a less dominant study. The qualitative data mainly served as a supplement to the development of items in the questionnaire survey in the quantitative research. Future study can try to explore individuals' conceptions and beliefs about sexual abuse and study sexual abuse in husband abuse.

Apart from the conceptions of spousal abuse and their measurement tools, the measurements on socialization influences on gender stereotypes and violence approval from parents also need further modification and validation. The inadequate operationalization of the socialization influences may be one of the reasons that no salient correlations were found between the socialization influences and the outcome variables. Certainly, there may be other sources of influences in affecting the outcome variables. Future studies could expand their exploration on other sources, including peers and media, as well as their combined impacts on individuals' conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse.

The ecological model adopted in the present study was found to be useful in predicting conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. However, the model was analyzed based on self-reported information from the participants. The data gathered was only from the individual level. Information from interpersonal level and cultural level should be independently examined in order to have clearer analyses on the utility

of the ecological model in studying the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. Further series of research can be separately conducted in examining the socialization influences and endorsement of cultural values on the conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse. In addition, the psychosocial correlates proposed within the ecological model were exploratory. The components of the ecological model should be further fine tuned in order to examine other related individual and environmental psychosocial correlates of spousal abuse.

The proposed ecological model failed to show the process of effects among the psychosocial correlates. Sobel tests showed no mediation effects between the salient predictors among the individual and cultural levels. Because the direction of cause and effect among the psychosocial correlates was not found, it could be explained with an alternative direction that the general gender role attitudes may influence the endorsement of Chinese traditionality and Chinese modernity. Though cultural factors are usually regarded as extra-personal factor in influencing individuals' thoughts, cultural factors could also be influenced by the factors at individual level. As this study could not show the direction of process of effect, this alternative explanation could be possible.

The present study could not establish the causal relationships among the key variables because of its cross-sectional nature. It is impossible to examine the genuine influences and processes of changes among the psychosocial correlates at different levels on the outcome variables in a cross-sectional study. Longitudinal study in examining the interaction processes among both individual and environmental correlates are suggested as the future study. Moreover, no mediation effects were found among the salient psychosocial correlates. Future study can try to further examine the interaction and the mediation relationships between the proposed correlates and the outcomes variables. Furthermore, longitudinal research is also

needed to investigate the changing social trend on endorsement of Chinese traditional and modern cultural values and their influences on perceptions of spousal abuse.

Finally, this study only focused on social work undergraduates. The findings on their conceptions and beliefs about spousal abuse could not be generalized to other social service professional groups. Replication of the present study could be conducted with social workers and other social service professionals who also have higher chance in handling spousal abuse cases, including police officers, nurses, doctors and lawyers.

Despite the above limitations, the present findings are inspirational and pioneering addition to our understanding of wife abuse and husband abuse. With limited understanding on husband abuse, it is suggested that more studies should be carried out in the future to study husband abuse.

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	同意程度			
	1 非常 不同意	2 不同意	3 同意	4 非常 同意
你是否同意以下所列舉的行為是 虐妻 的表現?				
1. 用物件擲(掙)向妻子，而有關行為可能會令她受傷。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. 扭妻子的手臂或拉扯妻子的頭髮。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. 推撞妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. 抓傷妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. 掌摑妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. 用刀或利器刺傷妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. 用拳頭或物件打妻子，而有關行為可能會令她受傷。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. 勒住妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. 將妻子大力撞向牆壁。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. 毆打妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. 故意燒傷或燙傷妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. 踢妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. 強迫妻子做非自願的行為。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. 禁止妻子飲食。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. 使用武力禁錮妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. 強迫妻子做所有家務。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. 故意 無益食物給妻子吃。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. 故意 一些會令妻子敏感的食物給她吃。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. 做一些傷害妻子身體健康的行為。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. 故意在家中放一些會令妻子產生敏感的物件。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. 在妻子的反對下，蓄意注射藥物入妻子身體。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. 不斷製造噪音令妻子不能入睡。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. 用風扇不停吹著妻子，令她不能入睡。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. 令妻子在不知情及無需要的情況下服用安眠藥。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix II: The Chinese version of the items of psychological abuse in the questionnaire

	同意程度			
	1 非常 不同意	2 不同意	3 同意	4 非常 同意
你是否同意以下所列舉的行為是 <u>虐妻</u> 的表現?				
1. 控制、限制或剝奪妻子經濟，個人資源或社交活動。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. 不准許妻子與子女見面。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. 不准許妻子工作。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. 侵犯妻子私隱。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. 收起妻子的旅遊證件。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. 將妻子與親戚隔離。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. 不准許妻子做自己喜歡的事情。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. 在家中收藏武器，製造一個令妻子感到威脅的環境。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. 丈夫威脅妻子停止作為家中經濟支柱。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. 用利器或武器指嚇妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. 威脅要打或用物件擲(掙)向妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. 威脅要推妻子落樓梯。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. 威脅要殺死妻子或全家人。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. 長時間忽略妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. 要求家人忽略妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. 嘲笑妻子無用/沒能力賺錢。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. 在居住的社區中毀壞妻子的名聲。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. 將自己的妻子與其他人比較。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. 指責自己的妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. 指責妻子為極壞的伴侶。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. 壞屬於妻子的物件。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. 責罵妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. 呼喝妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. 在公共場所，責罵妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. 不斷煩擾(哦)妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

同意程度

1	2	3	4
非常 不同意	不同意	同意	非常 同意

你是否同意以下所列舉的行為是**虐妻**的表現?

- | | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 26. 用粗口責罵妻子。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27. 無理的責罵妻子。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28. 在子女面前責罵妻子。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 29. 說些話惡意傷害妻子。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30. 說妻子身體肥胖或樣子醜陋。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31. 不斷打電話給妻子。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 32. 不斷打電話給妻子的朋友。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 33. 調查妻子。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 34. 跟蹤已離婚的妻子。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 35. 找私家偵探跟蹤妻子。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

親愛的社會工作學系學生：

本人是香港中文大學社會工作學系的研究生，現正進行博士論文研究。

為瞭解香港社會工作學系學生對虐待配偶的認識，現懇請你完成本問卷。你所提供的一切資料，只會用於本研究，而個別參與者的資料將會絕對保密。

我們是根據你的學生證編號，以隨機抽樣的方式，邀請你為本研究的參與者。希望你能抽空填寫本問卷。在你完成整份問卷後，你將會得到港幣伍拾元正以答謝你的參與。完成問卷後，請將問卷交回有關的工作人員。

本問卷並非任何評估你能力的工具，而問卷內的問題亦沒有所謂對或錯的答案，所以請你憑着你對自己的感覺作答。

請一次過(即不要分數次)回答問卷內的問題。因為環保，本問卷是雙面印刷，請順序回答每頁的問題。

請你在回答問題前，詳細閱讀每部分的指示，並按照下列填寫問卷的方法，回答每一部分的所有問題。請你在各題的選項中，選出最能代表你感受和想法的方格，並把該方格塗黑。請注意，你並不需要完全塗黑有關方格。

- 請參閱以下「正確」及「不正確」塗黑方格的例子：

正確塗法 ：

不正確塗法 ：

如果你需要更改答案，你只需要用「**X**」號將舊答案刪去，然後塗黑最能代表你感受和想法之新答案。請參考以下例子：

正確刪除答案的方法 ：

若你願意回答這份問卷內的問題，請你填寫以下之同意書。

同意書

我願意回答這份問卷內的問題，並願意將有關資料提供作本研究之用。
我明白我有權隨時終止回答此問卷。

(請在橫線上填寫數字並將適當方格塗黑)

學生證編號(只用作核實回答問卷者為隨機抽樣所邀請的參與者)：

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

就讀院校：香港中文大學 香港大學 香港浸會大學
香港理工大學 香港城市大學 香港樹仁大學

就讀課程：學位課程 文憑課程

就讀年級：1年級 2年級 3年級 4年級 5年級

簽名：_____ 日期：20__年__月__日

“你所提供的個人資料均會絕對保密”

如對本研究有任何問題，請與本研究的負責人譚雪欣聯絡
(電話號碼：96526901)

第一部份：有關虐妻的行為表現

你是否同意以下所列舉的行為是虐待妻子(虐妻)的表現?

請選取最能代表你同意程度的答案，然後將該空格塗黑。

	同意程度			
	1	2	3	4
	非常			非常
你是否同意以下所列舉的行為是 <u>虐妻</u> 的表現?	不同意	不同意	同意	同意
25. 用物件擲(掙)向妻子，而有關行為可能會令她受傷。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. 扭妻子的手臂或拉扯妻子的頭髮。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. 推撞妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. 抓傷妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. 掌摑妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. 用刀或利器刺傷妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. 用拳頭或物件打妻子，而有關行為可能會令她受傷。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. 勒住妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. 將妻子大力撞向牆壁。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. 毆打妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. 故意燒傷或燙傷妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. 踢妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. 強迫妻子做非自願的行為。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. 禁止妻子飲食。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. 使用武力禁錮妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. 強迫妻子做所有家務。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. 故意 無益食物給妻子吃。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. 故意 一些會令妻子敏感的食物給她吃。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. 做一些傷害妻子身體健康的行為。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. 故意在家中放一些會令妻子產生敏感的物件。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. 在妻子的反對下，蓄意注射藥物入妻子身體。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. 不斷製造噪音令妻子不能入睡。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47. 用風扇不停吹著妻子，令她不能入睡。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48. 令妻子在不知情及無需要的情況下服用安眠藥。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49. 控制、限制或剝奪妻子經濟，個人資源或社交活動。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50. 不准許妻子與子女見面。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
51. 不准許妻子工作。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	同意程度			
	1 非常 不同意	2 不同意	3 同意	4 非常 同意
你是否同意以下所列舉的行為是 <u>虐妻</u> 的表現?				
52. 侵犯妻子私隱。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
53. 收起妻子的旅遊證件。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
54. 將妻子與親戚隔離。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
55. 不准許妻子做自己喜歡的事情。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
56. 在家中收藏武器，製造一個令妻子感到威脅的環境。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
57. 丈夫威脅妻子停止作為家中經濟支柱。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
58. 用利器或武器指嚇妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
59. 威脅要打或用物件擲(掙)向妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
60. 威脅要推妻子落樓梯。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
61. 威脅要殺死妻子或全家人。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
62. 長時間忽略妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
63. 要求家人忽略妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
64. 嘲笑妻子無用/沒能力賺錢。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
65. 在居住的社區中毀壞妻子的名聲。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
66. 將自己的妻子與其他人比較。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
67. 指責自己的妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
68. 指責妻子為極壞的伴侶。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
69. 壞屬於妻子的物件。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
70. 責罵妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
71. 呼喝妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
72. 在公共場所，責罵妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
73. 不斷煩擾(哦)妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
74. 用粗口責罵妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
75. 無理的責罵妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
76. 在子女面前責罵妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
77. 說些話惡意傷害妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
78. 說妻子身體肥胖或樣子醜陋。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
79. 不斷打電話給妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
80. 不斷打電話給妻子的朋友。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	同意程度			
	1	2	3	4
	非常 不同意	不同意	同意	非常 同意
你是否同意以下所列舉的行為是 <u>虐妻</u> 的表現?				
81. 調查妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
82. 跟蹤已離婚的妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
83. 找私家偵探跟蹤妻子。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

第二部份：有關對性別的想法

如果你認為下列項目對男性較為適合或重要，請在「對男性較為適合或重要」的一欄指出你認為該項目對男性較女性適合或重要的程度。1 表示程度最弱，4 表示程度最強，然後將該空格塗黑。

如果你認為該項目對女性較為適合或重要，請在「對女性較為適合或重要」的一欄指出你認為該項目對女性較男性適合或重要的程度。1 表示程度最弱，4 表示程度最強，然後將該空格塗黑。

如果你認為該項目對男性和女性均適合或重要，請在「男女均適合或重要」的一欄將該空格塗黑。

在每個項目，你只須選擇一個答案。

例如：你認為“可以發展抱負”對男性較為適合，而相比起女性，對男性的適合程度為最強，請在「對男性較為適合或重要」將“4”的一格塗黑。

	對女性較為適合或重要	男女均適合或重要	對男性較為適合或重要
例子：可以發展抱負	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	對女性較為適合或重要	男女均適合或重要	對男性較為適合或重要
1) 成為領袖	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
2) 擁有成功的事業	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
3) 做生意	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
4) 接受最高等教育	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
5) 賺錢	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
6) 照顧小孩	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
7) 洗衣服	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
8) 做家務	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
9) 在家中燒飯	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>
10) 到超級市場買日用品	4 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	0 <input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/>

第三部份：有關虐夫的行爲表現

你是否同意以下所列舉的行爲是虐待丈夫（虐夫）的表現？

請選取最能代表你同意程度的答案，然後將該空格塗黑。

	同意程度			
	1	2	3	4
	非常			非常
你是否同意以下所列舉的行爲是 <u>虐夫</u> 的表現？	不同意	不同意	同意	同意
1. 用物件擲(掙)向丈夫，而有關行爲可能會令他受傷。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. 扭丈夫的手臂或拉扯丈夫的頭髮。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. 推撞丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. 抓傷丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. 掌摑丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. 用刀或利器刺傷丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. 用拳頭或物件打丈夫，而有關行爲可能會令他受傷。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. 勒住丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. 將丈夫大力撞向牆壁。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. 毆打丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. 故意燒傷或燙傷丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. 踢丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. 強迫丈夫做非自願的行爲。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. 禁止丈夫飲食。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. 使用武力禁錮丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. 強迫丈夫做所有家務。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. 故意 無益食物給丈夫吃。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. 故意 一些會令丈夫敏感的食物給他吃。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. 做一些傷害丈夫身體健康的行爲。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. 故意在家中放一些會令丈夫產生敏感的物件。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. 在丈夫的反對下，蓄意注射藥物入丈夫身體。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. 不斷製造噪音令丈夫不能入睡。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. 用風扇不停吹著丈夫，令他不能入睡。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. 令丈夫在不知情及無需要的情況下服用安眠藥。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. 控制、限制或剝奪丈夫經濟，個人資源或社交活動。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. 不准許丈夫與子女見面。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. 不准許丈夫工作。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	同意程度			
	1	2	3	4
	非常			非常
你是否同意以下所列舉的行為是 <u>虐夫</u> 的表現?	不同意	不同意	同意	同意
28. 侵犯丈夫私隱。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. 收起丈夫的旅遊證件。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. 將丈夫與親戚隔離。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. 不准許丈夫做自己喜歡的事情。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. 在家中收藏武器，製造一個令丈夫感到威脅的環境。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. 妻子威脅丈夫停止作為家中經濟支柱。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34. 用利器或武器指嚇丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35. 威脅要打或用物件擲(掙)向丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36. 威脅要推丈夫落樓梯。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
37. 威脅要殺死丈夫或全家人。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
38. 長時間忽略丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
39. 要求家人忽略丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
40. 嘲笑丈夫無用/沒能力賺錢。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
41. 在居住的社區中毀壞丈夫的名聲。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
42. 將自己的丈夫與其他人比較。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
43. 指責自己的丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
44. 指責丈夫為極壞的伴侶。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
45. 壞屬於丈夫的物件。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
46. 責罵丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
47. 呼喝丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
48. 在公共場所，責罵丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
49. 不斷煩擾(哦)丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
50. 用粗口責罵丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
51. 無理的責罵丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
52. 在子女面前責罵丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
53. 說些話惡意傷害丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
54. 說丈夫身體肥胖或樣子醜陋。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
55. 不斷打電話給丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
56. 不斷打電話給丈夫的朋友。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	同意程度			
	1	2	3	4
	非常 不同意	不同意	同意	非常 同意
你是否同意以下所列舉的行為是 <u>虐夫</u> 的表現?				
57. 調查丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
58. 跟蹤已離婚的丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
59. 找私家偵探跟蹤丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

第四部份：有關虐待配偶的信念

請小心閱讀下列各句子，並選取最能代表你同意程度的答案，然後將該空格塗黑。

	同意程度			
	1	2	3	4
	非常 不同意	不同意	同意	非常 同意
有關丈夫虐待妻子（虐妻）的信念：				
1. 丈夫虐待妻子是夫妻之間的私事，外間不應干涉。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. 丈夫掌摑妻子只是小事，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. 如果丈夫知道他的妻子有外遇，他用武力懲罰妻子是合理的。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. 丈夫不斷製造噪音令妻子不能入睡只是小事，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. 如果妻子因挑釁丈夫而受到丈夫用武力對待，她的丈夫不須要為虐妻的行為負責。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. 丈夫不准許妻子做她喜歡的事情只是閒事，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. 如果丈夫因為生活壓力而掌摑妻子，這是可以理解及原諒的。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. 丈夫用利器指嚇妻子並不是嚴重的事情，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. 丈夫在忍無可忍的情況下才向妻子使用武力，是情有可原的。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. 丈夫經常嘲笑妻子無用並不是問題，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. 虐妻通常涉及較多的身體虐待，而精神虐待則較少。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. 丈夫長時間忽略妻子只是閒事，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	同意程度			
	1 非常 不同意	2 不同意	3 同意	4 非常 同意
13. 在虐妻個案中，妻子通常被丈夫長時間精神虐待，而身體虐待只會偶爾發生。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. 丈夫經常煩擾（哦）妻子並不是問題，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
有關妻子虐待丈夫（虐夫）的信念：				
15. 妻子虐待丈夫是夫妻之間的私事，外間不應干涉。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. 妻子掌摑丈夫只是小事，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. 如果妻子知道她的丈夫有外遇，她用武力懲罰丈夫是合理的。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. 妻子不斷製造噪音令丈夫不能入睡只是小事，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. 如果丈夫因挑釁妻子而受到妻子用武力對待，他的妻子不須要為虐夫的行爲負責。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. 妻子不准許丈夫做他喜歡的事情只是閒事，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. 如果妻子因為生活壓力而掌摑丈夫，這是可以理解及原諒的。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. 妻子用利器指嚇丈夫並不是嚴重的事情，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. 妻子在忍無可忍的情況下才向丈夫使用武力，是情有可原的。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. 妻子經常嘲笑丈夫無用並不是問題，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. 虐夫通常涉及較多的身體虐待，而精神虐待則較少。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26. 妻子經常煩擾（哦）丈夫並不是問題，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. 在虐夫個案中，丈夫通常被妻子長時間精神虐待，而身體虐待只會偶爾發生。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. 妻子長時間忽略丈夫只是閒事，不必大驚小怪。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

第五部份：有關你父母的想法

這部份是有關你父親和母親的想法，每題均設有兩個部份。

第一部份的句子是形容你的父親或母親的看法，請你選取最能夠代表他們的看法之空格，然後將該空格塗黑。第二部份是詢問你是否同意你父親或母親的想法，請你選取最能夠代表你同意程度的空格，然後將該空格塗黑。

同意程度			
1	2	3	4
非常			非常
不同意	不同意	同意	同意

例如：你同意你的父親有“女孩子不應學習跆拳道”的看法，而你卻不同意你父親的想法。請把第一部份形容你父親的想法“同意”(3)塗黑。把第二部份你是否同意父親的想法“不同意”(2)塗黑。

例：我的爸爸認為女孩子不應學習跆拳道。

例：你是否同意爸爸的想法？

有關你的父親的想法：

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. 我的爸爸重男輕女，認為男孩子比女孩子重要。 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 1a. 你是否同意爸爸的想法？ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. 我的爸爸認為：「相對女孩子，男孩子應該接受多點教育。」 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2a. 你是否同意爸爸的想法？ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. 我的爸爸認為：「女兒必須做家務，但兒子卻不需要做家務。」 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3a. 你是否同意爸爸的想法？ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. 我的爸爸認為：「男性較女性更適合做管理階層。」 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4a. 你是否同意爸爸的想法？ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. 我的爸爸認為：「當男孩子被欺負時，他應該還手。」 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5a. 你是否同意爸爸的想法？ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. 我的爸爸認為：「當女孩子被欺負時，她應該還手。」 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6a. 你是否同意爸爸的想法？ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. 我的爸爸認為：「在某些程況下，丈夫掌摑妻子是可以接受的。」 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7a. 你是否同意爸爸的想法？ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. 我的爸爸認為：「在某些程況下，妻子掌摑丈夫是可以接受的。」 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8a. 你是否同意爸爸的想法？ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

		同意程度			
		1	2	3	4
		非常			非常
		不同意	不同意	同意	同意
9.	我的爸爸認為：「當孩子駁咀，父母掌攔孩子是合理的。」	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9a.	你是否同意爸爸的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10.	我的爸爸認為：「若要管教孩子，體罰有時是需要的。」	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10a.	你是否同意爸爸的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

有關你的母親的想法：

11.	我的媽媽重男輕女，認為男孩子比女孩子重要。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11a.	你是否同意媽媽的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12.	我的媽媽認為：「相對女孩子，男孩子應該接受多點教育。」	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12a.	你是否同意媽媽的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13.	我的媽媽認為：「女兒必須做家務，但兒子卻不需要做家務。」	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13a.	你是否同意媽媽的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14.	我的媽媽認為：「男性較女性更適合做管理階層。」	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14a.	你是否同意媽媽的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15.	我的媽媽認為：「當男孩子被欺負時，他應該還手。」	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15a.	你是否同意媽媽的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16.	我的媽媽認為：「當女孩子被欺負時，她應該還手。」	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16a.	你是否同意媽媽的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17.	我的媽媽認為：「在某些程況下，丈夫掌攔妻子是可以接受的。」	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17a.	你是否同意媽媽的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18.	我的媽媽認為：「在某些程況下，妻子掌攔丈夫是可以接受的。」	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18a.	你是否同意媽媽的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19.	我的媽媽認為：「當孩子駁咀，父母掌攔孩子是合理的。」	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19a.	你是否同意媽媽的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20.	我的媽媽認為：「若要管教孩子，體罰有時是需要的。」	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20a.	你是否同意媽媽的想法？	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

第六部份：有關中國文化的看法

請小心閱讀下列各句子，並選出你認為最能夠代表你感受的空格，然後將該空格塗黑。

	同意程度			
	1 非常 不同意	2 不同意	3 同意	4 非常 同意
1. 行政長官是大家長，一切政策 應聽從他的決定。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. 要避免發生錯誤，最好的辦法是聽從長輩的話。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. 女人婚前接受父親管教，出嫁後則應順從丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. 年輕人不知天高地厚，不能讓他們獨自處理事情。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. 如果因事爭執不下，應請輩份最高的人主持公道。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. 父母所敬愛的人，子女也應敬愛。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. 爲了維護社會安寧，個人言論應該受到更多管制。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. 中、小學生應該穿著校服。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. 夫妻意見不合時，妻子應該順從丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. 女人應該避免在外拋頭露面。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. 男人是一家之主，家中的事應由丈夫作主。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. 妻子的喜怒好惡，應該儘量迎合丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. 管教子女時，妻子應以丈夫的看法和方法爲標準。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. 女人的工作能力和效率，總是不如男人。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. 在性生活方面，男人應比女人享有更多的方便與自由。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. 女人的事業在家庭，已婚婦女不應出外工作。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. 行政長官犯了錯，市民可以公開批評。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. 爲了求學與就業，離鄉背井也沒有關係。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. 爲了有效監督政府，我們需要強而有力的在野黨。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. 如果子女覺得自己的想法合理，即使父母反對，也應該據理力爭。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. 如果婚姻生活太痛苦，離婚不失爲解決問題的方法。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. 色情刊物是禁不掉的，因爲總有些人需要看這種刊物。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. 如果師長有錯，學生可以提出理由辯論。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. 子女的宗教信仰與父母不同，父母也應該容許。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
25. 如果妻子希望外出工作，丈夫不應反對。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	同意程度			
	1 非常 不同意	2 不同意	3 同意	4 非常 同意
26. 行政長官由女性來擔任，也沒有什麼不好。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. 妻子應有獨立人格，不必事事服從丈夫。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. 夫妻都應有獨處的時間，不受對方干擾。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. 男女兩性應有同等的機會接受良好的教育。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. 在大多數的行業中，女性與男性應該可以擔任同樣的工作。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. 夫妻應該各有自己的朋友。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. 女子在各方面都不比男子差，她們應該享有同等的社會地位。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

第七部份：在社工教育課程中有關「虐待配偶」的教育

請小心閱讀下列各句子，並選出你認為最能夠代表你感受的空格，然後將該空格塗黑。

	同意程度			
	1 非常 不同意	2 不同意	3 同意	4 非常 同意
1. 在我現時修讀的社工課程中，有關虐待配偶的訓練是足夠的。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. 我現時修讀的社工課程，令我對虐待配偶有足夠的認識。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. 我期望學系能夠在我現時修讀的課程中，增加更多有關虐待配偶的學科。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. 我期望學系能夠在我現時修讀的課程中，為我們提供更多有關虐待配偶的資料，例如：安排講座、安排參觀處理虐待配偶的機構。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. 如果有機會，我希望到處理虐待配偶個案的機構實習。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. 畢業後，我希望到處理虐待配偶個案的機構工作。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. 整體而言，我覺得我對「虐待配偶」這個課題有足夠的認識。	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. 在你曾經選修的學科中，有多少個學科有涵蓋虐待配偶這個課題？

1個 2個 3個 4個 5個 6個 7個 8個 9個
或以上

9. 你是否在社會工作系的課程中，學到有關虐待配偶的定義？

是

否（請註明其他的資料來源）：

10. 你是否在社會工作系的課程中，建立對虐待配偶的想法？

是

否（請註明其他的資料來源）：

11. 在本科的主修課程以外，你有沒有額外修讀有關家庭暴力的課程？

有
 沒有

如果有，是哪一類的課程（可選擇多項）？

副修課程的學科

通識課程的學科

校外課程的學科

由非政府機構提供的課程，（例如工作坊，講座等）

其他，（請註明）：

第八部份：有關個人和家庭現況的資料

以下是問及一些有關你個人和家庭現況的資料，你提供的資料會絕對保密。因此請放心選出你的答案，並將該空格塗黑，或在線上填上答案。

1. 你的年齡是：

17歲 18歲 19歲 20歲 21歲 22歲 23歲 24歲 25歲 25歲
或以下 或以上

2. 性別：

- 男 女

3. 你覺得你的家庭生活愉快嗎？

- 很不愉快 不愉快 普通 愉快 很愉快

4. 在你成長至現在，你主要是與誰人同住？

- 與父母同住
 與父親同住
 與母親同住
 沒有與父母同住（請註明）：
-

5. 你父母現時的婚姻狀況是怎樣？

- 父親與母親已離婚，但沒有再婚
 父親與母親已分居，但沒有再婚
 父親與母親是夫婦關係（第一段婚姻關係）
 父親和／或母親離婚後再婚
 其他（請註明）：
-

6. 你的家庭現在是否接受綜合社會保障援助金（綜援金）？

- 是 否

7. 你父母現在的工作狀況是怎樣？(只選取一項)

- 父母均有全職工作
 - 只有父親有全職工作
 - 只有母親有全職工作
 - 父親有全職工作，母親有兼職工作
 - 母親有全職工作，父親有兼職工作
 - 父母均沒有工作，沒有領取綜援
 - 父母均沒有工作，有領取綜援
 - 其他 (請註明) :
-

8. 在你的成長過程中，你的父親有沒有在身體及/或精神虐待你的母親(即父親虐待母親)？

- 從來沒有
- 很少有
- 間中有
- 經常都有
- 大部分時間都有
- 一直都有

9. 在你的成長過程中，你的母親有沒有在身體及/或精神虐待你的父親(即母親虐待父親)？

- 從來沒有
- 很少有
- 間中有
- 經常都有
- 大部分時間都有
- 一直都有

(問卷完) 謝謝你的幫忙！