"PRIVATE" PROBLEM IN A PUBLIC PLACE:
A FEMINIST CRIMINOLOGICAL EXAMINATION OF UNION RESPONSES TO
WORKPLACE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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ABSTRACT

“PRIVATE” PROBLEM IN A PUBLIC PLACE:
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Using a public/private framework encompassing a socialist feminist criminological perspective, this study explores workplace domestic violence from the perspective of labour unions. The damaging effects of domestic violence are now being equated with lost productivity and safety concerns in the workplace. Domestic violence victims as well as co-workers, clients, and employers are often at risk; as a result, it is clear that domestic violence travels through various aspects of life and cannot be ignored in the workplace. This study examines workplace domestic violence policies and initiatives that have been adopted by Canadian unions, in addition to union perceptions of workplace domestic violence, the nature of these policies and initiatives, and the impetus for their adoption. In conclusion, unions with workplace domestic violence policies and initiatives are typically female-dominated, and they aim to provide safe workplaces for members and to protect the jobs of victims through proactive, educative, and responsive strategies.
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In closing, this thesis is a reminder that domestic violence continues to pervade our society. May we, one day, exist in a world where violence against women does not.

Dedicated, with love, to Mom, Dad, and Grandma K.
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Chapter One: Introduction

Domestic violence transcends all boundaries. Although domestic violence is most commonly associated with the familial home, research has shown that it has a tendency to interfere with a victim’s ability to maintain employment. In other words, the effects of such abuse may hinder her performance on the job; even more, the abuse can literally follow her to work if her\textsuperscript{1} abuser interferes with the workplace itself. Furthermore, the abuse that she experiences in the home may prevent her from attending work if she is physically, emotionally, or psychologically injured prior to her shift. Finally, the most alarming potential consequence of workplace domestic violence is death. As a result, it is clear that workplace domestic violence is an issue that cannot be ignored. As such, this study will examine the position that unions in Canada have taken to address the issue of workplace domestic violence. More specifically, union perceptions of workplace domestic violence will be examined in addition to specific policies and initiatives that have been adopted in response to the problem. To begin, however, I will describe the social context of domestic violence in Canada in terms of how it has evolved from a matter of acceptable discipline that was hidden in the home to a public problem that, although criminalized and less hidden, continues to persist today.

The family home has traditionally been associated with symbolic images of privacy and safety. Ironically, the home is where many women are assaulted by their intimate partners. Even so, domestic violence has not always been defined as a public social issue. For centuries, many women have been subjected to private beatings by their intimate partners within the so-called “safe haven” that we call “home” (Duffy & Momirov, 1997, p. 4). Dominant theological, social, and political belief systems have

\textsuperscript{1} Use of the female pronoun will be justified on page 3.
traditionally dictated how men and women are to behave and to be treated within the familial home. When European settlers first brought English Common Law to North America, for instance, men were encouraged to beat their wives as an appropriate act of discipline (Felter, 1997).

Today, however, domestic violence is a crime. It is a legal violation of human rights that is not justifiable in the Canadian criminal justice system. Perpetrators are not permitted to “discipline” their intimate partners, and they do not have the right to abuse them physically, sexually, emotionally, financially, or by any other means. Men do not have sexual rights to their partners, and it is not a woman’s duty to be a passive and submissive member of the family. Only within the past thirty years, though, has domestic violence been defined in a way that draws attention to its importance as a public issue and a crime. According to Walker (1992, p. 3), “the process of making the experience of oppression in our own homes visible to ourselves and then getting it accepted as a matter of public concern involved defining it as a problem in our own terms.” Following personal recognition that domestic violence was both widespread and unjustifiable, the ultimate goal for victims and feminists was to then convince society at large that domestic violence must be coined a public social problem and not just a “woman’s issue.” This transition has prompted socio-political responses to violence against women in general, as these acts are now defined in terms of human rights offences and criminal justice matters (Walker, 1992).

Although domestic violence is now recognized as a social problem, it continues to persist in Canada with predominantly men abusing women and children. While it is possible for men to be victims of domestic violence themselves, the vast majority of
domestic violence incidents involve female victimization and male perpetration (Duffy & Momirov, 1997: Johnson & Bunge, 2001; Kelly, 2003). Essentially, this over-representation highlights the need for domestic violence to be recognized as a gendered, systemic problem. Based on data derived from the 1999 Statistics Canada General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization, for instance, Johnson and Bunge (2001, p. 37) found that female victims of domestic violence, in comparison to men, are physically assaulted with a higher degree of severity, are often assaulted for longer periods of time, and are more likely to feel that their lives are in great danger. For the purposes of this study, then, domestic violence victims will most typically be referred to using the female pronoun.

Buzawa and Buzawa (2003) suggest that growing trends in family isolation may contribute to increased domestic violence. In other words, a decrease in responsibilities and interaction outside of the home can potentially weaken the relations of domestic violence victims to external support networks such as friends, family, and co-workers. Isolation from social support networks can thereby increase susceptibility to victimization in the home since these women have limited access to the social resources that may be utilized when escaping a violent setting (Buzawa & Buzawa, 2003). Based on these assumptions, then, it could be suggested that women with social connections outside of the home, such as in the work environment, are less likely to be experiencing victimization than women without these external support networks. However, increased visibility of domestic violence in the workplace suggests otherwise. Even though these women would appear to have greater access to external support networks through co-workers, managers, and union representatives, they are victimized just the same (Johnson & Gardner, 1999; Mighty 2004; Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg, Macke & Logan, 2006).
As a result, the roles played by these external supports in addressing workplace domestic violence may be integral to the maintenance of a victim’s safety and job since there is an evident connection between domestic violence and the workplace. For instance, a small study by the American Medical Association at a Minneapolis hospital found that 91 percent of participants who disclosed domestic violence also reported abuse at work; 100 percent of these victims claimed that abuse at work resulted in medical problems, and more than 80 percent reported decreased productivity and increased absenteeism as a result of the abuse (Cohen, 1994, p. 369). Since domestic violence transcends all boundaries, then, it cannot be ignored as a private issue having no meaning in the workplace. In particular, the role played by unions will be examined in this study.

Since women now constitute almost half of the Canadian labour force (Zukewich, 2000, p. 99), domestic violence victims may be more visible in this public setting than when women’s labour force participation was much smaller. However, although much research addresses the extensive problem of domestic violence (Walker, 1990; DeKeseredy & MacLeod, 1997; Duffy & Momirov, 1997; Felter, 1997; Gartner, Dawson & Crawford, 1998; Flowers, 2000; Johnson & Bunge, 2001; Buzawa & Buzawa, 2003; Kelly, 2003), there is little research that examines the specific problem of workplace domestic violence. Workplace domestic violence can be described as the overflow of violence from the home into the workplace; for instance, the direct harassment of the perpetrator at the victim’s place of work, or the effects of domestic violence from the home to the workplace; for example, psychological trauma or physical impairments that complicate a victim’s ability to perform on the job and therefore maintain employment. Furthermore, workplace domestic violence can be a safety concern for the victim’s co-
workers, clients, and the overall functioning of the workplace in general. According to Moe and Bell (2004, p. 49), “when women choose safety over work and resign, are dragged away from the workplace by the hair, or are absent due to facial bruises, the inaccuracy of claims that partner violence is not an organizational issue becomes increasingly clear.”

Research has shown that domestic violence can impact a victim’s ability to maintain employment in various occupational settings (Lloyd & Taluc, 1999; Mighty, 2004; Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2006). Furthermore, domestic violence victims are more likely to suffer from mental health issues resulting from the abuse, such as depression and anxiety, which tend to affect their productivity at work and their ability to maintain employment (Lloyd & Taluc, 1999). Oftentimes, domestic violence victims are absent or late for work simply because their abusers have physically prevented them from leaving the home (Swanberg et al., 2006). Again, such problems can affect a victim’s ability to maintain employment if her managers are unaware that abuse is a contributing factor to her frequent absence and low productivity. In addition, a victim is not necessarily safe on the job if her abuser is frequently intruding upon the workplace; even more, workplace domestic violence can be fatal (Mighty, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2006). For instance, some women in Canada have been killed on the job by their abusive partners.

Workplace domestic violence can result in severe injury or death as is demonstrated by two recent Canadian cases of workplace domestic homicide. One of these cases occurred in 2005 and involved the stabbing death of 37-year-old Lori Dupont, a Windsor, Ontario nurse who was killed on the job by her former abusive intimate
partner, a doctor who was working at the same hospital (Nash & Cross, 2005). Additionally, in 2004, 47-year-old Aysegul Candir, a Brampton, Ontario high school teacher, was shot and killed by her abusive husband in the parking lot of the school at which she taught (CTV News, 2004). Taking these occurrences into account, it is clear that the workplace may be a dangerous setting for domestic violence victims in the same way that the home has often been found to be. As a result, domestic violence is a workplace problem that cannot be ignored.

Domestic violence has only recently been perceived by employers as a workplace issue (Mighty, 2004) although it can clearly impact a victim’s safety and employability. Still, many employers continue to reject the relationship between domestic violence and the workplace, holding to the dated belief that such violence is a matter of privacy (Mighty, 2004; Moe & Bell, 2004). As a result, the extent to which unions have addressed workplace domestic violence will be examined since an important role of unions is to promote a safe working environment for their members (Kumar, 1993). However, there currently appears to have been little, if any, research conducted in Canada on union responses to workplace domestic violence.

In order to address this gap in research, this study examines union responses to workplace domestic violence by exploring the policies and initiatives that they have implemented in efforts to address this problem. In particular, the issue of workplace domestic violence is examined here through the lens of Canadian labour unions. According to Jackson (2005), unions are important resources because workers are often very replaceable. In other words, the number of available labourers is typically greater than the number of available jobs, so employers can easily hire new workers for most
positions (Jackson, 2005). Victims of domestic violence might consider themselves to be easily replaceable if the violence affects their productivity at work (Mighty, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2006). As a result, domestic violence victims may require reassurance of job security and options available to them if union policies and initiatives have been adopted. When union representation is available in the workplace, workers have more power to demand justice from the employer and to ensure that their rights, as workers, are taken into consideration (Jackson, 2005). In other words, unions “humanize” and “democratize” workplaces in such a way that workers are organized in large numbers in order to possess more power than they would have individually (Jackson, 2005, p. 144).

While Canadian legislative policies are designed to protect the rights of workers, unions have realized that policies aiming to protect workers are not always sufficient, so collective bargaining is deemed necessary for the assurance of workplace safety and equity (Kumar, 1993). Because domestic violence has received minimal attention as a workplace issue, union policies and initiatives that respond to this problem could potentially provide victims with an additional outlet for both personal protection and job security.

The Current Study

This study examines the resources available to domestic violence victims in the workplace as supplied by national and provincial labour unions. More specifically, this research explores: the types of Canadian unions that have implemented workplace domestic violence policies and initiatives (WDVPI), the impetus and goals for implementation, the nature of these policies and initiatives, the types of workers these
unions represent, whether these workers are employed in male- or female-dominated occupations and, finally, union perceptions of domestic violence. Through the use of the internet, union representatives were recruited as participants and then completed one of two qualitative email surveys; one survey for unions with workplace domestic violence policies and initiatives and one for those without. The data were then explored by means of a qualitative, comparative analysis. This analysis incorporates a comparison of unions with workplace domestic violence policies and initiatives with unions without such policies and initiatives. Union perceptions of domestic violence both as a social issue and a workplace problem are compared among all participating unions to determine what union attitudes are towards such abuse and the perceived need for domestic violence policies and initiatives.

**Description of Chapters**

The following chapters will explore the linkage between domestic violence and the workplace and the reception it receives from national and provincial unions in Canada. In Chapter Two, I provide an in-depth review of existing literature on workplace domestic violence. Because this is the first Canadian study, that I am aware of, to examine union involvement with workplace domestic violence, this literature review will primarily draw from existing research on domestic violence in the workplace. To begin, an overview of violence in the workplace will be discussed in addition to the recognition of domestic violence as a workplace issue. Consequences of workplace domestic violence, as well as organizational response policies, will be explored in order to develop an initial framework of the types of policies and initiatives that unions may or may not
have adopted. Finally, a general discussion of unions, the involvement of women in unions, and union responses to issues affecting women (i.e. violence) are addressed in this chapter.

Chapter Three introduces the theoretical framework that guides this study, which is the public/private dichotomy and socialist feminist criminology's position within it. The public/private dichotomy is first introduced as a lens through which to understand the emergence of domestic violence as a traditionally "private" issue in the home to, more recently, a "public" problem that is clearly visible in the public sphere as represented in this study by the workplace. Socialist feminist criminology is then introduced as a framework that pinpoints the oppressive nature of capitalism, patriarchy, and the criminal justice system as contributors to the existence of workplace domestic violence. Finally, the transition of sexual harassment from a private problem in the workplace to both a human rights violation and workplace issue will be compared to the recent transition of domestic violence from a private problem to a workplace issue.

Chapter Four outlines the methodological approach employed in this study. In terms of research design, the advantages of distributing email surveys for data collection, as opposed to conducting face-to-face interviews, is discussed. The questions included in both surveys developed for this study will be outlined and the purpose for including two different surveys will also be addressed. I will then describe the sampling frame as well as the process of recruitment. Finally, a brief overview of the procedure involved in gaining approval from the Research Ethics Board of the University of Guelph will precede an introduction to the data analysis component of this study.
In Chapter Five, I detail the procedure for data analysis as employed in this study. First, the demographics of all participating unions will be introduced, followed by union perceptions of domestic violence as a workplace issue. The types of workplace domestic violence policies and initiatives adopted by participating unions will then be explored, including: proactive approaches, educative strategies, and responsive policies. Limitations of such policies and initiatives will also be examined. Finally, alternative responses to workplace domestic violence, as adopted by unions without specific workplace domestic violence policies and initiatives, will be discussed.

Lastly, Chapter Six provides a discussion of the results of the current study. Common findings among all participating unions, limitations of the current study, research contributions, and recommendations for future research will be addressed. Finally, I conclude this study with some closing remarks which indicate that unions appear to be making positive changes with regards to the establishment of workplace domestic violence policies and initiatives.
Chapter Two: Review of Existing Literature

Introduction

Workplace domestic violence is difficult to define because it is so varied in nature. For instance, Moe and Bell (2004) address the concept of workplace domestic violence from a financial standpoint, and examine the effects it can have on the employability of victims. Swanberg et al. (2006) broadly refer to workplace domestic violence as a safety issue for victims whose abusers injure or harass them at the workplace, which can potentially affect their employability. Lloyd and Taluc (1999) focus on women’s labour force participation and how workplace domestic violence can jeopardize their employment due to the physical and psychological effects resulting from the abuse. In addition, Mighty (1997, p. 249) explains that “…family violence can affect the career advancement of individual victims; their performance at work; relationships with co-workers, supervisors, and customers; and, ultimately, organizational effectiveness.”

For the purposes of this research, workplace domestic violence is conceptualized as the act of domestic violence within the workplace and the perpetrator behaviour that interferes with his victim’s ability to maintain financial independence via her employment. While domestic violence can also prevent victims from obtaining employment due to the abusive control of perpetrators (Moe & Bell, 2004), this dimension cannot be measured in this study since unions would not have access to such information. Overall, research on workplace domestic violence is limited, especially in Canada. While it is clear, based on existing research, that domestic violence is slowly receiving more attention as a workplace concern, it is important to explore avenues
through which the problem is being addressed. At the present time, there does not appear to be any academic studies on the relation between unions and workplace domestic violence. The purpose for examining the role of unions with regard to workplace domestic violence is that they are a progressive source of social advancement for workers. In addition, the role of unions in addressing issues of gender inequity, discrimination, and worker vulnerability (i.e. as victims of sexual harassment and violence) has encouraged many employers to recognize and take action against these problems (Jackson, 2005).

According to Jackson (2005, p. 144), if not for unions, workers would be “on their own” when matters such as wrongful termination, inequitable treatment from employers, discrimination, and harassment arise. Unions are also a useful resource for women in terms of organizing themselves into women’s advocacy groups and committees within the union to provoke social change (Phillips & Phillips, 2000). In light of the fact that unions have been an active force for women in terms of achieving equitable workplace rights and protection from workplace injustices (i.e. sexual harassment and gender discrimination), it is appropriate to explore whether unions in Canada are making efforts to assist domestic violence victims within their membership. More specifically, how are unions approaching and responding to the issue of workplace domestic violence? What types of workers do these unions represent? What types of union policies and initiatives are now in place to protect workers? Because of the lack of research on union responses to workplace domestic violence, the literature summarized below draws from previous studies on workplace domestic violence with a particular emphasis on the employer’s role, rather than the union’s, in addressing the problem. This will produce a starting point
within which this study will examine the position unions have taken on the issue of workplace domestic violence.

To begin, a general discussion of workplace violence will draw attention to the various forms of violence that affect workers, and what employers have done in response to the problem. This will lead into a discussion of the role of gender in workplace violence and will demonstrate that certain acts of violence are more likely to involve women as victims and men as perpetrators. Next, I will examine how the problem of violence against women in the workplace is framed, followed by a discussion of workplace domestic violence as a social and organizational problem which will emphasize the growing visibility of a traditionally-perceived “private” abuse in the public workplace.

An exploration of the prevalence of domestic violence in the workplace will then be conducted in order to understand the extent of this problem. The effects on employee performance will be outlined with a particular focus on job interference tactics and on the job interference tactics that are often exercised by the perpetrator. The effects on secondary victims, including co-workers, employers, and the workplace in general, will be introduced and followed by a discussion of workplace liability. This will lead into a discussion of the types of WDVPI that currently exist, such as: proactive approaches, educative strategies, and responsive policies. Finally, the challenges to addressing domestic violence in the workplace will be explored with emphasis on the strengths and weaknesses of disclosing the abuse to co-workers, supervisors, and/or union representatives.
Once the state of the literature in this area has been described, the potential role of unions in responding to this issue will be discussed. Here, I refer to the successful efforts of unions to advance equitable measures for women in the workplace with regards to issues such as wages, gendered discrimination, and harassment. Next, union responses to issues affecting women will be discussed in more detail, including, for instance, the inclusion of gender-neutral language now present in collective agreements and how this signals a commitment to gender equity and the need for unions to continue going beyond the “bread and butter” issues that have traditionally directed their attention. Finally, union responses to violence against women in the workplace will briefly be discussed in order to illustrate the degree to which unions have taken this matter into account.

Workplace Violence in General

Workplace violence is a growing concern in Canada. In 2004, 356,000 cases of violent crimes, such as robbery and assault (both sexual and physical), were reported in the workplace, which accounted for 17 percent of all reported violent victimizations in Canada that year (de Léséleuc, 2004, p. 7). Workplace violence is difficult to define, however, because there are many variations of it (Boyd, 1995; Canadian Initiative on Workplace Violence, 2006). For instance, Boyd (1995) suggests that workplace violence may be defined based on Canadian Criminal Code definitions of violent acts of crime, and can include verbal abuse and sexual harassment. The Canadian Initiative on Workplace Violence (2006) supports this definition, referring to workplace violence as “any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work” (Canadian Initiative on Workplace Violence, 2006). The
Canadian Initiative on Workplace Violence (2007) elaborates upon this definition by stating that workplace violence goes beyond physical assault, and can include bullying, harassment, and stalking. These forms of violence are classified as human rights violations under the Canadian Human Rights Commission, therefore proper prevention mechanisms should exist to restrict their occurrence in the workplace (Canadian Initiative on Workplace Violence, 2006).

Few Canadian statistics are available on workplace violence as a result of limited research in this field (de Léséleuc, 2004). Furthermore, a great deal of violent victimization in the workplace goes unreported due to a variety of factors; for instance, workers often believe the act is too trivial to report, or that no justice will be gained in reporting the act (Boyd, 1995; Hesketh, Duncan, Estabrooks, Reimer, Giovannetti, Hyndman & Acorn, 2002). Limitations in research cause difficulty, not only in properly defining workplace violence, but in accurately quantifying its frequency. Research has shown that women and men are often victimized by different forms of workplace violence (de Léséleuc, 2004). Therefore, the relationship between gender and workplace violence must be discussed in order to outline various forms of violence that impact the working experiences of women, including workplace domestic violence. In addition, examining the types of workplaces in which women tend to be employed in is important for drawing connections between the types of unions that represent these women, and the types of unions that have adopted WDVPI.
The Role of Gender in Workplace Violence

Research shows that certain occupations are more likely to have higher rates of employee victimization (de Léséleuc, 2004). Data from the GSS on Victimization show that workers most vulnerable to on-the-job victimization include those in the occupational fields of health care, social assistance, accommodation, and food service (de Léséleuc, 2004, p. 8). According to Zukewich (2000, p. 107), these jobs are saturated with a primarily female labour force, with women comprising roughly 70 percent of these jobs. As such, it can be suggested that female workers are at particular risk of violent victimization because they comprise a large portion of employees in occupations with higher victimization rates. Furthermore, public health care workers, such as nurses, are vulnerable to violent victimization, not only at the hands of their patients, but also from co-workers in the form of emotional abuse or sexual harassment (Hesketh et al., 2002). Baines (2005) asserts that funding cutbacks to the predominantly female care-worker industry have resulted in a number of care-workers working individually, thereby increasing their risk of violent victimization. Therefore, drawing from the Canadian research that has been conducted on workplace violence, there appears to be strong evidence of gendered victimization.

In the United States, where more research is available, men are more likely than women to be victims of physical assault and homicide at work, with homicide being the most common cause of death (Moracco, Runyan, Loomis, Wolf, Napp, and Butts, 2000). However, while men are more often victimized by threats of violence perpetrated by strangers and clients, women are more likely to be violated by co-workers and intimate partners (Scalora, Washington, Casady & Newell, 2003). Swanberg, Logan, and Macke
(2005) note that female employees are often victimized by abusive (male) intimate partners while at work, and that these victims have a greater chance of being killed by their intimate partners than by co-workers (Swanberg et al., 2005). Furthermore, men are more likely to be perpetrators of all types of violence in workplace settings (Scalora et al., 2003).

Although gendered patterns of workplace violence exist, Canadian studies on workplace violence typically exclude domestic abuse. For instance, the GSS on Victimization does not measure the proportion of violent workplace crimes committed by intimate partners even though GSS data reveal that 66 percent of violent crimes occurring in the workplace are committed by perpetrators known to the victim (de Léséleuc, 2004, p. 10). Of these violent crimes, 38 percent involve perpetrators such as family and/or relatives, former intimate partners, friends, neighbours, and acquaintances (de Léséleuc, 2004, p. 10). Since it is clear that workplace victimization is a problem in Canada, an examination of how such violations are framed within a workplace context is warranted.

**Framing Violence Against Women as a Workplace Problem**

According to Walker (1990), the women’s movement brought forth the concept of violence against women as a problem in need of legal and social recognition. Now, incidents of gendered victimization, once overlooked in the workplace, are being transformed into human rights injustices. For instance, employers can no longer ignore the act of sexual harassment since it is now defined as inappropriate conduct within the workplace, and is a violation of various Canadian Human Rights Codes (Schell, 2003).

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2 Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination often against women by men through unwanted sexual attention or gestures that can be both direct and indirect (MacKinnon, 2000).
The Canadian Initiative on Workplace Violence (2006) defines harassment as a form of discrimination violating human rights regulations. Such harassment can include, but is not limited to: inappropriate and disrespectful joking, unwanted touching, undesired sexual advances or gestures, threatening actions, and insults (Canadian Initiative on Workplace Violence, 2006). It is now the employer’s legal responsibility to provide every employee with a safe working environment that is free of sexual harassment (Canada Labour Code, 2007). Not only can employers be held liable for harm inflicted upon victims (Backhouse, 2004), but organizational costs may be endured (Mighty, 1997). While implementing workplace sexual harassment policies was once a matter of employer discretion, it is now a matter of employer obligation enforced by the federal government through Canada Labour Code regulations. Similar to sexual harassment, workplace domestic violence has also recently been defined as a public issue.

Workplace Domestic Violence as a Social and Organizational Problem

The workplace has the potential to become an unsafe place when social problems in the private realm are made visible at work. Women have progressively transited from their traditional role as primary occupants of the home to active members of the workforce (Phillips & Phillips, 2000; Thistle, 2006). Since women now play a larger role in the labour force, there is an increased likelihood that issues affecting them in the home will be more visible in the workplace, and potentially affect the operation of the workplace. According to Zukewich (2000), women as a group have consistently gained stronger ground in the working environment. For example, thirty-seven percent of Canadian women were employed in 1976 whereas these numbers increased to 46 percent
in 1999, with more married women and mothers active in the labour force than ever before (Zukewich, 2000, p. 99). This gradual shift has encouraged some researchers to question the impact of domestic violence on women, not only as victims in the home, but as victims in their place of employment.

Women’s increased presence in the labour force has minimized the “privacy” of domestic violence as a result of its increased public visibility in the workplace. It would appear, then, that while women have successfully increased their presence in the workplace, the violence that some have endured in the home has followed them into this venue. What is more, the spread of domestic violence into the workplace may not only affect the primary victims themselves, for it can also cause harm to secondary victims such as co-workers, clients, and employers (Johnson & Gardner, 1999; Swanberg et al., 2006). As a result, domestic violence has become an additional form of workplace violence requiring the attention of employers.

Researchers argue that domestic violence is a workplace issue for various reasons, but mainly because it can transform the workplace into a dangerous zone for victims, co-workers, supervisors, and clients (Lloyd & Taluc, 1999; Hearn & Parkin, 2001; Scalora et al., 2003; Mighty, 2004; Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2006). Hearn and Parkin (2001) assert that the recent emphasis on harassment, bullying, and physical violence is important, but there are other forms of workplace violence (i.e. domestic violence) that have been over-looked. For example, in a focus group study with domestic violence survivors/victims, managers, and co-workers from Canadian workplaces, Mighty (2004) found that managers who had not received domestic violence response training were less likely to intervene because they felt it was not their job to act as a counselor. Similarly,
in a study by Denham and Gillespie (1992), co-workers and supervisors often chose not to intervene in the violence because they felt that the victim should just simply leave the abuser. These attitudes demonstrate a widespread misunderstanding in the workplace of the dynamics of domestic abuse. There were also various misconceptions about the average number of workdays missed by victims. For instance, co-workers who participated in the focus group typically argued that victims missed a considerable number of work days in comparison to them, and they felt pressured to compensate for tasks not completed by victims when absent (Mighty, 2004). On the other hand, victims were adamant that they did not miss more work than their co-workers, and that they were absent for legitimate reasons pertaining to the impact of domestic abuse, such as doctor’s appointments and legal consultations (Mighty, 2004). Lack of consensus on these issues suggests a need for educating organizational members about workplace domestic violence since workplace domestic violence not only has negative effects on victims, but on co-workers, clients, and the workplace itself. Moreover, the prevalence of workplace domestic violence shows that this is not a matter that can easily be ignored by employers, and will be discussed next.

Prevalence of Domestic Violence in the Workplace

According to Pizzino (2002), the media often leads the general public to believe that workplace violence is random and that perpetrators within the working environment (such as unsatisfied employees) are to be feared most. However, the majority of fatal and nonfatal workplace assaults in Canada are caused by persons not employed within the organization, thereby making this issue an urgent concern for occupational health and
safety committees (Pizzino, 2002). Furthermore, this presents a need for examining the various types of perpetrators that are not employed within the workplace, including workplace assaults committed by domestic abusers as discussed below.

Because the connection between domestic violence and the workplace has often been overlooked, the amount of academic research in this field, until recently, has been minimal. Although Canadian statistics are limited, results from a US-based National Crime Victimization Survey show that between 1992 and 1996, approximately 18,000 people were assaulted per year by their intimate partners while at work; of those cases, women were five times more likely than men to be victimized (Swanberg et al., 2006, p. 561). While these numbers may appear small in comparison to the total number of employed Americans, which is approximately 146 million (United States Department of Labour, 2007), these numbers demonstrate that although workplace domestic violence is a gendered problem that should not exist, it continues to disrupt the lives of many working women each year.

On a more severe level, workplace violence can result in fatal injury or death (Carr et al., 2004). Domestic homicides also occur in the workplace (Moe & Bell, 2004) which, again, is evidenced by the recent deaths of Lori Dupont (2005) and Aysegul Candir (2004), both of whom were killed by domestically abusive men. Furthermore, a report by the United States Bureau of Statistics (2001) shows that 1.7 million people were victimized at work between 1993 and 1997, with an outcome of 900 reported homicides (Scalora et al., 2003, p. 311). In an examination of workplace homicides in North Carolina, Moracco et al. (2000, p. 632) found that 12 out of 16 dispute-related homicides occurred as a result of a domestic dispute involving a female victim. In 40 percent of
these cases, a history of domestic abuse had been recorded (Moracco et al., 2000, p. 632). Finally, Swanberg et al. (2005, p. 287) found that approximately 20 per cent of women who are fatally injured on the job are victims of domestic violence in the home on a regular basis. In essence, victims are not necessarily protected from domestic abuse once they leave the home. This shows that the boundaries between the home and the workplace are not as distinct as some might believe, and negative consequences may occur for victims, co-workers, and the workplace in general.

**Consequences of Workplace Domestic Violence**

There is significant evidence to support the claim that the effects of domestic violence can be detrimental to the workplace. According to statistics gathered by some Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) in Canada, for instance, domestic violence accounts for approximately 25 to 50 per cent of workplace performance problems (Mighty, 1997, p. 253). As a result, I will discuss the effects of workers’ dependability and performance while focusing on various types of interference tactics that can inhibit a victim’s ability to perform on the job, such as job interference tactics and on-the-job interference tactics. Next, the consequences of workplace domestic violence in terms of maintaining employment will be discussed. Then, an examination of the effects of workplace domestic violence on unintended victims otherwise known as “secondary victims” will be conducted, followed by the effects on employers and the workplace in general. This will lead into a discussion of workplace liability in regards to workplace domestic violence.
Effects on Workers’ Performance and Dependability

Job Interference Tactics

Swanberg et al. (2006) describe the intrusive behaviour of perpetrators as ‘job interference tactics.’ Job interference tactics are attempts by the perpetrator to prevent the victim from attending a scheduled shift at work. These tactics can include, but are not limited to, turning the alarm clock off while the victim is sleeping, hiding her car keys or stealing her public transportation money, refusing to watch the children during her shift, physically restraining the victim so she cannot leave, causing visible harm to her body so that she will be ashamed to attend work, and psychologically harming the victim through the use of threats if she attends work (Mighty, 1997; Johnson & Gardner, 1999; Lloyd & Taluc, 1999; Swanberg et al., 2005; Reeves & O’Leary-Kelly, 2007). These measures can also affect the victim’s ability to concentrate at work if she is able to attend her shift. Such control mechanisms can impact a worker’s ability to maintain employment because increased tardiness and absenteeism can be perceived by employers as a lack of dedication to the job.

On the Job Interference Tactics

‘On the job interference tactics’ are intrusive strategies used by perpetrators to cause disruption at the victim’s place of work while she is there, and this can reflect negatively on the victim herself. On the job interference tactics are visible within the workplace and can be witnessed by other workers. These tactics are important because they represent the perpetrator’s ability to compromise not only the safety and productivity of the victim, but the safety of secondary victims such as co-workers and clients. One of
the most common job interference tactics is obsessive phone calls by the perpetrator to the victim while she is at work (Johnson & Gardner, 1999; Mighty, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2005). Perpetrators are also known for harassing victims in person while they are working, which can lead to a high level of workplace disruption and can cause the victim enough embarrassment and distraction to lose or quit her job (Swanberg et al., 2005).

**Difficulty Maintaining Employment and Consequences**

Maintaining employment is often very difficult for women who are domestically abused (Swanberg et al., 2006). For example, in their study of low-income women in Chicago, Lloyd and Taluc (1999) found that women who are abused are just as likely to be employed as those who are not, but it is more difficult for victims to maintain their employment. In situations of workplace domestic violence, the victim may experience the burden of the perpetrator’s interference through termination. According to Moe and Bell (2004), when a woman works it can impact an abuser’s sense of control over her. Violent partners are often jealous of victims’ economic stability and independence, and choose to strip victims of that status by exerting control over her ability to produce an income (Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2005). Abusers may accomplish this through the use of emotional and physical assault prior to the victim’s shift. As previously mentioned, if a victim has visible signs of injury or is physically impaired she will likely choose not to attend her shift (Moe & Bell, 2004). In essence, a victim’s job may be jeopardized due to the perpetrator’s frequent interference at the victim’s workplace as well as his physically abusive tactics which may prevent her from going into work at all (Moe & Bell, 2004).
Victims of domestic abuse are often subjected to long term financial consequences of workplace domestic violence. For instance, they are more likely to have experienced bouts of unemployment, dependence on welfare, and health-related problems (Lloyd & Taluc, 1999; Moe & Bell, 2004). Lloyd and Taluc (1999) further claim that women who have suffered domestic abuse throughout the past 12 months are likely to be unemployed. Moe and Bell (2004) support this claim by asserting that abused women often experience poverty when they resign from their jobs in order to escape violent households. Moe and Bell (2004) further contend that victims who drift between jobs in lower-end industries (i.e. food services) as a result of domestic violence often lack health care benefits until a probationary period has been achieved. Since victims in frequent escape of their abusers cannot maintain jobs for extended periods of time, they often lack basic health care benefits that may be essential for healing physical and psychological ailments caused by the abuse.

Conversely, the experience of domestic violence can motivate women to increase their productivity above normal standards, in spite of their trauma, out of fear that they might otherwise lose their jobs (Lloyd & Taluc, 1999; Mighty, 2004). Many victims, for instance, are aware that job maintenance is crucial in order to earn enough money to escape the abuse\(^3\) (Lloyd & Taluc, 1999). Even so, domestic violence victims often require additional time off in order to attend to various medical visits, legal appointments, and court hearings. According to Swanberg et al. (2005, p. 288), it is estimated that victims of domestic violence in the United States lose $18 million in earnings each year.

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\(^3\) Ending a violent relationship does not necessarily mean that abusers will stop victimizing their former partners. In fact, many women are most vulnerable at work because this is the one place where victims can be found on a regular basis (Moe & Bell, 2004). Although some women may feel they are placing themselves at risk of abuse in this familiar environment, it is often difficult to leave a job and be able to afford the economic cost of escape (Lloyd & Taluc, 1999).
as a result of absenteeism, termination, and job instability. Frequent absenteeism and tardiness can also impact a victim’s ability to receive company promotions because employers often view these workers as less efficient and unreliable (Mighty, 1997). If absenteeism and decreased productivity lead to job loss, the resulting financial strain may affect a victim’s ability to leave the violent household (Moe & Bell, 2004).

Victims of domestic abuse are often unable to leave violent settings due to financial strain or economic dependence on the abuser. In fact, some abusers disconnect women from their financial freedom as soon as the intimate partnership begins. In a study by Moe and Bell (2004), for instance, one participant reported that her child support benefits were cancelled by her abuser, and many others have had their driver’s licenses stolen. In essence, when a woman is forced into economic dependence by her abuser, her options become limited. A sudden lack of child support benefits would make employment even more necessary for a victim in need of financial resources, and a lack of driver’s license could make travelling to and from work more complicated. For a victim of domestic violence, economic stability through job maintenance may be more achievable with the assistance of WDVPI.

Employment maintenance is not a simple task for victims. Some women must leave their jobs when workplace policies are not in existence, simply because the safety plans they have devised are not compatible with work schedules or locations. Furthermore, Moe and Bell (2004) discovered that women in desperation often resort to accepting beds at the first available shelter. This means that the daily commute between the shelter and the workplace may be impractical if there is a significant distance between them. Moreover, abusers are often known to harass the victim’s family and friends when
she quits her job, due to the frustration of being unable to locate her (Moe & Bell, 2004). Such consequences for victims suggest that workplace domestic violence policies might consider the need for potential relocation in order to preserve the victim’s safety while still maintaining a source of income. Although this may not prevent the abuser from harassing the victim and her family entirely, it may provide her some freedom from his harassment while at work.

Effects on Secondary Victims

Although domestic abusers may not initially set out to target co-workers of their victims, the safety of co-workers can also be jeopardized (Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2006). Mighty (2004) found that co-workers feared that the victim’s abuser would harm them, too. For instance, perpetrators may bother co-workers and clients in the workplace when the victim is not there, or may harass co-workers for information regarding the victim’s whereabouts (Moe & Bell, 2004). Furthermore, perpetrators who frequently telephone victims at work can place co-workers in potentially harmful or stressful situations if they successfully draw co-workers into the middle of the situation (Johnson & Gardner, 1999). In a Canadian study by Mighty (2004), co-workers of domestic violence victims admitted to experiencing decreased concentration as a result of frequent phone calls placed by abusers, thereby resulting in lower productivity and output levels. According to Moe and Bell (2004), this can result in psychological and physical harm. In turn, co-workers may, to a lesser degree, experience similar effects as the primary victim herself, which can result in reduced productivity and increased absenteeism that hurts the organization financially (Moe & Bell, 2004).
Another negative effect on secondary victims is the stress they face in observing the impact of workplace domestic violence on primary victims. In addition to safety concerns, co-workers often feel a need to protect victims at work, which can be emotionally straining (Mighty, 2004). Co-workers interviewed by Mighty (2004) admitted to feeling fearful about victims harming themselves while operating dangerous machinery. Consequently, co-workers also acknowledged their frustrations with performing extra duties during shifts to compensate for the limited output of victims (Mighty, 2004). Co-workers also felt that victims were less willing and able to extend a "team player" attitude, which was reflected in meager efforts to interact with clients, thereby lowering the quality of customer service in the establishment (Mighty, 2004). In essence, the workplace atmosphere becomes stressed when the effects of domestic violence impact the social cohesion of its workers, and the ability of workers to positively interact with clients.

Effects on Employers and the Workplace in General

As shown in previous sections, domestic violence can economically strain the workplace. For instance, Day (1995, p. 7) found that the health-related costs of domestic violence in 1995 amounted to a yearly average of $7.6 million in medical expenditures and $1.4 million in medical costs, some of which are incurred by employers through medical health coverage. In a Statistics Canada survey in 1995, 335,000 women reported taking at least one day off work for reasons related to domestic violence, equating to $36.3 million dollars of lost income provided victims were absent for only one day of work (Day, 1995, p. 7). Nearly a decade later, Moe and Bell (2004, p. 34) discovered
through an examination of employer-sponsored health care programs, that American employers were said to be spending an average of $5 billion yearly on costs related to domestic violence such as absenteeism and tardiness, a decline in employee productivity, turnover rates, and increased security measures (Johnson & Gardner, 1999; Urban & Bennett, 1999; Moe & Bell, 2004). Moracco et al. (2000) assert that employers are also responsible for paying to address property damages when an abuser aggressively intrudes upon the premises, and may also have to increase security measures and other safety precautions at their own expense. In addition, Day (1995) emphasizes that women who are both employed and domestically abused will require recovery time. Increased absenteeism can therefore affect the Canadian economy as a result of reduced contribution to the workplace (Day, 1995). In essence, employers can be held financially liable for the many impacts of domestic violence, and may even face legal repercussions if appropriate safety measures are not ensured.

Workplace Liability

Employers may be held liable for violence and inappropriate behaviours endured by primary victims and co-workers. Although no Canadian workplace domestic violence cases were located to demonstrate this, the Canada Labour Code (1985) requires that employers take reasonable measures to protect workers against gendered violence, such as sexual harassment, and must agree to impose disciplinary measures against the perpetrator. In the United States, however, employers can be reprimanded for not helping victims if domestic abuse was suspected and disclosed (Moe & Bell, 2004). Such accountability falls in line with the general responsibility of employers to intervene in
cases of sexual harassment among co-workers (Scalora et al., 2003). In other words, when employers knowingly fail to assist victims of sexual harassment, they may be held legally responsible for the outcome. With the growing recognition of domestic violence as both a public and workplace issue, the same consequences could be true for an employer who chooses not to protect a victimized employee.

**What is Being Done in Response to Workplace Domestic Violence**

Because of its prevalence in the workplace, domestic violence can no longer be ignored as "private" matter that occurs only in the home. Although workplace domestic violence has not received significant attention in the past, some employers are now introducing policies and initiatives that respond to this social problem. The types of WDVPI most commonly adopted by employers are discussed in greater detail below.

**Types of Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives**

Because of the growing recognition of domestic violence as a workplace issue, written policies and organizational initiatives have recently been implemented in various workplaces.  

4 Formalized policies can be of assistance to victims when needing to choose safety over economic stability. Moe and Bell (2004) contend that when organizations lack formal policies addressing workplace domestic violence, victims often feel compelled to resign if abusers are compromising their safety and embarrassing them at

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4 For the purpose of this research, "policies" and "initiatives" were chosen as terms for describing workplace responses to domestic violence. The term, policy, refers to formalized procedures created as guidelines for addressing domestic violence in the workplace that "outline simple personnel practices that provide employers and employees with options for decreasing personal and workplace risks and liability, making the workplace a safer, more supportive environment" (Family Violence Prevention Fund, 2006). Initiatives are recognized as semi-formal standards for acknowledging and responding to workplace domestic violence via education and programs (Family Violence Prevention Fund, 2006).
work. Workplace policies and initiatives can prove useful in preparing for unacceptable behaviour before it begins. According to Scalora et al. (2003, p. 324), written policies are ideal because they “assist employers and employees through clear, objective criterion of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour within the workplace.” In a focus group study by Mighty (2004), victimized workers, co-workers, and managers admitted that a lack of WDVPI left managers unprepared for addressing the problem of workplace domestic violence, and that a lack of training and education left managers and co-workers unable to empathize with the struggles of victims. Implementing WDVPI, then, could prepare all members of the workplace for potential incidents of workplace domestic violence, and could serve as a guide for addressing the problem with a supportive and empathic approach. Policies can also provide a uniform, systematic approach that can allow all victimized workers equity in receiving support from their employers.

Perpetrators of domestic violence are often responsible for intrusive and intimidating behaviour at the victim’s place of employment (Scalora et al., 2003; Swanberg et al., 2006). Verbal harassment and physical assault initiated by the perpetrator at the workplace can be responded to more readily if formal policies exist and are clearly understood by all (Swanberg et al., 2006). Swanberg et al. (2006) argue that workers at all levels of an organization should be trained to recognize signs of domestic violence, and to apprehend a situation of suspected co-worker endangerment. Swanberg et al. (2006, p. 574) also assert that “although such types of employee development training may seem more plausible for medium and large-size organizations with larger budgets, small-size organizations might partner with local social service agencies to develop educational strategies conducive to its needs.” In other words, the size of the
organization should not be the determining factor in deciding whether or not to implement response policies, as domestic violence is a social problem that can pervade an organization of any size.

Workplace policies can also be effective in addressing warning signs that could lead to serious domestic violence-related problems in the workplace (Scalora et al., 2003) and these can be useful to employers and union representatives. Policies and initiatives can include proactive/preventative approaches, educative strategies, and responsive policies as discussed below. These approaches can be taken by employers and union representatives to minimize the effects of domestic violence before they harm the victim and/or workplace in general, thereby potentially preventing harm to all parties involved (Johnson & Gardner, 1999).

Proactive Approaches

Proactive approaches involve victim-based measures for preventing victimization at work, and for assisting victims who wish to escape the violence altogether. In order to combat the effects of domestic violence on primary and secondary victims, some have suggested that employers must take a proactive approach in dealing with the violence. According to the Family Violence Prevention Fund (2006), workplaces that address the issue of domestic violence, not only assist victims, but limit risks associated with the violence through prevention. Preventative techniques can include: altering the victim’s work schedule by providing her with varied shifts throughout the week (so that the abuser does not know when the victim is working), relocating the victim to another branch of the

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5 It should be noted that these categories may not be mutually exclusive; for instance, while a policy might be primarily proactive in nature, it could also be also be responsive and/or educative.
organization, screening company phone calls, and increasing security on the work premises (Johnson & Gardner, 1999). Scalora et al. (2003) and Moracco et al. (2000) agree that knowledge of prevention strategies is imperative for employees of all organizational levels. For example, paid training for both employees and supervisors could teach them to recognize signs of domestic violence victimization, and help them respond to the problem in a timely and empathic fashion.

Educative Strategies

Educative strategies are victim, community, and employer-based measures intended to enhance awareness and understanding of domestic violence for all employees (Johnson & Gardner, 1999). These strategies are particularly important in order to prepare all workers for perpetrator interference and to establish the means for which to support victims in overcoming the abuse as well as maintaining their employment. Educative strategies are designed to discretely inform victims that help is available while encouraging co-workers and employers to recognize the signs of abuse in order to be of assistance (i.e. in departing from an abusive relationship).

Because victims often fear that their abusers will learn that they have sought assistance through social service providers, it is not uncommon for victims to contact these agencies during their shifts (Moe & Bell, 2004). In this context, educative initiatives in the workplace could provide assistance to employees in danger because informative resources would be made discretely available to them; for instance, attaching pamphlets for women’s shelters to employee pay cheques (Gardner & Johnson, 1999). If victims feel a sense of support in the workplace, then seeking help could be a less
intimidating process (Mighty, 2004). As Mighty (2004) contends, it is important for co-workers and supervisors to offer their support, but suggesting that victims leave their abusive partners (as commonly done according to participants in her study) is not a beneficial form of support. Research has shown that there is a tendency for violence to escalate when the victim leaves an abusive setting or even indicates that she has given it some thought (Moracco et al., 2000). Since the home can be a dangerous place for victims, some women use company time to locate resources not only to escape the violent setting, but to arrange medical appointments and legal assistance in response to the abuse (Moe & Bell, 2004). Moreover, some victims appreciate time spent at work because they may feel a sense of temporary refuge from the home, and use this time as a means for coping with the abuse (Denham & Gillespie, 1992; Reeves & O’Leary-Kelly, 2007). Therefore, if employers and organizations can provide victims with the tools they need to cope with the effects of abuse and seek services that can help them escape, there may be positive benefits for the workplace in the long run. For instance, assisting a victim in leaving an abusive setting might result in preserving her job, and could allow the employer to maintain a trained employee. However, the ability to educate victims depends on increased education of co-workers and supervisors as well.

Although the establishment of WDVPI can signal a positive change for victims in the workplace, it can be difficult to convince others about the reality of domestic abuse. In an extensive interview session with victims/survivors of domestic violence, co-workers, and managers, Mighty (2004) found that, although disclosure was encouraged, co-workers and managers often possessed stereotypical assumptions of domestic violence victims. As previously mentioned, for instance, some managers and co-workers often
failed to understand the safety concerns related to escaping a domestically violent setting, as the most common suggestion offered was for the victim to simply leave the abuser (Mighty, 2004). In short, management and staff often fail to understand the underlying pressures and dangers associated with domestic violence and assume that it is something that the victim can resolve by simply abandoning the situation. Mighty (2004, p. 122) found that managers and co-workers were adamant that “at some point, survivors had to learn how to separate what was happening at the home from what they were required to do in the workplace.” This quote reveals an inadequate understanding of the effects of domestic abuse, as well as maintenance of the traditional belief that domestic violence should be kept in the home.

It is important to educate the entire workplace about domestic violence so that co-workers and supervisors are trained in recognizing abuse. Swanberg et al. (2006) claim that disclosing domestic violence can stigmatize victims due to lack of education on the issue. Furthermore, Mighty (2004) found that victims of domestic violence often felt excluded from various promotions and advancements in the workplace because of the apparent abuse. As a result, many victims attempt to hide the abuse to protect their reputations and to prevent exclusion from professional advancements (Swanberg et al., 2006). As such, it is necessary for employers to develop policies and initiatives that will encourage victims to disclose abuse without fear of repercussions, and will educate all workers and supervisors on the causes and effects of domestic violence so that stigma will be minimal at worst (Swanberg et al., 2006).
Responsive Policies

Domestic violence perpetrators can also be disruptive within their own working environments. For example, frequent calls or visits to the victim's place of employment (during their own scheduled shifts) may distract them from their duties. This, too, may result in a reduction of productivity, thereby impacting organizational costs. In addition, according to Swanberg et al. (2005), workplaces that employ domestic violence perpetrators may be economically affected when these offenders are sentenced to jail time, probation orders, court dates, and counseling. As such, Johnson and Gardner (1999) propose that employers establish domestic violence policies that will not only support victims in crisis, but will encourage treatment for abusers. Furthermore, Johnson and Gardner (1999) advocate on behalf of workplace domestic violence policies that reinforce disciplinary action for perpetrators who harass and abuse victims during company time, such as programs for abusers offered through EAPs, or referrals to batterer treatment programs.

Challenges to Addressing Domestic Violence in the Workplace

The effectiveness of WDVPI lies in the assumption that victims will disclose the abuse they are encountering in order to receive the workplace support and assistance they need. While disclosure can provide victims access to various benefits offered by the employer and/or union, it may also cause them to feel unsafe. The challenges of disclosure will now be discussed in further detail.
Weaknesses of Disclosure

Some victims of domestic violence might be hesitant to disclose the abuse in efforts to receive employer protection (Swanberg et al., 2006). However, disclosure is normally required in order for victims to seek protection from disciplinary measures such as termination. One standard that should be addressed is whether domestic violence disclosure by the victim is necessary for job protection and other benefits the employer may offer, or if the recognition of it by co-workers and/or supervisors is enough. Consequently, there are many issues involved in choosing to disclose domestic violence to fellow co-workers, managers, and others, as will be examined.

Due to the generalized assumption that domestic violence is a matter of privacy, victims often choose not to disclose the abuse to co-workers or supervisors (Swanberg et al., 2006). In a study by Swanberg et al. (2006), although some victims admitted to being personally affected by the act of domestic violence, they felt strongly that household issues should remain in the home and that there was no reason to discuss them in the workplace. Others simply feared that disclosure would cause stigmatization that would result in negative treatment by co-workers and supervisors, and some victims claimed to have experienced embarrassment due to socio-cultural stigmas surrounding domestic abuse. In sum, a lack of trust among co-workers and a fear of judgment may prevent victims from formally disclosing abuse (Swanberg et al., 2006).

Confiding in people who may well be strangers is a frightening experience for many (Manitoba Women's Directorate, 2005). While disclosure is typically necessary for victims to receive workplace protection, victims may place themselves at great risk of harm if they disclose the abuse (Swanberg et al., 2006). This is a problem for many
abused women as an escalation of violence may be feared if the abuser learns that disclosure has occurred\textsuperscript{6} (Mighty, 1997; Swanberg et al., 2006). Many abusers threaten to kill their victims if the violence is disclosed, or if others become involved (Swanberg et al., 2006). In addition, some women worry that their employers will terminate them when the abuse is disclosed (Swanberg et al., 2006). Although employers cannot legally justify termination on the basis of domestic violence alone, lack of disclosure may result in the termination of a victim due to the byproducts of abuse, such as high absenteeism and lack of productivity (Moe & Bell, 2004). In conclusion, although disclosure may be necessary for victimized workers to receive protection from employers and unions, the potential harm of disclosure may prevent them from seeking the assistance of available WDVPI.

Benefits of Disclosure

Although fear may prevent many victims from seeking help within the workplace, there are often many benefits to disclosing the violence provided that employers are responsive to the needs of victims. For instance, victims can better justify increased absenteeism, low productivity levels, high levels of stress, and lack of interpersonal communication among co-workers by admitting that they are being abused (Lloyd & Taluc, 1999; Mighty, 2004). In fact, some will disclose based on the assumption that supervisors have already suspected the abuse (Lloyd & Taluc, 1999). Disclosure might also be considered when an abuser's intrusive tactics become overbearing, especially when supervisors are visibly annoyed with the intrusion. For example, the victim may

\textsuperscript{6} Even though organizations may enforce confidentiality standards, abusers could learn about the disclosure in other ways (i.e. if the abuser discovers domestic violence brochures in the victim's possession).
feel that it is necessary to explain the abuser’s tendency to frequently call the workplace or make sudden appearances during her shift (Swanberg et al., 2006). Furthermore, victims may choose to disclose the abuse in an effort to explain physical ailments such as black eyes and other visible injuries (Swanberg et al., 2006).

Women are more likely to disclose the abuse if they are welcomed with solid support in the workplace, if their quality of work performance is suffering, if health-related matters develop, or if safety issues and fear become a significant problem (Lloyd & Taluc, 1999). One study showed that participants who had disclosed domestic abuse were more likely to still be employed at the time of interview than those who had not (Swanberg et al., 2006). This demonstrates that WDVPI may have a positive effect on the victim’s ability to maintain employment, provided they receive support from their employers and co-workers. What must be established, however, is whether Canadian unions have adopted their own policies and initiatives responding to workplace domestic violence. As such, the potential for unions to address matters of concern to women in the workplace, including domestic violence, will now be discussed.

The Progressive Role of Unions in Canada

The increased visibility of domestic violence in the workplace has resulted in a need for greater attention to the problem from employers; however, many Canadian workers are also members of organized labour unions. As such, this research examines the presence of union policies and initiatives responding to workplace domestic violence. However, there currently appears to be no available research on union responses to workplace domestic violence and few studies exist on union responses to workplace domestic violence.

7 30.8 percent of workers in Canada are unionized (HRSDC, 2006).
violence more generally. Regardless, unions are a progressive force in both the workplace and in society having dealt with a wide variety of social problems and, therefore, it is possible that they have a significant role to play when addressing this issue. In particular, it is necessary to explore the various approaches some Canadian unions have taken to reduce gender inequity in the workplace. More specifically, it is important to recognize union efforts to include women in formal positions and in policy development roles, as well as to explore the types of policies and initiatives developed by unions in efforts to reduce women's vulnerability and marginalization in the workplace.

Unions: An Overview

Unions play a significant role in the lives of many Canadian workers. As of January 1, 2006, 4,441,000 workers were employed in unionized workplaces, and this number constitutes 30.8 percent of the Canadian labour force (HRSDC, 2006). The importance of such numbers is revealed in the fact that unionization typically allows for more competitive wages and salaries, more extensive benefits packages, and safer working conditions than workplaces that are not unionized (Jackson, 2006). For instance, unionized workers in Canada earn an hourly wage of roughly seven to fourteen percent higher than non-unionized workers in similar jobs, and have greater access to medical and dental plans (Jackson, 2006). This may be beneficial to domestic violence victims whose access to family funds is limited, as well as to victims in need of medical assistance due to domestic injury. Furthermore, pay equity is a primary concern for unions (Phillips & Phillips, 2000; Jackson, 2005). Providing union members with more
equitable wages and benefits may be crucial for women in acquiring the economic stability that is required when leaving a violent household.

Historically, however, unions were not always equitable in terms of providing women the same benefits awarded to men. For instance, unions formerly perceived the primary role of women to be the family homemaker whose real contribution to the union was in supporting her “union husband” (Phillips & Phillips, 2000). According to Phillips & Phillips (2000, p. 161), prior to the 1950s “the union position indicated that men worked and women made the coffee.” Furthermore, some unions assisted employers in providing men with an economic advantage over women (Phillips & Phillips, 2000; Forrest, 2004). Today, many of these disparities have been corrected, yet the widespread receipt of low wages, meager benefits, questionable job security, and a greater susceptibility to harassment in Canadian workplaces still place women at a disadvantage in comparison to their male colleagues (Clark et al, 1996; Phillips & Phillips, 2000; Forrest, 2004). However, considerable efforts have since been made to reduce these gaps with the help of unions (Jackson, 2005). For instance, while Canadian women earn an average of 65 percent of a man’s wage, unions have reduced this gap somewhat, with some unions eliminating it entirely (Briskin, 1999). Unionized women are also more likely than non-unionized women to enjoy more inclusive benefits and better job security (Forrest, 2004). These advancements demonstrate the actions unions have taken to recognize and promote women’s inclusion as valued members as well as to further women’s equality in the workplace.

While union membership has been advantageous to many Canadian workers, unions are currently struggling in terms of representation and expansion. For instance,
union membership has decreased since the mid 1980s. In 1984, 37.2 percent of workers were unionized in comparison to 30 percent in 2006 (Jackson, 2006, p. 6). According to Kumar and Schenk (2006) the growth of part-time jobs and corporate downsizing has reduced union membership, which may be of particular concern to female workers since women of all ages are more likely than men to be employed on a part-time basis (Zukewich, 2000). Moreover, the privatization of public sector occupations has had implications for workers, women in particular. According to Stinson (2004), organized public sector jobs have traditionally provided workers with competitive wages and benefits. However, the privatization of health services, social services, and education has taken a negative toll on women, who typically occupy these occupational fields (Stinson, 2004). For instance, many of these workers have experienced a significant decrease in wages in addition to the loss of employer-provided benefits (Stinson, 2004). In spite of these challenges, many women, as workers and union members, have pushed forward within the union environment to have their voices heard and concerns addressed. Since women now enjoy greater representation in unions, it is important to understand the impact their presence has had on unions and the changes that have developed as a result of their activism.

The Role of Women in Unions

Despite the large number of unionized women workers, they continue to be under-represented in appointed positions of union leadership (Cuneo, 1993; Briskin, 1999; Kumar & Schenk, 2006). As previously discussed, unions themselves have not always practiced gender equality, which may partially be attributed to the low
representation of women in these appointed positions. In the past, some unions were guilty of discriminatory practices regarding the exclusion of women from leadership roles and the inattention to "women’s issues" (Phillips & Phillips, 2000). In addition, while unions generally stress the importance of gender equality within the workplaces of members whom they represent, one study has shown that these practices are not always enforced within the workplaces of union headquarters themselves (Clark et al., 1996).

Cuneo (1993) contends that the patriarchal pressures existing in the home may also be a cause of unequal representation of women in appointed union positions; for instance, unequal childcare responsibilities, and an imbalance of domestic work. Stinson (2004) supports this contention by stating that women generally assume a larger portion of domestic responsibilities in the home than men, thereby making it more difficult for women to accept more time-consuming leadership roles in the workplace and/or union. Unions have recognized that women workers generally have different life experiences than men, and will have different needs that must be recognized if more women are to accept leadership roles within unions (Yates, 2006). For the most part, however, these practices have been reversed and unions are now considerably more willing to address women’s issues (i.e. gender discrimination, pay equity, and unequal gender roles) than are employers (Phillips & Phillips, 2000). Accordingly, unions are often prepared to settle issues of fairness and equity in court if employers are unwilling to cooperate with equity standards, and this was demonstrated through the 2004 multibillion dollar settlement won by the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) for women members demanding pay equity (Jackson, 2005). It is clear, then, that women and unions can be a strong force in affecting change within the workplace.
Unions have historically acted as vehicles for social change. Participating women have benefited from this by organizing themselves within the union in such a way that brings attention to issues affecting them (Briskin, 1999). Since the 1970s, women’s committees, leadership training for women, and other programs have been introduced in various unions as a way of increasing leadership opportunities for women (Yates, 2006). According to Briskin (1999, p. 166) “trade union women work with community-based feminist groups, both to build coalitions around key issues such as child care and pay equity and to pressure the union movement to respond to the feminist challenge.” In essence, members of women’s committees are activists and messengers in the workplace spreading awareness of the union’s role in providing assistance to victims of various social problems that exist in both the workplace and the community.

Matters such as workplace gender discrimination, sexual harassment, and assault are often discussed in organized women’s groups and committees, and members develop agendas for taking action against these problems (Cuneo, 1993; Phillips & Phillips, 2000). According to Cuneo (1993), informal activism is crucial not only for strengthening feminist values and power in unions, but for creating advancements in the labour movement. Additionally, Forrest (2004, p. 69) asserts that “feminist activists have insisted that unions address systemic barriers to women’s economic equality such as sexual harassment, family responsibilities, and low pay for traditional women’s work.” Feminists, as leaders, in unions can promote the development of new policies, but when few women hold leadership positions within the union, it is difficult for activists to ensure that these developments occur (Cuneo, 1993). Therefore, in order for more women’s issues to be directly addressed in union policies, increased formal
representation of women in unions is necessary (Cuneo, 1993; Phillips & Phillips, 2000). Nevertheless, it is important to recognize the great feats that many unions have accomplished in order to address issues pertaining to women’s safety, equality, and anti-oppression in the workplace.

Union Responses to Issues Affecting Women

Unions have made great strides in responding to issues affecting women because “... unions in Canada are becoming increasingly sensitive to women’s workplace concerns” (Kumar, 1993, pp. 215-216). Moreover, women’s issues now bear great importance to unions during collective bargaining (Phillips & Phillips, 2000), and this is evident through the adoption of inclusive language in union documents and policy statements. The Canadian Auto Workers union (CAW), for instance, adopted inclusive language as a means for curbing sexual discrimination in the workplace (Hargrove, 1997). All CAW collective agreements and publications now contain generic language that addresses women and men as equal workers, and avoids differentiation of certain jobs as “men’s” jobs or “women’s” jobs (Hargrove, 1997). Hargrove (1997) explains that,

...in the past, many collective agreements included language that referred to men’s jobs and women’s jobs. There were different rates of pay, and different seniority lists for men and women. Today, this kind of discrimination is illegal. Our (CAW) collective agreements have been changed to reflect these new laws.

Recognizing, in written form, women and men as equals, demonstrates the ability of unions to advocate social advancement.
Although women and men must be recognized equally as workers and union members, women often possess different needs as workers, many of which have been recognized as a result of women’s activism in unions. As such, women have raised consciousness to the fact that basic ‘bread and butter’ issues (i.e. wages) are not enough to satisfy and balance their work and life conflicts. The CAW, for example, has implemented policies that protect members against harassment in the workplace, and provide specific guidelines on how workers can file sexual harassment claims. What needs to be made clearer, though, is how Canadian unions are responding to violence against women both in the workplace and in society more generally.

Unions Addressing Violence in the Workplace

There does not appear to be many academic studies on union responses to violence against women in the workplace. What is known, however, is that

In Canada, unions in both public and private sectors are playing active roles in assisting their members with efforts to prevent violence at work. Much of the unions’ activity has been geared to pressuring employers and governments for the recognition of violence as an occupational hazard and for the enactment of legislative, policy and collective bargaining provisions (Pizzino, 2002, p. 166).

According to Pizzino (2002), many unions in Canada have sought to encourage Workers’ Compensation Boards to categorize incidents of workplace violence with a more efficient method. At the present time, these boards do not capture the full essence of violence in the workplace because too many incidents go unrecorded when injury or death do not occur. It must be understood that victims are not always physically or visibly injured when violence enters the workplace, thereby resulting in the potential neglect of
attempted violence, emotional abuse, or physical violence that does not leave visible wounds. Furthermore, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) has stressed the importance of increasing attention to violence in the workplace. For instance, the CLC has recommended that union health and safety representatives be trained on issues such as violence against women, recognition of aggression in individuals, violence prediction, proper attention to violent situations, and effective follow-up with violent occurrences (Pizzino, 2002). What can be seen, then, is that Canadian unions are, in fact, addressing the issue of general workplace violence.

In regards to the main question guiding this research, it is important to explore the types of unions that have addressed the issue of violence against women in the workplace; more specifically, workplace domestic violence. According to Kumar (1993), however, a lack of certain union policies and initiatives does not necessarily indicate that union representatives and leaders did not support their adoption. In other words, there is little a union can do to introduce new policy if the employer dismisses the motion and oftentimes employers will simply refuse to comply with agreed upon conditions (Forrest, 2004). In fact, the unsuccessful efforts of unions to implement equity measures in the workplace are typically the result of employer resistance (Phillips & Phillips, 2000). Still, union policies and initiatives may be viewed as more reliable sources of employee protection, especially in the event that Canadian social legislation fails. In order to understand the action national and provincial unions have taken to address workplace domestic violence, an exploration of existing policies and initiatives is necessary, and will occur in the analysis chapter of this report.
Next, I will discuss the theoretical framework that guides this study. More specifically, I will demonstrate how the broad framework of the public/private dichotomy explains how domestic violence has shifted in definition from a matter of privacy, to a public social problem. In addition, socialist feminist criminology's position on the public/private dichotomy will be introduced as a theoretical model for which to assess women's victimization through the intersecting oppressions of capitalism and patriarchy.
Chapter Three: Theoretical Framework

Introduction

In Canada, various “private” issues have evolved into social problems requiring public attention. One of these issues is workplace domestic violence, which is currently receiving greater attention by both employers and unions as a public concern. When issues affecting women are considered “private” in nature, they are believed to be publicly dismissible. Schneider (1994, p. 42) contends that:

The concept of privacy encourages, reinforces, and supports violence against women... privacy says that what goes on in the violent relationship should not be the subject of state or community intervention. Privacy says that it is an individual and not a systemic problem. Privacy operates as a mask for inequality, protecting male violence against women.

Accordingly, the issue of workplace domestic violence as a private matter would mean that employers could, potentially, ignore the problem by claiming that it is not their role to become involved. However, the visibility (and effects) of such violence at work demonstrates that workplace domestic violence is, in fact, a public issue requiring the attention of employers and unions.

This chapter examines the public/private nature of domestic violence within the workplace from the theoretical perspective of socialist feminist criminology. More specifically, this chapter begins with a discussion of the evolution of domestic violence from an issue of privacy to a publicly-recognized social problem. Next, the public nature of workplace domestic violence will be discussed as a social problem that requires protection for victims now that women are active members of the workforce. As such, this section will demonstrate the need for WDVPI.
An examination of socialist feminist criminology and its position on the public/private dichotomy will illustrate the development of feminist criminology as a theoretical framework that focuses on the intersection of gender and crime. More specifically, this theoretical framework draws attention to the fact that women and men have different experiences with crime and victimization, and that the public/private oppressions faced by women stem from the patriarchal-capitalist structure of western society. This will lead into a discussion of the interference of domestic violence in the workplace. Finally, a discussion of women as victims in the workplace, and how “private” or “hidden” violence is publicized, will be conducted through a socialist feminist criminological lens. In this section, the evolution of workplace sexual harassment from a private issue to a public human rights violation will be used as a framework through which to understand the current progression of domestic violence as a workplace problem.

**Domestic Violence and the Public/Private Dichotomy**

In Canada, women have traditionally been considered primary occupants of the family home, or of the private sphere. Men, on the other hand, have dominated the public sphere in accordance with their expected roles as economic breadwinners and political figures (Schneider, 1994; Kelly, 2003). This image reflects the traditional patriarchal structure of the family, wherein man is both the father and master of the household (Kelly, 2003). With patriarchy comes the societal expectation of man as dominant and woman as submissive which may reflect the widespread social belief that men should physically discipline the family, thereby resulting in an overrepresentation of women as
victims of violence in the home (Kelly, 2003). When violence is denied or hidden within the privacy of the home, it is easier to ignore. Because the home has traditionally been designated a private space under all forms of social organization, the pervasive nature of domestic violence was not realized until consciousness-raising emerged with the second-wave feminist movement (Walker, 1990). According to Walker (1990) the development of women's shelters in the 1970s, in addition to the emergence of women in the public sphere, demanded public attention to the traditionally perceived private issues of violence against women and gender inequity. For instance, the inaccurate depiction of the home as a safe haven for women and children was soon discovered when women increasingly fled their homes for safety (Walker, 1990). It was at this time that domestic violence could no longer be ignored as a private issue that was invisible in the public sphere. As a result, domestic violence required public recognition as a social problem in order to increase public acknowledgement of its criminal nature. This transformation would indicate to all members of the public that domestic violence is not justifiable behind closed doors.

Attaining widespread public recognition of domestic violence as a social problem and criminal offence was a challenging task for the women's movement. In order to have their voices heard, members of women's groups joined task force committees, and lobbied social service providers to receive the necessary funds to operate programs such as women's shelters (Walker, 1990). Providing safe havens for victims who lacked legal protection was, therefore, of significant importance to the women's movement. According to Schneider (1994), laws did not readily protect women from abuse until the battered women's movement succeeded in having domestic violence widely recognized
as a criminal act. Although domestic violence could have been treated as a criminal act prior to the battered woman’s movement, it often was not. In other words, publicizing this private problem as a criminal matter required feminist input in various components of the public sphere. The adoption of the term wife assault provoked an initial connection between violence against women and the criminal justice system (Walker, 1990). The legal approach of providing women with protective orders from their abusers, for instance, exemplified the public nature of the problem (Schneider, 1994). In short, the feminist struggle to have domestic violence recognized as a public problem indicates a successful reversal of the traditional notion of private familial discipline to a public, criminal offence (Marcus, 1994). However, acts of domestic violence, as well as the effects of domestic violence, are not always confined to the familial home. In other words, the traditionally private problem of domestic violence is becoming more visible in public places.

According to Schneider (1994), the concept of privacy is not as straightforward as it appears because the public/private framework is not a clearly defined dichotomy. In other words, domestic violence is part of a larger, systemic problem that cannot be examined on the basis of its private, or public, dimensions alone. Schneider (1994) contends that certain aspects of the private sphere overlap with the public sphere, meaning various social issues cannot easily be defined as one or the other because public and private issues interact on a continuum. According to Kelly (2003, p. 1), “as domestic violence becomes more visible, the enormous price it extracts from all members of society is increasingly clear.” In other words, domestic violence cannot solely be viewed as a private issue when it produces negative effects that are visible within the public.
realm. Since domestic violence is now defined as a public problem and as a criminal
own, it is important to recognize that there are various venues within which this crime
can occur. The workplace is one location that domestic violence can occur within and
victims, as well as the workplace, can be affected by the abuse as already documented.

The Public/Private Nature of Workplace Domestic Violence

Increased visibility of women in the public sphere has prompted changes to public
policy. Since the 1960s and 1970s, women have made a dramatic shift from the private
realm to the public sphere as both workers and independent caretakers of their lives
(Boyd, 1997). Due to women's increased participation in the labour force, the damaging
effects of domestic violence are now more visible in the workplace (Mighty, 2004; Moe
& Bell, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2006). In other words, the appearance of domestic
violence within the public workplace emphasizes the reality of its public nature.
According to Cohen (1994), domestic abuse can be viewed as private violence with
public side effects because the damage inflicted upon victims by their abusers inhibits
their ability to perform at work and, in turn, domestic violence impacts the economy
which is of significant social concern. Furthermore, domestic violence policies and
initiatives should be extended to all members of the workplace to demonstrate that this is
not an individual problem, but a societal one (Cohen, 1994). Cohen (1994) also contends
that these initiatives could lessen the damaging effects of domestic violence on the public
sphere (in this case, the workplace) while the effects of such abuse on victims occupying
the public realm can be minimized. Implementing workplace policies and initiatives
indicates an increasing recognition that domestic violence is both a public and private
concern, and demonstrates that a solid division between the public and private realms does not exist. In order to better understand the public recognition of this gendered crime and its relevance to the workplace, a discussion of socialist feminist criminology and its position on the public/private dichotomy will follow.

**Socialist Feminist Criminology and its Position on the Public/Private Dichotomy**

**Feminist Criminology: An Overview**

Having emerged out of the second-wave feminist movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s, feminist criminology is a theoretical framework that assesses crime with a strong focus on gender (Chesney-Lind, 2006, p. 6). Unlike most traditional criminological theories, which simply fit women into their explanations of crime, feminist criminology recognizes women's experiences with criminality and victimization as being different than those of men (Naffine, 1996; Daly & Chesney-Lind, 2004). For example, the societal link between sexuality and violence is, in a sense, socially normalized because women are expected to be the victims of sexual violence, such as domestic abuse and rape (Britton, 2004). Feminist criminology has and continues to work to dismantle this normalization through its focus on gender and the patriarchal nature of women's victimization (Britton, 2004; Chesney-Lind & Pasko, 2004). In other words, violence against women can be critically assessed through an examination of the overwhelming presence of male power and privilege in society (Comack, 1999).

Feminist criminology encompasses various micro-theoretical perspectives derived from liberal, radical, Marxist, and socialist feminism (Williams, III & McShane, 2004). Daly and Chesney-Lind (2004) argue that there cannot be one "feminist criminology" due
to the existence of many conflicting criminological theories, in addition to a diversity of feminist frameworks. However, Daly and Chesney-Lind (2004) believe that we can refer to feminist criminology as a theoretical framework as long as there is recognition of its many variations. For the purposes of this study, then, socialist feminist criminology will be applied to the issue of workplace domestic violence because of its central theoretical focus on both the capitalist and patriarchal oppressions of women (Messerschmidt, 1986) which can socially restrict women in the workplace. Within this framework, violence against women is said to “take on a different meaning in the context of a social system in which men are dominant over women” (Britton, 2004, p. 57). In other words, socialist feminist criminology draws attention to the intersection of social inequality and gendered victimization (Burgess-Proctor, 2006) whereby male power in the workplace can be equated with both women’s oppression and victimization in the workplace and in the home. Since women outnumber men as victims of domestic violence, it is clear that this is a gendered problem. Accordingly, workplace domestic violence should be examined from the standpoint of a theoretical framework that focuses on gendered victimization in both a public and a private context.

Socialist Feminist Criminology on the Public and Private Oppressions of Women

Socialist feminists contend that women have traditionally been subjected to inequality in the workplace as well as in the home (Messerschmidt, 1986). In the workplace, women’s sexuality and reproductive abilities have been used against them in order to uphold traditional beliefs that women are better suited to the privacy of the home (Daly & Chesney-Lind, 2004). This has thereby resulted in widespread subordination of
women to men in terms of wages and workplace opportunity (Daly & Chesney-Lind, 2004). Daly and Chesney-Lind (2004, p. 21) further contend that socialist feminists “view gender as constructed by power relations, not simply by roles. This feminist perspective considers the impact of patriarchy (a social structure of men’s control over women’s labour and sexuality), and they assume that both roles and attitudes are embedded in this larger structure.” Furthermore, power dynamics typically reflect the gendered relations of intimate partners in patriarchal families wherein man is the guardian and provider, and the female is the subordinate homemaker (Hackler, 2003). Such power dynamics clearly reflect a public/private split between intimate partners, with the man occupying the public sphere, and the woman in the private, in addition to the capitalist-patriarchal power that men, in comparison to women, are more likely to possess within both the public and private spheres.

While it is now more common for women to participate in the Canadian labour force, they also continue to perform the majority of unpaid labour in the home (Zukewich, 2000). This demonstrates that, although women are now more active in the public sphere, they have maintained the role of the primary caretaker in the private realm. This shows that while women are progressing in the public sphere, there continues to be a social expectation that women have responsibilities in the home, while the responsibilities of men are more central to the workplace. As previously indicated, pay equity is a significant concern for many Canadian unions in terms of encouraging equality between men and women in the workplace. The reality of gendered wage gaps demonstrates that a higher value is typically associated with men and their work than with women and their work. From a socialist feminist criminological perspective, then,
women continue to be oppressed both in the workplace, as well as in the home. Some are domestic violence victims who, under the intersecting oppressions of patriarchy and capitalism, suffer from both gender inequity and domestic victimization in the workplace.

**Socialist Feminist Criminology and Workplace Domestic Violence**

While it has already been established that many women are victimized by their intimate partners in the home (Gartner & McCarthy, 1991), they are not necessarily spared of this violence once they exit the home. For instance, domestic violence victims are often faced with greater danger from their abusers when they are employed because they challenge the patriarchal notions of gender (MacMillan & Gartner, 1999). Furthermore, domestic violence must not be viewed as a crime that occurs solely within the private boundaries of the home because women are more likely to be the victims of workplace domestic violence than men, who are more likely to perpetrate the violence. From a socialist feminist criminological perspective, then, this demonstrates a need for addressing women's victimization as something unique from that of men's. In essence, the traditionally private crime of domestic violence has entered the workplace because women have challenged the public/private divide in such a way that they are no longer confined to the boundaries of the home.

In order for male abusers to regain patriarchal power in the public sphere, these abusers may employ workplace domestic violence as a tactic for which to sustain power over their victims in both the public and private spheres. In turn, women who are victims of workplace domestic violence experience an intersection of patriarchal and capitalistic oppressions. On the one hand, they are victims of workplace discrimination due to
disproportional opportunity and gendered pay disparity, and on the other, they are victims of domestic abuse both at home and in the workplace. Also, because domestic violence is a crime that occurs in both the public and private realm, its effects (i.e. psychological issues, physical injury, sense of fear, etc.) can follow a victim from the home to the public sphere (i.e. the workplace) even if the violence is not physically occurring in the public sphere. In other words, domestic abuse can originate in the privacy of the home, but carry forward into the public environment of the victim’s workplace as noted previously.

Women as Victims in the Workplace: Publicizing “Private” Violence through a Socialist Feminist Criminological Lens

Historically, there was no perceived ‘need’ for addressing domestic violence as a public matter requiring social regulation, since it was an act traditionally protected by familial privacy. During the battered woman’s movement, however, feminists successfully lobbied for public support in having wife battering framed as assault. The purpose for this was to increase public education of the widespread problem of domestic violence in addition to having this act taken more seriously as a criminal matter (Walker, 1990). Even still, this was not an easy task for feminist activists and professionals working in the field of family violence. For instance, there was resistance from police officers when initiatives for specialized training were developed on how to properly respond to incidents of domestic violence (Walker, 1990). Furthermore, gaining increased support in court processes was a struggle for feminist activists (Walker, 1990). Nevertheless, the feminist movement to eliminate the public/private divide has resulted in various achievements regarding criminal justice for victims of violence in the home.
In order to achieve widespread recognition of domestic violence as a critical issue in the workplace, it may be necessary to draw from previous transitions of ‘non-issues’ that were redefined as pertinent workplace issues. The evolution of workplace sexual harassment from a hidden, non-issue to a public problem will be used as a framework to understand the transformation of domestic violence from a private matter to a workplace issue.

**Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: Locating and Defining the Problem**

Although women had been experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace for years, it did not become a public issue under the Canadian Human Rights Act until the 1980s (Thomas & Kitzinger, 1997; Backhouse et al., 2004). Prior to this, in the 1970s, sexual harassment was a private act without a name (Backhouse et al., 2004), another instance whereby women were oppressed both by patriarchy and capitalism. In 1983, however, it was discovered that approximately 1.5 million Canadian women were victims of sexual harassment in that year (Backhouse et al., 2004, p. 11). As a result, sexual harassment was eventually reframed as a human rights abuse due to the success of the second-wave feminist movement, which sought to define the experience of sexual harassment as a public violation reflecting the traditional power imbalances between men and women (Thomas & Kitzinger, 1997).

The definition of workplace sexual harassment in Canada has evolved over time, however. In 1978, sexual harassment was adopted as official terminology in the Canada Labour Code, yet up until the mid to late 1980s, sexual harassment victims were restricted from accusing managers or authority figures of workplace sexual harassment.
(Welsh et al., 2002). This allowed the problem of sexual harassment between authority figures and subordinates in the workplace to persist and to remain hidden until political changes were enacted.

The Privacy of Power Relations Regarding Sexual Harassment

From a socialist feminist criminological perspective, the presence of sexual harassment in the workplace demonstrates an overlap of patriarchal and capitalistic oppressions because men in positions of power are normally the perpetrators (Carr et al., 2004). From a socialist feminist criminological standpoint, this means that women, who typically have a lower job status and less power than men in the workplace (Messerschmidt, 1986), may feel compelled to comply with acts of sexual harassment to receive promotions or maintain employment (Messerschmidt, 1986). In other words, the sexual violations may privately continue if the victim is made to feel that disclosing the harassment will prevent her from advancing her career. What is more, this essentially allows for what Messerschmidt (1986, p. 146) refers to as “rape at work.” Under a socialist feminist criminological model, Messerschmidt (1986, p. 146) explains that “…middle- and upper-class men (are) economically able to exploit a woman, (and) can gain access to her sexuality without her genuine consent.” In other words, the overwhelming subordination of women to men in the workplace has resulted in the existence of a sexually-exploitative system whereby some men extend the patriarchal power they are awarded in the privacy of the home, to the public sphere of the workplace. In this sense, not only are these men exerting patriarchal power, but they are abusing their capitalistic power as well.
The men with the most powerful positions in the workplace are often responsible for the most severe forms of sexual harassment, such as sexual assault (Carr et al., 2004). For instance, a study by Carr et al. (2004, p. 18) found that:

All the women that shared their stories of workplace violence experienced it at the hands of someone who had more power than they did, conferred either through workplace rank or societal status. The harassers were always in a position of power vis-à-vis the targets of their abuse. With a few exceptions, the women relayed experiencing harassment perpetrated by male co-workers, supervisors, or employers. Our study supports the supposition that the power relations of the dominant society, which accord men more power than women, are reflected in the workplace.

Due to this unequal distribution of power, male perpetrators of sexual harassment often exercise their power in such a way that threatens and silences victims so that the acts continually remain private (MacKinnon, 2000). However, sexual harassment is a public issue that can, and does, affect the employment of many women whether or not they choose to report or succumb to the sexual requests of male authorities in the workplace (MacKinnon, 2000). According to Carr et al. (2004), victims who report sexual harassment are often shamed for doing so; family, friends, and co-workers will sometimes suggest that the victim has somehow provoked the harassment, or that the actions should have remained private. As such, it is necessary to examine the initiatives employers have taken to eliminate the public/private dichotomy with regards to women’s victimization. The development of workplace responses to violence against women, such as sexual harassment, can also provide a basis for publicizing domestic violence as a workplace issue and for developing policies and initiatives in response to it.
Eliminating Sexual Harassment in the Workplace

Some workplace hazards that affect women, such as sexual harassment, have received increased attention in the past two decades not only from the state, but also from unions (Armstrong, 1997). As such, many collective agreements in unionized workplaces include provisions on improving the working conditions of women (Kumar, 1993; Briskin, 1999), with a specific focus on the elimination of sexual harassment (Armstrong, 1997). Such advancements demonstrate the commitment of unions to protect the safety of women at work, which is evident through the recognition that violence against women is not a private issue, but a public concern.

According to Hamilton (2005, p. 140), “the dangers for women at work produce demands for new laws, new practices, and consciousness-raising.” Feary (2000, p. 83) contends that “now that sexual harassment has become a subject of public, moral, and political debate, new cases will be heard, new precedents set, and new laws will be forthcoming.” In theory, employers or corporations might also find that it is in their best interests to follow suit by implementing workplace policies to curb the existence of sexual harassment in the workplace (Mighty, 1997; Pizzino, 2002). According to Backhouse et al. (2004), personal lawsuits against employers who fail to protect victims from sexual harassment in the workplace may have their accountability questioned in court. As a result, this may tarnish professional images. In reality, though, achieving a successful sexual harassment suit may not be a simple task because sexual harassment claims are not always acknowledged with great seriousness. Through a socialist feminist criminological perspective, this can be explained by considering that capitalism and patriarchy work together to oppress women who are exploited for both their labour and
their sexuality (Williams, III & McShane, 2004). In other words, women have been
exploited in the workplace by traditionally being employed in less prestigious jobs than
men. In addition, they have also been victimized by men in positions of authority at the
workplace who treat them as sexual objects and then threaten the future of their jobs if
this sexual interference does not remain private. According to Naffine (1996), by
deviating from traditionally defined gender roles, whereby women are primary occupants
of the home, women are often subliminally blamed for their victimization for placing
explain that in order to correct this problem, the responsibility of the act must be lifted
from the victim and directed at the perpetrator. As a result, the practice of consciousness-
raising must be continued by feminists in order to demonstrate the importance of
recognizing sexual harassment as a public social problem in need of correction.
Consciousness-raising, however, must not be limited to sexual harassment as there are
other, less visible forms of violence affecting women in the workplace; for instance,
workplace domestic violence.

While it is evident that many employers have implemented workplace sexual
harassment policies (Mighty, 1997; Thomas & Kitzinger, 1997; Feary, 2000), very few
have incorporated policies directly related to workplace domestic violence (Mighty,
1997; Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2005). Although the dynamics of workplace
domestic violence are different from those of sexual harassment due to the distinction
between an intimate partner relationship and an employee-manager relationship, they do
share similarities in that they are oppressions faced primarily by women in the workplace
at the hands of men. According to Schneider (1994, p. 40), “like sexual harassment, the
‘problem’ of battering and the social and legal construct of a ‘battered woman’ did not exist in this country (USA) until the women’s movement named it.” Therefore, it is important to examine the ways in which unions and employers perceive the act of domestic violence in the workplace; in other words, how they define it and how it is responded to.

Workplace Domestic Violence: Locating and Defining the Problem

Domestic violence, like sexual harassment, has not always been formally recognized as a public violation against women. Similar to sexual harassment policies, employers can no longer refrain from implementing domestic violence policies based on the assumption that violent acts by abusers within the working environment are either too random to be concerned about, or are simply ‘private’ matters (Johnson & Gardner, 2000). From a socialist feminist criminological perspective, Messerschmidt (1986, p. 12) contends that disregarding the overlap of patriarchal and capitalistic oppressions women face in the workplace causes them to be “super-exploited” in the public sphere. In other words, domestic violence and sexual harassment are types of violence that were once hidden behind patriarchal power (Daly & Chesney-Lind, 2004), but as women become more visible in the public sphere themselves, these acts can no longer be so easily hidden.

The greater visibility of domestic violence in the work environment means that companies may suffer economically as a result of medical fees and absent employees (Kelly, 2003). Furthermore, since employers can be held liable for domestic violence suffered by victims at work if proper safety measures are not executed (Johnson & Gardner, 1999; Moe & Bell, 2004), it can be argued that there is now greater pressure on
workplaces to recognize gendered violence as both an organizational and criminal matter. In essence, employers can no longer deny domestic violence as a public problem, since it cannot simply be left within the privacy of the home when victims enter the workplace (Cohen, 1994). As such, domestic violence is slowly being defined as a public workplace issue, similar to where sexual harassment was several decades ago.

The Privacy of Power Relations Regarding Workplace Domestic Violence

As previously discussed, women are over-represented as victims of domestic violence at the hands of male perpetrators (Kelly, 2003). Furthermore, victims are not guaranteed a temporary escape from violence when they leave the privacy of the home in order to attend work. Women are often victimized by intimate partners when they are employed in the public sphere and oftentimes this violence will occur at the workplace itself. As a result, domestic violence in the workplace becomes more visible to co-workers, clients, and employers, while victims face greater risk of workplace harm and a potential fear of termination (Swanberg et al., 2005). As such, domestic violence policies and initiatives may be necessary in order to protect them from what has traditionally been considered a private issue.

From a socialist feminist criminological standpoint, it is suggested that together, patriarchy and capitalism breed violence against women due to the process of socially affirming masculine power via aggressive dominance over both women and the economy (Messerschmidt, 1986). In other words, men are expected to assume the role of the financial provider and household leader in order to maintain their social dominance over women. However, it must be understood that not all men share the same degree of power
and equality in western society just as women do not share equality with men. As a result, men, too, are oppressed by the capitalist system. Failing to adhere to this socially-constructed masculine identity (i.e. the well-off traditional family breadwinner) might lead to abusive retaliation of a man against his intimate partner, thereby indicating that even victims who are employed may still be in a position of powerlessness in the home. According to hooks (2001, p. 73), “like women, men have been socialized to passively accept sexist ideology.” More specifically, hooks (2001) contends that while women are raised to assume submissive gender roles, men are expected to acquire roles of dominance and power within the capitalist framework of society. According to hooks (2001, p. 75) “when he beats or rapes women, he is not exercising privilege or reaping positive rewards; he may feel satisfied in exercising the only form of domination allowed him.” In other words, battering may be used as a measure of control over victims in order for perpetrators to regain their sense of power in a society that encourages men to be economic providers for their families (Schechter, 1982). As a result, abused women are affected not only by the patriarchal power exerted by their abusive partners, but are affected by capitalistic class-struggles which encourage frustration in their male partners who then direct this frustration at them in the form of violence.

**Eliminating Domestic Violence in the Workplace**

Just as sexual harassment developed into a workplace issue in need of protective policies and initiatives, it is now more common for employers and unions to implement domestic violence responses. While sexual harassment is a form of gender oppression that does not typically accompany a victim from the public sphere into the private,
domestic violence is an oppression that has the potential to follow a victim from the privacy of the home, to the public workplace, and then back to the home. As the number of female workers in the public sphere continues to expand, domestic violence will continue to be less hidden and will be increasingly visible within the workplace. According to Schneider (1994, p. 42), “by seeing woman abuse as ‘private,’ we affirm it as a problem that is individual, that only involves a particular male-female relationship, and for which there is no social responsibility to remedy it.” In other words, by ignoring the multiple dimensions of domestic violence, employers might expect victims to leave the symptoms of abuse behind during work hours thereby denying its relevance in the public sphere. Since this is generally impossible, based on literature outlining the harmful effects of domestic violence in the workplace (Mighty, 2004; Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2007), workplace policies can demonstrate a need for acknowledging the public impacts of such abuse. Furthermore, failure of employers to acknowledge the public harm of domestic violence on victims at work means that termination can occur and victims may then be unable to exit violent relationships due to a lack of economic support (Kelly, 2003).

Researchers in both Canada and the United States have clearly outlined the need for public attention to be directed to victims (Mighty, 1997; Johnson & Gardner, 1999; Pizzino, 2002; Scalora et al., 2003; Swanberg et al., 2005, Swanberg et al., 2006). However, exactly what has motivated employers and unions to recognize a traditionally “private” matter like domestic violence as a workplace issue? DeKeseredy & MacLeod (1997) note that domestic violence is now defined as a social problem and has continued to gain support as such from both the government and the public for the past 30 years.
while other issues, such as poverty, have also existed for centuries, but have not received the same degree of recognition through social action. As a result, they suggest a combination of political and socio-economic factors have convinced many employers to take action in support of victims of domestic abuse within the workplace (DeKeseredy & MacLeod, 1997). This study will expand on existing research on workplace domestic violence by examining the impetus for Canadian unions to adopt WDVPI, the types of unions with such policies and initiatives, and whether these unions represent members in male- or female-dominated workplaces.
Chapter Four: Research Methodology

Introduction

This is an exploratory study that uses the qualitative, comparative method to examine a sample of Canadian unions that either have or do not have WDVPI. The data collected for this thesis were derived from eight surveys completed by union representatives throughout Canada. To my knowledge, this is the first academic study in Canada to examine union policies and initiatives responding to domestic violence in the workplace. As a result, a sample of national and provincial unions was chosen as the most practical starting point for several reasons. First, it would allow for an examination of WDVPI that would apply to a diverse range of occupations and provinces. Second, it would allow for a comparative analysis of the types of unions that have implemented WDVPI, the types of workers they represent, and their impetus for doing so. The national and provincial union levels, as opposed to the international level, were also seen as more relevant to this study because national and provincial unions are specific to one country only. Furthermore, national and provincial unions serve as the overarching headquarters for local unions, which are generally smaller divisions of the larger organization and are situated in various parts of the country or within certain provinces. In addition, unions were chosen for exploration because previous studies appear to have examined employer responses to domestic violence and, therefore, this study would examine an organizational unit that has not previously been studied in terms of domestic violence response policies and initiatives.
Unions were selected using an online union database available through Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC). This database was exhaustive as the website is updated regularly. Five hundred and forty-six unions were listed in this database including national, provincial, local, international, and central labour congress levels of organization. A total of 210 national and provincial unions were in the database and it was from this pool that potential participants for this study were selected.

Research Design

This study employed the use of two semi-structured, self-administered email surveys consisting of open- and closed-ended questions. The purpose for developing two surveys was to include participants representing unions either with or without WDVPI. It was anticipated that this approach would provide for a more informed understanding of why certain unions have adopted WDVPI (as detailed in Survey 1) and why others have not (as detailed in Survey 2). Open-ended questions were included so that participants could expand on various concepts with as much detail as possible while some closed-ended questions were to provide a demographical overview of the participating unions. Demographic questions captured information about union size, occupational categories of workers represented by the union, and the dominant gender of the workers. This study combined a traditional research method (survey) with a new method of delivery (email). Advantages and limitations of this approach are discussed below.

8 http://www110.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/millieudetravail_workplace/ot_lo/index.cfm/doc/english
9 French-based unions in the province of Quebec were excluded from the study, which is a limitation to the research conducted. This exclusion was the result of language-communication barriers that would likely have existed between French-speaking participants and the principal investigator.
10 See Appendix D
Advantages of Email Surveys

One of the first research decisions to be made for this study was whether to use face-to-face interviews or email surveys. Email surveys were selected for several reasons. First, semi-structured survey questions delivered through email would provide many of the same benefits as collecting data through face-to-face interviews (Bernard, 2000). According to Bernard (2000), a researcher might find that several different qualitative data collection methods are appropriate for a particular study, but the researcher should take cost, convenience, and the nature of the questions into account when choosing an approach. For the purposes of this project, cost and convenience were significant factors. This study was not funded by an outside agency and the research had to be conducted within a specific time frame to complete the thesis component of a Master's degree.

Second, the nature of the questions posed was particularly straightforward; that is, most questions in each of the surveys asked about specific union policies and objectives that had been adopted by the union. The survey questions did not make personal inquiries, for instance, about the experiences of participants in assisting domestic violence victims. Therefore, it was not necessary to observe personal reactions to the questions posed through body and facial gestures of the participants.11 Third, Bernard (2000) contends that self-administered surveys can significantly reduce response bias in the absence of the interviewer. Fourth, email surveys provide participants a longer period of time for completion which, in turn, may generate more thoughtful responses (Beck, 2005). Related to this, email surveys proved advantageous because

11 It should be noted that face-to-face interviews do not necessarily need to serve this purpose. However, because face-to-face interaction was not an essential requirement for this study, the more convenient method of collecting data via email surveys was chosen instead.

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they allowed participants to consult with necessary sources in order to provide appropriate responses. For instance, participants could consult with other union representatives, collective agreements, written policies, websites, and other sources in order to answer specific questions, if necessary. This would allow for an increased level of accuracy in results. If during a face-to-face interview, for instance, the respondent was unsure of why their union had not adopted domestic violence policies, they may have simply answered “unknown.” Email surveys, on the other hand, would allow respondents time to locate factual answers by consulting additional sources.

Fifth, email surveys are efficient with regards to time, schedule coordination, and distance (Mann & Stewart, 2000; Markham, 2004; Beck, 2005). According to Mann and Stewart (2000, p. 72) conducting surveys via email “collapses boundaries of time and space.” For the participant, email surveys can be completed at a time best suited to his or her busy schedule (Markham, 2004) and this proved true for the current study. Participants were asked to submit their completed surveys within approximately two weeks so not to place extra time pressure on their schedules. For those who expressed interest in participating in the study, but were unable to complete the survey within the requested time frame, additional time was provided. In contrast to face-to-face interviews which require the coordination of schedules, formal meetings between the researcher and participant are not necessary for email or self-administered surveys (Beck, 2005). As such, a wider, more diverse participant pool can be accessed without leaving the city of origin (Markham, 2004). Face-to-face interviews would not have been feasible because many respondents were located in provinces throughout Canada. Since funds were limited for this study, email surveys allowed for the inclusion of participants
across Canada, regardless of geographic boundaries. This diversity was necessary for studying WDVPI that exist at both the national and provincial union levels.

**Limitations of Surveys in General and Email Surveys in Particular**

Although email surveys were the most practical method for this study, collecting data by means of surveys, in general, does have limitations. For instance, self-administered surveys generally produce a low response rate of about 20 to 30 percent of the original sample (Bernard, 2000, p. 233; Beck, 2005). As a result, it was imperative to remain in frequent contact with those agreeing to participate in the study to maintain their interest and obtain their completed surveys. Another disadvantage of self-administered surveys is that the respondent may not interpret all questions in the way the researcher has intended (Bernard, 2000). In order to correct for this problem, follow-up emails were sent to various participants in order to clarify some of their responses.

With regards to email surveys in particular, privacy may be a concern for participants who have no way of knowing that the researcher contacting them through email is legitimate (Mann & Stewart, 2000; Markham, 2004) as opposed to completing surveys where the researcher is present. Accordingly, potential participants were contacted through an official University of Guelph email account that included the primary researcher's contact information and that of my thesis advisor. The Letter of Information and Letter of Consent\(^{12}\) also included the University of Guelph logo. A final limitation is that email surveys might limit the study's participant pool (Beck, 2005). Since data were primarily collected through email, only those union representatives with email access were recruited. This did not present a significant problem for the study,\(^{12}\)

\(^{12}\) See Appendix C
however, as the majority of the unions listed in the HRSDC database included websites with contact information. Essentially, this allowed for nationwide recruitment.

As previously noted, and to the best of my knowledge, no prior research has been conducted on union domestic violence policies and initiatives in Canada or elsewhere in North America. As a result, the questions developed for this study were drawn from literature on workplace domestic violence in general and the construction of questions for this survey demonstrated the exploratory nature of this research. The structure of the survey, the nature of the questions, and the information they were meant to capture are discussed below.

Survey Questions

Survey Structure

Berg (2001, p. 79) suggests that researchers should consider starting interviews and surveys with “non-threatening” demographic questions. In contrast, Bernard (2000) asserts that general demographic and socio-economic questions should be posed at the end of the survey while the first survey question should be directly related to the topic of study. Drawing from Bernard (2000), I chose to employ this tactic since I felt the most important questions were those that provided qualitative depth and delved right to the central focus of the study. Since I recognized the heavy workload of my participants who were likely completing the surveys during their work time, the questions were arranged in an order that would address the main issue first: what union policies and initiatives exist in response to domestic violence, why were they implemented or why not.
The structure of Survey 1 for unions with policies and initiatives was designed in a way that addressed the following categories of questions: 1. Policies and Initiatives, 2. Victims, 3. Offenders, and 4. Demographics. Survey 2 for unions without domestic violence policies and initiatives addressed only two question categories: 1. Policies and Initiatives, and 2. Demographics. Fewer questions were asked of participants in this latter group because it was expected that there would be less information in the absence of policies and initiatives directly related to workplace domestic violence. The demographics category was placed at the end of both surveys because this section contained questions requiring the least amount of depth. Finally, because the study is exploratory, the rationale for some of the survey questions are discussed in further detail below and linked to relevant research.

Survey 1

Survey 1 was developed for unions with domestic violence policies and initiatives. I began with the questions that related to policies and initiatives. For example, the first question was, what are normally considered by the union to be acts of domestic violence? From this general question, I hoped to obtain an understanding of what types of domestic interference behaviours in the workplace would be covered by the union’s domestic violence policies. With domestic violence accounting for 25 to 50 percent of workplace performance problems (Mighty, 1997, p. 253), it was important to determine what was being framed as “domestic violence” in union policies and initiatives.
The second question was: can you provide a brief explanation with regards to how this union perceives domestic violence (i.e. as a crime, a private social problem, a public social problem, etc.)? While the first question inquired about behaviours perceived to be typical of workplace domestic violence, this question tested the perceived severity of the issue and how unions believed the problem should be handled: privately in the home, in the workplace, and/or in other elements of the public realm (i.e. not-for-profit agencies and social services) and if the problem was recognized as a criminal justice issue. It was perceived that this information would be useful in understanding the impetus for implementing such policies and initiatives. For instance, if unions perceived workplace domestic violence as a crime then perhaps this served as motivation for implementing policies and initiatives.

In the third survey question, respondents were asked: What types of policies or initiatives exist that address the needs of workers affected by domestic violence? According to Johnson and Gardner (1999), workplace domestic violence policies can be educative, preventative, and responsive in nature. Since domestic violence has only recently received attention as a workplace issue (Moe & Bell, 2004), this question sought to identify what types of measures unions are taking to address the problem. Participants responding to Survey 1 represented unions with domestic violence policies or initiatives so this question established a framework for understanding which types of policies unions believed to be most effective. Furthermore, examining the types of policies that exist would show to what extent victims (and perpetrators) could access services made available by the union.

13 Workers as either victims or perpetrators, was not specified in this question in order for participants to explain existing policies and initiatives more generally. Policies and initiatives specific to the needs of victims and perpetrators would be questioned in sections two and three of the survey.
Question four examined when the union adopted WDVPI. The main goal for this question would be to offer some indication as to how recent these policies and initiatives were, and to potentially provide a chronological comparison among unions. Question five investigated the goals of union WDVPI. Exploring the goals of unions in adopting various policies and initiatives may help explain their impetus. Furthermore, identifying who these policies and initiatives protect would help explain who the union typically considers to be domestic violence victims. Question six inquired as to the perceived average yearly economic impact of domestic violence on the workplaces of members represented by this union. The purpose of this question was to see if union representatives were able to estimate the financial strain placed on the workplaces at which their members are employed.

The seventh question sought a description of which employees these policies are typically intended to protect. Question eight was meant to capture the types of training and workshops that may exist to enhance the knowledge of domestic violence for all workers or union representatives. Johnson and Gardner (1999) recognize the importance of educative initiatives; for example, workplaces that introduce victims to resourceful social service agencies by attaching brochures to the pay cheques. Moreover, since co-workers of domestic violence victims are at risk of harm when the perpetrator enters the workplace (Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2006) and since victims of domestic violence might be too afraid to disclose the abuse (Swanberg et al., 2006), it is important to examine the existence of educative strategies in unions. I encouraged participants to describe any educative strategies adopted in the union’s domestic violence policies and initiatives and used this as a basis for comparison among unions in the study. The final
question in the “Policies and Initiatives” category asked: what barriers, if any, prevent this union from further implementing response policies or initiatives? The purpose of this question was to examine the various factors that may act to limit resources for domestic violence victims and the creation of domestic violence awareness such as lack of finances, union size, and any other factors discussed by union representatives.

The second group of questions in Survey 1 addressed individual-level policies and procedures that specifically pertain to domestic violence victims. For instance, participants were asked about procedures that are followed when victims formally disclose abuse in the workplace, procedures followed when acts of domestic violence are reported to have occurred within the workplace, and measures adhered to when co-workers report suspicions of domestic violence in the home of a victimized worker. These questions were meant to expose any measures in place to respond to workplace domestic violence if it were to be brought to the union’s attention. For example, question 13 asked if special treatments or considerations exist for employees who are victims of domestic abuse (i.e. potential relocation, special services, protection from termination, referrals to community services, etc). According to Moracco et al. (2000), an abusive partner can become even more violent once the victim leaves the home. As such, victims may choose to remain in violent settings in order to limit the amount of violence that could be achieved. Furthermore, many abusers will make great efforts to assist in the termination of victims in order to exert control over them (Moe & Bell, 2004). In essence, this question examined any initiatives unions were putting in place to help their members remain safe and employed while they attempted to escape an abusive setting. Moreover, this question examined the willingness of unions to assist in the protection of
victims’ jobs (i.e. through the application of grievances if unionized workers are terminated due to the byproducts of abuse), even if productivity is low and absenteeism is high. As such, this question purposefully led into the next: how would an abused employee go about receiving special treatment from the union (i.e. time off for court hearings, medical appointments, etc.)? In other words, if unions adopt WDVPI to protect the jobs of victims, then what would these victims be required to do in order to receive special considerations from employers with the union’s help, such as extra days off? Furthermore, question 15 asked if victimized workers must formally disclose the abuse to their employer or a union representative to be considered for special treatments or if it is possible for victims to be protected by these policies if co-workers or supervisors report a case of suspected abuse. This question was especially important considering the fear of disclosure that many victims experience (Swanberg et al., 2006) and can shed light on whether unions are helping to relieve some of the pressures from domestic violence victims by making it easier to receive such considerations. Furthermore, it examined if union policies and initiatives are helping employers recognize the negative consequences many women experience when they disclose domestic abuse (Swanberg et al., 2006).

Although the union cannot formally tell the employer how to proceed regarding the use of disciplinary measures, union WDVPI can assist employees with filing grievances if wrongfully terminated.

Question 16 asked who victimized workers would report their experiences of domestic violence to in order to receive special consideration from their employer with the union’s help (i.e. human resources agent, supervisor, manager, etc). The importance of this question was to locate the organizational level at which the issue of workplace
domestic violence would receive the greatest attention. The remaining questions in the victim category pertained to procedures that are followed if workers are frequently absent (and domestic violence has been suspected as the cause), procedures followed when victims are terminated as a result of the impact of domestic violence, and the types of services offered to victims. These questions were relevant to understanding the level of assistance unions perceive to be acceptable when the negative effects of domestic violence enter the work environment. For instance, what role does the union play when domestic violence is affecting the ability of its members to attend work and be productive and does the union assist members in reversing what might be considered wrongful termination (i.e. a victim is fired because her abuser is harassing her at work)? In essence, these questions inquired as to the union’s position in assisting victims in overcoming the effects of abuse.

The third set of questions in Survey 1 briefly examined the union’s role in assisting perpetrators of domestic violence and in taking action against them in favour of victims. For instance, what policies are in place to apprehend and/or discipline perpetrators employed in unionized workplaces, and what assistance (if any) is made available to offenders in order to encourage them to discontinue the abuse (i.e. counseling)?

The final section consisted of demographic questions about the union and the employees represented by the union. A key question in this section was: would you say that the workplaces of members represented by this union tend to be male-dominated, female-dominated, or gender neutral (i.e. a fairly equal split among male and female workers)? This question, then, explored whether unions are more likely to implement
domestic violence policies if the workers they represent are primarily in female-dominated occupations because women are more likely than men to be victims of domestic violence (Johnson & Bunge, 2001).

Survey 2

Survey 2, as noted, was completed only by participants from unions without WDVPI. The purpose for having this comparison group was to explore reasons why some unions in Canada might implement WDVPI while others may not. This survey was shorter (12 questions in total) and provided a brief overview of why WDVPI have not been implemented and how victimized workers might receive assistance from the union without the existence of such policies. Unique to this survey was the question: does this union have any other policies in place that specifically address the issue of violence in the workplace (i.e. sexual assault, criminal harassment, physical assault, etc.)? The purpose for asking this question was to understand whether these unions were actively concerned with the growing problem of workplace violence in general (de Léséleuc, 2004; Canadian Initiative on Workplace Violence, 2006), but not workplace domestic violence in particular.

Respondents to Survey 2 were questioned as to how many domestic violence reports in the workplace were brought forward to the union in the past year. It was anticipated that this question would demonstrate whether there is a need for WDVPI in these particular unions. Since this is an exploratory study, this question could also demonstrate how likely it would be that workers would report acts of domestic violence to the union if such policies are not in existence.
Upon discovery of the frequency (or infrequency) of domestic violence reporting within workplaces, question nine then asked: under what circumstances would domestic violence be acknowledged by the union? What I hoped to gain from this question was an indication of the point at which domestic violence would become such a problem in the workplace that the union would involve itself in the situation. These issues led into question 10, which asked: does this union recognize domestic violence as a crime? Why or why not? This was a particularly important question because if unions consider domestic violence as a criminal act, then the point at which they become involved in workplace domestic violence is crucial for evaluating how serious the matter is taken.

Finally, respondents were asked about barriers that have prevented the union from adopting WDVPI. These responses could allow for a clearer understanding of any issues that have potentially delayed unions from actively approaching the issue of workplace domestic violence. The final question was personal in nature: do you think that domestic violence is a workplace issue? This question was purposely open to interpretation because it would show whether particular union representatives have made the connection between domestic violence and the workplace. This is particularly important because of the influence the respondent might have in prompting forthcoming policies and initiatives within the union.
Sampling Frame

Purposive Sampling

A purposive sampling method14 was used to contact potential participants. Although purposive sampling has been criticized for its inability to generalize as a non-probability method (Berg, 2001; Chambliss & Schutt, 2003), I chose to employ this technique in order to reach a diverse participant pool. Randomly selecting a number of unions from the HRSDC database may have resulted in the recruitment of a homogenous participant pool (i.e. majority of nurses’ unions, teachers’ unions, etc.). I selected particular unions based on occupational representation and national or provincial location in order to develop a broad base for comparison. I initially sought participation from individuals who were from unions representing various occupational categories in the goods-producing sector as well as the services-producing sector in various parts of Canada since there tends to be more male workers in the goods-producing sector and more females in service production (Phillips & Phillips, 2000; Zukewich, 2000)15 I predicted that selecting unions from these various categories would produce a participant pool from a wide range of occupational backgrounds, resulting in a solid base for which to compare WDVPI. In other words, I was interested in whether traditionally gendered occupations were more or less likely to have workplace domestic violence policies. However, a low response rate during the recruitment process limited the ability to achieve such diversity and resulted in the recruitment of a fairly homogenous sample with regards

14 Purposive sampling is defined by Berg (2001, p. 32) as a type of collection where “researchers use their special knowledge or expertise about some group to select subjects who represent this population.”
15 Occupations in the goods-producing sector include: Agriculture, Forestry/Fishing/Mining/Oil/Gas, Manufacturing, and Construction, while occupations in the services-producing sector involve: Transportation and Warehousing, Trade, Professional/Scientific/Technical, Information/Culture/Recreation, Business/Building and Other Support Services, Health Care and Social Assistance, Educational Services, Public Administration, and Other Services.
to occupational category (i.e. nurses unions were over-represented in the sample).

Thirty-six unions were contacted for recruitment although only 13 responded and eight actually participated. As a result, a response rate of 36 percent and a participation rate of 22 percent were achieved for this study.  

I was able to secure a heterogeneous sample in terms of geographic diversity because the study included participants from western to eastern Canada.

**Recruitment**

It was not my intention to undermine the efforts of unions without domestic violence response policies and initiatives and this was made clear in the Letter of Information inviting representatives to participate in the study. This letter clearly stated that the ultimate purpose of this exploratory research was to examine the impetus for implementing domestic violence response policies or, if none existed, why not. Participant recruitment occurred through email using email addresses obtained from a list of national and provincial unions in Canada available online through the HRSDC website, or by exploring the websites that were included in the initial sampling frame. The second of these two routes proved to be most useful because, although the website was claimed to be updated regularly, some of the email addresses listed on the HRSDC website were inaccurate. Union websites often provided detailed contact lists for representatives in the categories of occupational health and safety, women’s advocacy, and equity divisions. Contacting members employed in such divisions often resulted in a

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16 Union representatives responded but chose not to participate for several reasons, including: They had not adopted WDVPI and strongly felt that they had little to contribute; they were unable to complete the survey as a result of a union strike; they agreed to participate but then halted communication with the primary researcher.
quicker reply because these representatives were usually quite attuned to domestic violence response policies and initiatives as well as workplace issues affecting women more generally.

At times, email addresses on official union websites were limited to general inquiries. In this case, I would deliver an email invitation to email addresses intended for general inquiries and would request that the invitation be forwarded to an appropriate representative within the union. These emails were often forwarded to occupational health and safety representatives but, in one case, the union president received the email and participated in the study. If a more expansive listing of representatives with contact information was provided on a union website, I would typically send the Email Invitation to at least one representative in the women’s advocacy division or women’s committee. Although it was common for unions to have women’s advocacy divisions or women’s committees, in the event that a union did not have one I would deliver the invitation to a representative in the occupational health and safety or equity division. Since this research explores an issue pertaining to women’s safety in the workplace, I felt that it was appropriate to recruit participants who oversee matters related to workplace health and safety, equity, and women’s issues.

The first attempt at recruitment occurred in November 2006 and consisted of 22 national and provincial unions throughout Canada. Unions were selected in such a way as to allow for participation from representatives across the country. Of the 22 unions, every occupational category was included as per Statistics Canada’s Employment by Industry table (Statistics Canada, 2006). For instance, a range of contacts were initiated with unions from various trades, health care organizations, public administration, and
manufacturing units. Potential recruits were sent a standardized email inviting them to participate in research for a Master’s thesis that would explore the existence of union policies and initiatives responding to domestic violence in the workplace.\textsuperscript{17} Participants were told that the study was to explore the existence and types of union policies and initiatives that address the issue of workplace domestic violence and that the purpose of interviewing various union representatives was to develop an understanding of why certain unions choose to implement such policies. Finally, they were told that I would be examining the types of workplaces these unions represent as well as investigating the underlying reasons for implementing such policies.

Of these 22 contacts, five union representatives responded\textsuperscript{18} and four agreed to complete the survey. Two weeks after the invitational email was delivered, I re-sent the email in anticipation that more individuals would respond. However, this round of recruitment resulted in a limited participant pool. At the beginning of January 2007, a second list of union representatives was compiled from which another 15 union representatives were sent an Email Invitation. This round of recruitment produced a slightly higher response rate. Six union representatives responded to the email and expressed interest in the study; of those six, five representatives agreed to complete the survey. The final round of recruitment took place in late February and this involved re-establishing contact with potential participants who had not yet responded. Three

\textsuperscript{17} See Appendix B
\textsuperscript{18} Of those five, one representative provided detailed information about his/her union, including the union’s definition of domestic violence, how they believed domestic violence and the workplace were (or were not) related, and the reasons for which domestic violence response policies had not been implemented. Upon clarifying some questions this representative had regarding the concept of workplace domestic violence, he/she declined to answer a survey. This representative strongly believed that answering the questionnaire would not fruitfully contribute to my study, as the depth of information he could provide was available in the two emails he had already prepared. As such, the representative encouraged me to use this information for my research in place of an actual survey, so the emails were analyzed in place of a questionnaire.
representatives replied within 24 hours. Two individuals declined to participate while the third participant chose to participate in the survey by telephone.

Participants were sent reminder emails two to three weeks following the initial survey mail-out because participants were often too busy to complete the survey right away. Although 10 individuals formally agreed to take part in this study, complications arose whereby two participants eventually declined. In one instance, a union was preparing to strike and the participant no longer had the time or resources to complete the survey. In another instance, the participant revoked consent for participation for undisclosed reasons. In total, eight surveys were completed. Three respondents represented unions with WDVPI while five participants were from unions without such policies and initiatives.

Once all of the surveys were returned, preliminary data analysis was conducted. Because one limitation of email surveys is the lack of probing devices, notes were made on some of the surveys to indicate that responses required some expansion. Follow-up emails were sent to participants in order to seek elaboration. In most cases, participants were willing to provide such information while others were too busy to do so. One participant requested that I contact her through telephone for elaboration.

**Research Ethics**

This study received approval from the Research Ethics Board (REB) of the University of Guelph.\(^\text{19}\) Participants were informed of potential risks that could be encountered in a study of this nature. For instance, various aspects of union policies and procedures were discussed in the survey which they, personally, may or may not have

\(^{19}\) See Appendix A
agreed with. This is a psychological risk because it may cause conflicting emotions with regards to personal values and employment standards. With respect to social risks, participants could experience uneasiness in discussing their views on the existence of, or lack of existing, union policies responding to domestic violence. These risks were clearly discussed in the Letter of Consent,\textsuperscript{20} and strict measures to ensure participant confidentiality were adopted.

All participants were informed of the potential benefits that this study had to offer, including benefits to participants as a result of their involvement. For instance, participants representing unions that have implemented workplace domestic violence policies can benefit from knowing that their unionized efforts are positively valued and perhaps these interviews will lead to new ideas for improving such policies. Participants representing unions that have not implemented these policies might benefit by becoming more aware of the need for such policies and initiatives in the workplace as well as the benefits of incorporating them into union standards. The academic/scientific community would benefit from this project because little research has been conducted on the issue of domestic violence in the workplace (Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg, 2006). The development of this project would be useful to the community in that unions could review this research and use the findings to further improve their services to workers who are victims of domestic abuse both at home and in the workplace. The following chapter will explain how the data were analyzed as well as the general themes that were found in the analyzed data.

\textsuperscript{20} See Appendix C
Chapter Five: Data Analysis

Introduction

This research is exploratory in nature as it examines a subject matter that has received little, if any, academic attention. As such, a qualitative, comparative analysis was conducted in order to test the research question: What types of labour unions have implemented workplace domestic violence policies and initiatives? Included in this broad question are the following sub-questions: (1) Of those unions that have implemented such policies and initiatives, what types of workers do they represent and are these workers employed in primarily female- or male-dominated workplaces? (2) Of the unions that have implemented WDVPI, what was the incentive for doing so, what do these policies and initiatives look like, and what are their primary goals? Developing an awareness of the types of Canadian unions that either have or have not adopted such policies and initiatives can contribute to an understanding of why specific types of unions have addressed recent concerns about victim safety (both as direct and indirect victims of domestic violence). In essence, this research will explore union attention to workplace domestic violence and the extent to which unions have contributed to victim protection and assistance.

This chapter begins with an in-depth review of the data analysis procedures that were used to produce the findings of this study. Next, I will describe the unions participating in this study. An examination of union perceptions of domestic violence will then be conducted followed by an exploration of the reasons why unions choose to either adopt or not adopt WDVPI. The various types of WDVPI adopted by participating unions will then be described. A brief examination of the limitations of WDVPI will be
conducted, followed by a discussion of alternative responses to workplace domestic violence offered by unions without WDVPI.

**Data Analysis Methodology**

Once data were collected, a qualitative, exploratory, comparative methodological approach was taken in order to analyze the data. Preliminary data analysis began as each survey was collected from participants. Bernard (2000) suggests that texts be coded in order to allow for the emergence of themes. More specifically, Neuman (2000) recommends the use of open coding which simply refers to the assignment of initial labels to recently-collected data to bring meaningful themes to the forefront. As such, each sentence or paragraph provided in the survey responses of participants was coded in a way that reduced the collected data from long passages to single-word descriptors. According to Berg (2002), data reduction is essential in qualitative research because it assists in managing raw data and in allowing themes to emerge. In compliance with these suggestions, I labeled every line or sentence in each email survey with a brief, preliminary code that best summarized the information provided by the respondent. Examples of these codes include: EAP, counseling, non-issue, arbitration, workplace problem, crime, disclosure, and union size, among many other general codes.

Once each survey was labeled with preliminary codes, the process of axial coding was conducted. Axial coding, according to Neuman (2000), is the second stage of coding and focuses more heavily on the initial labels assigned through the process of open coding than on the raw data itself. Furthermore, axial coding assists in the organization

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21 A term used by some participants to indicate that the issue had not been brought forward to the union as a matter requiring specific attention.
of ideas and themes in such a way that the “researcher asks about causes and consequences, conditions and interactions, strategies and processes, and looks for categories or concepts that cluster together” (Neuman, 2000, p. 423). Additionally, Neuman (2000) recommends that closely-related concepts be combined to fit within one overarching subcategory in order to produce conceptual linkages within the data. In order to achieve this, various preliminary codes that were devised in the process of open coding were linked together in order to produce broad subcategories. Because I was conducting a comparative analysis among unions that either had or had not adopted WDVPI, some of these broad subcategories would be similar while others would be different.

The subcategories developed for unions with policies and initiatives were: a) union perceptions of domestic violence; b) reasons for choosing to adopt WDVPI; c) types of WDVPI; and d) limitations of WDVPI. For unions that had not adopted policies and initiatives, the following subcategories were developed in the process of axial coding: a) union perceptions of domestic violence; b) reasons for choosing not to adopt WDVPI; and c) alternative responses to workplace domestic violence.

Finally, selective coding was conducted whereby themes within subcategories were illustrated in order for generalizations to be made during qualitative data analysis (Neuman, 2000). For unions that have adopted WDVPI, a number of selective codes or themes were drawn from the broad subcategories established in axial coding. Although these themes will be described in more detail below, themes included in the subcategory of union perceptions of domestic violence were: domestic violence as a crime, domestic violence as a public or private problem, domestic violence as a social problem, and
domestic violence as a workplace problem. Within the subcategory of reasons for choosing to adopt WDVPI, the following themes emerged: employee job protection, employee support/security/safety, employer/workplace costs, employer benefits, union-community involvement, and unions making change in society. The third subcategory of types of WDVPI included themes such as: employee/victim protection, counseling, EAPs, victim-centered approaches, provisions/job protection, police involvement, education and training, and abuser-based programs. Finally, the subcategory of limitations of WDVPI included the themes of: employer/union relationship, barriers, and disclosure.

With regards to unions without WDVPI, several themes were included within the overarching subcategories. Within the subcategory of union perceptions of domestic violence, the following themes were arrived at: domestic violence as a crime, domestic violence as a private issue, domestic violence as a workplace issue, and domestic violence as a non-issue. In terms of the subcategory of reasons for choosing not to adopt WDVPI, the themes arrived at were: lack of education on the issue, infrequency of domestic violence reporting, job types, barriers preventing establishment of policies and initiatives, and policies in progress. Finally, the subcategory of alternative responses to workplace domestic violence, included themes such as: EAPs, unions helping victimized members, grievance, and policies and initiatives for workplace violence in general.

The data were then visually analyzed with the use of two expansive flow charts. Two large pieces of poster board were used to create the flow charts-- one for unions with WDVPI and the other for unions without them. According to Bernard (2000), causal flow charts involve the visual display of boxes that are connected by arrows, illustrating
visual connections between various concepts and themes. Relationships between two or more variables can be simplified in this manner because the arrows clearly show how certain variables affect or are affected by others (Bernard, 2000).

The overarching subcategories were then connected to the emerging themes established through axial coding, within the flow charts. These themes were then linked to specific data collected from the survey responses in this study. Once all subcategories, themes, and examples from the raw data were illustrated in the flow chart, and relevant connections were made, a comparative analysis was conducted as part of the analytical write-up. According to Neuman (2000), a method of agreement and a method of difference should be considered when conducting analytical comparisons. This means that commonalities among cases, including common causes of events and conceptual similarities, should be determined for analysis while crucial differences must also be accounted for to produce a strong comparative analysis (Neuman, 2000). Initially, perceptions of domestic violence in general were compared among participants from unions with or without WDVPI. Next, the reasons for unions choosing to adopt WDVPI were compared with reasons for unions choosing not to do so. Additionally, the types of WDVPI that exist in these unions were explored, along with an examination of the limitations of these initiatives. To follow, these policies and initiatives were compared to alternative policies and procedures of unions that have not established responses specific to workplace domestic violence. What results is an exploratory discussion of how unions, in general, are prepared to respond to workplace domestic violence whether specific policies and initiatives exist or not. The findings arrived at in this comparative
analysis will now be discussed in greater depth, beginning with a description of the participating unions.

**Description of Participating Unions**

**Unions With Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives**

In this study, three participants represented unions that have adopted WDVPI. The membership size of these unions ranged from 7,700 to 260,000 and each union represented a large number of workers in traditionally female-dominated jobs such as health care, nursing, retail, hospitality, and social services.

**Demographics of Participating Unions with WDVPI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union</th>
<th>Dominant Occupation Categories</th>
<th>Gender Representation</th>
<th>Membership Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>Female-Dominated</td>
<td>10,000-25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>Female-Dominated</td>
<td>10,000 or Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Health Care; Auto &amp; Transportation Industry; Retail; Hospitality</td>
<td>Male-Dominated</td>
<td>More than 200,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unions 1 and 2 were primarily situated in the nursing/health care sector with specializations in public health and personal home health care which, according to research, are typically female-dominated occupational domains (Phillips & Phillips, 2000; Zukewich, 2000; Jackson, 2005). Both participants described this type of work as being “traditionally” and “historically” occupied by women. More specifically, members of union 2 were described as being 95 percent female yet concrete numbers were unavailable from union 1. Although unions 1 and 2 were unable to provide an indication
as to when these policies and initiatives were originally adopted, the participant from union 3 explained that this union started developing WDVPI around 1993.

Union 3 was much larger in size and represented a wider diversity of occupations in the health care, auto, transportation, retail, and hospitality industries. In terms of gender dominance, most health care and retail workers were described as being employed in female-dominated workplaces while auto parts and assembly units were described as being primarily male-dominated. Again, these gender breakdowns coincide with existing Canadian research that describes the goods-producing industry as male-dominated and the health care sector as female-dominated (Zukewich, 2000). Overall, however, this union is described as being primarily male-dominated as there is an over-representation of workers in the traditionally male-dominated occupations. In essence, two of the three unions with WDVPI were female-dominated while the third union, although male-dominated, also represented a large number of women workers.

**Unions Without Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives**

Five participants in this study represented unions without WDVPI and the membership size of these unions ranged from 500 to 75,000. These unions represented workers in a variety of occupations such as public and private health care, medical laboratories, group homes, construction, warehousing, public security, transportation, navigation, public education, and provincial public service workers.
### Demographics of Participating Unions without WDVPI

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union</th>
<th>Dominant Categories</th>
<th>Gender Representation</th>
<th>Membership Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Municipal Technical, Clerical, and Professional Workers</td>
<td>Female-Dominated</td>
<td>10,000 or Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Public Education</td>
<td>Female-Dominated</td>
<td>50,000-75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>Female-Dominated</td>
<td>10,000-25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Male-Dominated</td>
<td>10,000 or Less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Construction; Health Care; Multi-Sector (i.e. warehousing, security, and volunteer firefighters)</td>
<td>Male-Dominated</td>
<td>25,000-50,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of gendered labour, participants from unions 4, 5, and 6 described their members as being employed in primarily female-dominated workplaces. Union 4, for instance, was a public service workers’ union that was described by its representative as “female-dominated resulting from (the) type of work carried out.” Although specific numbers detailing this gendered split could not be obtained, the clerical, library, blood collection, and group home labour represented by this union were defined as female-dominant jobs consistent with existing research (Zukewich, 2000). Union 5 was a teachers’ union whose representative described it as being “female-dominated but just fractionally.” Although research describes teaching positions as “care-giving” jobs that are normally female-dominated (Phillips & Phillips, 2000; Zukewich, 2000), this union does not appear to have a vast over-representation of female members. Union 6 was a health care union representing “professional and technical workers in health care and related organizations in both the public and private sectors” such as in hospitals, health units, long-term care facilities, group homes, emergency medical units, and medical laboratories. The participating representative of union 6 asserted that members are
"approximately 85 percent female. Depending on the department, they may range from 100 percent female to predominately male.” In other words, although the majority of its members are female, certain units may actually be male-dominated.

Although several participants in this study were from unions representing workers in female-dominated occupations, two out of five participating unions without WDVPI (unions 7 and 8) represented workers in male-dominated jobs. The participant from union 7 described this union as representing transportation workers; professions that he or she explained as being most commonly occupied by men. In contrast, workers represented by union 8 were described as being “pretty gender neutral with a 55/45 split (55 percent being men, 45 percent being women).” This participant described the gendered split as a reflection of the types of jobs performed by union members; the construction workers were more likely to be male while the health care workers were typically female. Again, these breakdowns are consistent with existing research (Zukewich, 2000).

Commonalities Among Participating Unions

The unions that participated in this study shared some commonalities. First, there appears to be an over-representation of unions representing workers in the health care occupations: five out of eight unions represented workers in health care or nursing in at least some capacity (unions 1, 2, 3, 6, and 8). Furthermore, the majority of participating unions described their membership as being female-dominated, (unions 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6). Next, the overall perceptions of domestic violence held by union representatives will be
examined. In other words, what are their perceptions of workplace domestic violence and how do they define it.

**Union Perceptions of Domestic Violence**

**Unions With Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives**

All participants from unions with WDVPI referred to the issue of workplace domestic violence as a private and a public problem, a crime, a workplace problem, and a social problem. The participant representing union 3 further explained that:

This union recognizes domestic violence as all of the above. Violence against women is a crime not only against women, but also has a dramatic impact on families, friends, communities, the workplace and society in general. Ending violence against women has become a priority for the (union) in the workplaces, communities where our members work and live.

In explaining the connection between domestic violence and the workplace, this participant also asserted that “... their (the victims’) lives don’t stop and start at the workplace, and it (is) important to identify supports beyond wages and benefits for our members.” In other words, this union recognizes the inability of victims to simply ignore the effects of domestic violence once their shifts begin. Additionally, the representative of union 2 further described domestic violence as offensive to the victim and discriminatory in nature, while the representative of union 1 stressed the importance of considering “the legal and emotional aspects of domestic violence” in the workplace due to its definition as a crime.

Domestic violence was also typically described by respondents as a form of physical violence directed at the victim by the abuser. The participant from union 3 expanded on this description by stating that, “typically we recognize acts of domestic
violence as physical violence as well as verbal violence. We also recognize 'control' as an act of domestic violence either in a financial or emotional sense.” Furthermore, it was explained that the impact of domestic violence on families and communities demonstrates its ability to harm those with whom the victim interacts with in both the public and private spheres. In other words, participants agreed that while domestic violence could best be described in terms of physical violence against a victim, it could not be limited to such a definition.

Unions Without Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives

Participants from unions without WDVPI shared some similar perceptions of domestic violence with participants from unions with such policies and initiatives. For instance, various respondents described domestic violence as a crime, a workplace issue, and a private/public issue. In terms of domestic violence being a workplace issue, the participant from union 5 said that “it can be (a workplace issue) if it (domestic violence) spills into the workplace; for example, high worker absenteeism, worker in need of assistance either financially or psychologically, etc.” Additionally, the participant from union 8 explained that domestic violence is a workplace issue just as is “anything that disrupts the ability of employees to carry forth work in the workplace.” In other words, if the violence was visibly affecting the workplace, then it would be considered a workplace problem.

A significant difference between unions with WDVPI and unions without such policies and initiatives was that some referred to it as a “non-issue” as far as the workplace is concerned. For instance, the participant from union 4 explained that “the
union has never taken a position on domestic violence. It has not arisen as an issue.”

The participant representing union 8 supported this stance, stating that there has never been a request for domestic violence to be defined as a workplace issue that should be recognized by the union. In agreement, the participant from union 7 asserted that the union “would not be made aware (of the violence), and would not become involved.”

Furthermore, the union 8 respondent described the experience of domestic violence as being potentially embarrassing for victims which would likely impact a victim’s willingness to publicly disclose the abuse to a work supervisor. As such, this participant described domestic violence as a matter that would most likely be kept private between the victimized worker and the abuser and would not be witnessed in the workplace. In other words, it was assumed that a victim would not disclose the abuse to her union representatives because she would simply prefer to keep the embarrassment of the abuse private. In essence, unions that did not have WDVPI in place appeared to justify their absence by describing domestic violence as a non-issue within the union. This may be attributed to the amount of education that respondents had on the issue which will be discussed in a later section.

Finally, representatives of unions 6 and 8 stated that domestic violence is a workplace problem just as many other social problems. In other words, domestic violence in the workplace is equally problematic to social issues like substance abuse and sexual harassment; therefore, policies and initiatives specific to domestic violence are not perceived as necessary. The participant from union 8, for instance, stated that domestic violence is an “important issue, but there are so many important issues that we need to prioritize what is going to go into the collective agreement.” This participant drew a
comparison to alcoholism and domestic violence and stated that specific policies would not be necessary for either problem because both issues affect the workplace in the same way (i.e. lower performance levels, decreased productivity, and increased absenteeism). As such, this participant explained that disciplinary actions taken by employers against victims would not occur as a result of the violence itself, but of the victim’s inability to deal with the consequences of domestic violence. The respondent from union 6 agreed that domestic violence is a workplace issue

... in the same way that other societal issues such as health (both physical and mental), addictions, and equality issues are workplace issues. However, it is not an issue that has received much of a profile either internally or externally as a workplace issue. In this union, either domestic violence is not very prevalent or else the members do not think the union should or can assist in it.

It seems, then, domestic violence may not receive a great deal of attention in some unions because its consequences have not been formally distinguished between those of other social problems that can, and do, affect the workplace.

Most participants who completed Survey 2, however, asserted that the union would become involved in incidents of workplace domestic violence if they were brought to the attention of union representatives. The participant from union 5 explained that domestic violence would be acknowledged by the union “if the member was not ‘safe’ in their workplace because assaults are taking place.” Some participants also discussed the importance of recognizing domestic violence as a workplace issue if victims were terminated as a result of the negative effects of abuse. For instance, the respondent from union 6 stated that:
Whenever a worker experiences performance issues, our labour relations staff look for a causation. Therefore they will explore with the member whether there are issues in the home that may be contributing to the (poor) performance, absenteeism, etc. Certainly if we are aware that there are domestic abuse issues, we will assist in accessing counseling or other assistance through EAPs.

As such, it appears that although some unions have not implemented WDVPI and, although union perceptions of domestic violence are varied, there exists some recognition that domestic violence can be an issue of union concern. In order to further understand why some unions have implemented such policies and initiatives and others have not, then, the impetus for implementation is examined below.

**Reasons for Either Choosing to or Choosing Not to Implement Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives**

**Unions With Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives**

In order to suppress the negative effects of workplace domestic violence on victims, some unions in Canada have implemented policies and initiatives in response to the problem. Additionally, some unions have jointly negotiated policies and initiatives with employers (Jackson, 2005). Furthermore, it is the policy of some unions to guide victims to employer-based WDVPI if members approach the union unaware of their options. In this case, union representatives would then be required to have grounded knowledge of these employer-based WDVPI in order to effectively educate members on available services.

According to participants who completed Survey 1, the primary reasons for implementing WDVPI were to provide safety to victims and to protect the jobs of victimized members. With regards to victim safety, the participant from union 1 stated
that the underlying purpose of WDVPI is “to maintain the physical, emotional, and mental health of our membership” by supporting victims through union assistance. These unions recognize that domestic violence is not a problem confined only to the home. The participant from union 3 explained that “the number one cause of death of women in the workplace is murder, and as women in violent relationships are potential homicides, there is a statistical reality to the fact that this is something that could potentially happen at their workplace.” These assertions partially coincide with US statistics provided by the Family Violence Prevention Fund (2006) which show that “for women, homicide was the second leading cause of death on the job in 2003.” Similar Canadian statistics could not be found.

The respondent from union 1 stated that his or her union encourages employers to “ensure the abuser is barred from the workplace” if domestic violence is disclosed by a victim. In order to ensure that victims are protected in the workplace, the participant representing union 2 explained that WDVPI “require the earnest reporting, participation and monitoring of everyone involved to make the process work.” In other words, victim protection requires teamwork within the organization and cannot be limited to management or union intervention.

In order to aid the victim in her struggle with domestic violence, the participant from union 3 discussed the willingness of the union to assist the victim in keeping her actions hidden from the abuser through policies negotiated between the union and employers. This participant explained that “in certain workplaces, the employer has even paid time off for a woman to attend a first visit at a shelter to get information if time off her pay cheque would be noticed by her abuser.” These unions have instituted a number
of victimized employee protection policies, some of which are negotiated between the union and employers. Such policies and initiatives will later be discussed in greater depth.

Employee job protection is also a significant factor in a union's decision to implement WDVPI. As per written policy in various collective agreements, the participant from union 2 explained that the first step in ending domestic violence in the workplace is for the victim to tell the abuser to stop harassing her at work, followed by documentation of any further incidents pertaining to this abuse. According to this participant, "if the harassment does not stop at this point, or if the harassed employee does not feel able to approach the alleged harasser directly, that employee should immediately report verbally or in writing the harassment to the appropriate supervisor and/or union representative." Again, this provision is documented in several collective agreements that the union has negotiated with employers. With regards to union 3, such suspicions are addressed within its women's advocacy program. According to the respondent of this union,

If an employee began missing a lot of work and it was suspected that she is in an abusive relationship there would be a referral to the women’s advocate. Often the signs of abuse are evident by supervisors, advocates, union representatives, co-workers, etc. This referral could come from a myriad of sources, i.e. payroll, another co-worker, union representative, direct supervisor, (or) a family member.

As a result, when domestic violence is suspected within these unionized workplaces, the matter is addressed with great seriousness, according to the participants.

All three participating union representatives also declared that victims who were wrongfully terminated as a result of the abuse would receive union intervention with the
employer as long as the abuse had been formally disclosed. The participant from union 2 contended that the union “would exhaust all avenues in the collective agreement to protect her job.” Similarly, the respondent from union 1 explained that the union would “intervene, represent and seek accommodation in another workplace using portability of seniority and benefits” as per the collective bargaining agreement. Finally, the participant from union 3 explained that a union representative would, on behalf of the victim, “file a grievance demanding reinstatement.” In essence, these unions address such termination with a victim-centered approach, meaning representatives will advocate on behalf of the victim provided that the domestic abuse has already been disclosed or is disclosed in the aftermath of termination.

While the main rationale for all three unions in choosing to implement WDVPI was to ensure employee safety and job protection, the participant from union 3 discussed various measures taken to convince employers that such policies and initiatives were, indeed, necessary. According to this representative, “employers often argue that situations that take place outside the workplace are not their responsibility and, therefore, they are not interested in negotiating language/policy/programs to deal with employees who may be in abusive relationships outside of the workplace.” As a result, this union realized the necessity for providing employers with incentives in order for them to agree to such policies and initiatives. For instance, this participant discussed various employer-related costs associated with domestic violence in the workplace, such as increased health care expenditures and costs related to high absenteeism. Furthermore, this participant contended that employers can actually save money in the long-term if they can provide victims with assistance. As such, if victims can work through problems associated with
domestic violence (i.e. legal appointments, shelter assistance, etc.) while continuing to work then the victim may be less likely to apply for a stress leave. According to this participant,

If assisted by her union (instead of going off work on short term disability due to stress), we can advocate to help a woman stay at work, working through the issues—we save the employer money that would be paid out in sickness benefits and retraining costs. A six week stress leave could cost the employer as much as $5000.

Furthermore, this participant disclosed that employers may be required to pay double the indemnity for life insurance if the victim is killed by her abuser at work. Moreover, if the employer knew about the abuse, but was negligent in addressing the problem, the employer would be at fault and could face severe consequences such as civil litigation. It would appear, then, that employers failing to take notice of domestic violence in the workplace, or choosing not to address the problem, may face more costly long-term repercussions than those taking an active stance to address the problem by assisting the victimized worker. In essence, this union has successfully negotiated WDVPI with many employers on behalf of its members through its ability to successfully illustrate the organizational costs that workplace domestic violence can potentially entail.

With regard to the many social issues addressed by this union, in fact, members at all levels of this union are encouraged to lobby the government to influence positive social and political change in the community. The union often organizes public campaigns stressing the importance of affordable childcare, affordable housing, funding for women’s programs and services, reasonable minimum wages, and many other social programs. Bringing attention to many of these issues helps strengthen the union’s goal of improving women’s employment and economic equality. In essence, the establishment
of WDVPI for this union does not end at protecting a victim’s health, safety, and job, but these policies are also intended to promote women’s equality in society in general.

Unions Without Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives

Since participating unions without WDVPI typically agreed that domestic violence is a workplace problem, an exploration of why response policies and initiatives have not been implemented is necessary. Three out of five participants stated that domestic violence has not been raised as an issue by union executives or members, and one participant asserted that there had not been any requests that domestic violence be raised as a workplace issue. Furthermore, as previously noted, workplace domestic violence has been described by some participants as a “non-issue” that has received little, if any, priority in terms of collective bargaining. It appears that because there are many important social issues permeating the workplace, the importance of isolating domestic violence as a problem in need of its own policies and initiatives has received little, if any, attention.

The lack of education about the harmful effects of workplace domestic violence was made clear when a participant representing union 8 argued that victims are not terminated because of domestic violence, but because of the negative effects of domestic violence. This participant argued that employers who terminate victims due to low productivity levels or frequent absence would not wrongfully be doing so because the employer would not technically be terminating the worker as a direct result of the victimization. It was further explained that “if discharged for any reason, domestic violence is going to be an aggravating factor. Employees are not receiving discipline
because of the domestic violence itself.” In other words, the employer would be viewed as rightfully terminating the employee as a result of an inability to meet certain expectations and standards required of the workplace.

The lack of reported incidents of domestic violence in the workplace was also stated as a reason for not implementing WDVPI. Three participants declared that no reports of workplace domestic violence had been brought forward to the union. The remaining two participants, both representing female-dominated unions, asserted that domestic violence had, in fact, been a problem for their unions. One of these participants, for example, mentioned four reported incidents of workplace domestic violence in the past year although no specific details were disclosed. Another participant recalled one incident of workplace domestic violence that had recently been reported to the union. This incident involved the killing of a union member by her abusive partner at the workplace. This union, however, has not sought policy changes since the homicide occurred. The union with four reports of workplace domestic violence, on the other hand, has initiated talks regarding the implementation of WDVPI. The participant from this union expressed that:

... until recently, the issue of domestic violence as a workplace issue distinct from other safety or violence concerns has not been flagged for us. However, we have developed a relationship with (a violence against women group), and are exploring ways to work with them to develop processes and policies for workplaces that could be used not only by our members, but by workplaces everywhere.

It seems that, for some unions, then, domestic violence is slowly being recognized as a problem requiring policy change. Nevertheless, barriers may exist that prevent unions from proceeding with such changes even when women are killed.
Participants of unions without WDVPI discussed some barriers that may have prevented their adoption. Union membership size, for example, was described as a common barrier. Two of these unions ranged in size from 500 to 1,500 members which was described as being far too small for having the resources required to develop such policies and initiatives. Moreover, a lack of demand for these policies and initiatives by union members was discussed by two participants. One of these participants represented the union that had one of its members killed by her abuser at her workplace. Another participant discussed the potential for employer/member resistance to the implementation of WDVPI. According to this participant, “... like any union proposal, we could anticipate resistance from employers or even some members. We know that we face resistance to accommodation of disability, so it would not be unreasonable to expect similar resistance here.” In other words, although development of these policies and initiatives may be proposed to union executives, members, and employers, their adoption could be denied thereby posing a significant barrier to the spread of awareness of workplace domestic violence.

Types of Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives Established by Participating Unions

Participants in this study representing unions with WDVPI discussed an assortment of measures for addressing and responding to the needs of victims and abusers. The most common types of WDVPI were proactive, educative, and responsive in nature, thereby paralleling the most common types of policies and initiatives addressed in existing literature on workplace domestic violence. As previously explained, proactive approaches are those which seek to prevent the violence before it occurs, and are also
preparatory tools for dealing with the abuse if and when it happens. Educative strategies can exist in the form of victim, community, and/or union-based (or employer-based) measures that provide an understanding of workplace domestic violence to all members of the workplace. Finally, responsive policies are reactive in nature and address the problem of workplace domestic violence during its occurrence and/or after it has occurred. The existence of such policies and initiatives adopted by participating unions in this study are discussed below.

Proactive Approaches

The underlying purpose for WDVPI, as discussed by the three participants, was to proactively protect the victimized worker from harm. The participant from union 3 asserted that his or her union “recognized the impact of violence against women on society and understood the importance of raising the issue of violence against women among our members if we were to work towards making change in society.” All three participants emphasized the need for unions to ensure that employers are proactively providing workers with a safe working environment, especially when domestic violence is a cause for concern.

In order to ensure safety from abusers, unions have adopted proactive policies and initiatives in order to prevent victims from enduring victimization on the job. One participant discussed informal intervention plans available to this union’s membership that protect victims when abusers enter the workplace. For instance, known abusers are banned from the workplaces of members represented by this union; an initiative applied by employers but negotiated with the union. This participant explained that information
is collected by managerial staff about known abusers; for instance, photographs of their vehicles and license plate identification numbers are placed on file. In order to prevent abusers from harassing their victims at work, front-line staff will normally be instructed to screen telephone calls on behalf of the victims. "Safe parking" may also be provided to victims and victims can request assistance to their cars by co-workers or security staff.

As previously discussed, protecting victimized members from termination or from a sudden decision to resign is also crucial to these three unions. As such, various strategies have been implemented to protect victims from termination as well as to protect them from the frequent harassment they may experience by abusers. All three participants discussed the potential for employee relocation (which may result in an abuser being unable to locate the victim at work). One participant discussed the ability of union members to request time off work for legal appointments and counseling while another explained that time off with pay for medical appointments would also be granted to victims. Furthermore, one participant explained that his or her union has negotiated, with employers, a "family leave" policy in the collective agreement. This is a written policy allowing victims temporary absence to seek abuse-related assistance, and employers are expected to comply with a victim's request for this service. If the victim is wrongfully terminated, however, grievances may also be filed by the union.

Victimized workers represented by these three unions may be referred to counseling facilities and other social services when they approach union representatives and/or women's advocates. Two participants explained that domestic violence counseling is normally provided through EAPs. Representatives of these unions will normally refer victims to EAPs who then assist the victim with referrals to counseling
services and medical offices. The legal and emotional aspects associated with domestic violence may also be discussed with an EAP counselor. Confidentiality is always guaranteed with EAPs and information shared by the victim with the EAP counselor will not be relayed back to the employer or union.

As previously discussed, one union involved in this study has implemented a women’s assistance program. According to this participant, (This) is a program that has evolved over the years but the (program assistant) is primarily a resource person for women who are facing violence in their lives. This initiative was the first time a union had put the issue of violence against women on the bargaining table.

Victims can be referred to the program by practically anyone in the workplace, the union, or in her social network (i.e. family and friends). However, victims do not necessarily have to be referred to the service as they can make appointments to meet with a program assistant on their own. These assistants are specially-trained individuals who may provide guidance and support to victims of violence. For instance, The (assistants) are trained to refer women to community resources on a number of issues that stem from domestic violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, suicide, substance abuse, legal system, etc. In a number of our workplaces we have negotiated safe and secure workplaces along with the right to refuse unsafe work due to harassment.

Furthermore, program assistants may be contacted by men attempting to assist female family members with matters concerning domestic violence. A program assistant may refer victims to services that specialize in helping women escape abusive situations and they may also refer women to shelters, second stage housing, and legal aid. If a program assistant is not available, a union representative within the victim’s workplace or department would advocate on behalf of the victim through the employer with regards to
requests for time off work and workplace assistance (i.e. medical and legal needs). The women's assistance program can also be beneficial to the employer. Through the assistance of a program assistant, the victim possesses a better chance of working through her problems while remaining in the workplace rather than applying for a stress leave. This, in turn, may be a cost-effective strategy for employers as noted earlier.

**Educative Strategies**

Educative strategies appear to be fewer in number than proactive policies in these unions; nevertheless, domestic violence awareness training is available to members of all three unions in the form of training sessions and/or workshops led by either professionals in the community or by trained union leaders themselves (i.e. a women's advocate). However, such training is not mandatory because unions cannot impose such requirements of their members; therefore, not all members will benefit from this training.

With regards to specialized education, one participant explained that his or her union places great importance on educating both members and the community on various social issues. Workshops and specialized training are also provided to union leaders on the topic of violence against women, and members are encouraged to participate in various educational programs. Such programs can be related to a number of union, community, workplace, and social issues, some of which may specifically focus on violence against women and domestic violence. Furthermore, this union regularly attends academic and community conferences pertaining to violence against women and representatives often present research conducted within the union. More specifically,

(They) also develop resolutions and recommendations that are debated and discussed at conventions, and council discussion that
raise the awareness among the leadership of our union. We organize campaigns on child care, affordable housing, funding for women’s programs and services, minimum wage campaigns... all with the goal of improving women’s economic equality in Canada.

For this union, then, it appears that educative strategies are also designed to address various social problems and inequities working women often face.

**Responsive Policies**

The most common response policy for these three unions is the involvement of police when abusers enter the workplace. These policies are, for the most part, employer responses. However, two of these unions have negotiated the terms of these policies with employers. According to one representative, his or her union has “sought security responses in each workplace to protect both staff and patients who are victims of violence” while the other representative noted that security procedures have been negotiated with employers. For instance, if an abuser is reported to have entered the premises, management will be notified and security will be increased. Furthermore, this participant explained that “police would be called, and the employee would be warned and moved to a secure part of the building.” Such initiatives result in the removal of unwanted perpetrators and are designed to protect all members and clients in the workplace. One participant explained that “the employer has a responsibility to provide a safe working environment for its employees under the law.” Furthermore, participants spoke of employer-based response initiatives for domestic violence perpetrators that are union members themselves. For instance, employers may refer known domestic abusers to the union, where they could then be referred to appropriate social service agencies.
offering programs such as anger management and counseling. The unions, however, do not have their own policies or initiatives regarding perpetrator-intervention. Furthermore, unions cannot issue punishment to members who are abusers themselves. Nonetheless, one participant stated that “if a report was made to an employer about one of his employees making threatening phone calls while at work the employer would have an obligation to deal with the allegations.” In other words, the criminal nature of the problem would have to be addressed by the employer and police involvement would be obligatory. Although the discipline of abusers is the responsibility of the employer and not of the union, the union can assist victims in seeking legal action against the abuser. While these responses to workplace domestic violence appear to provide useful assistance to victims, an examination of disclosure as a limitation to the effectiveness of these policies and initiatives is discussed next.

Disclosure as a Limitation of Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives

One particular barrier for the efficiency of WDVPI is the issue of formal disclosure. All three union participants who completed Survey 1 stated that victims are required to formally disclose abuse to receive the special treatment and services offered by the union. Two participants explained that a victim would be required to report the abuse to a manager or supervisor in the workplace or to a union representative. The third participant discussed the availability of a women’s program assistant to whom a victim would be expected to disclose the abuse. This participant expressed that, “(program assistants) are trained to recognize the seriousness of the situation and the potential of homicide once the woman has disclosed her situation and therefore treat the situation
very seriously from that point forward.” Since the program assistants recognize the dangers women can encounter if a perpetrator realizes that the abuse has been disclosed, the matter is handled with a high degree of confidentiality. Nonetheless, the formal disclosure of domestic violence could potentially prevent victims from coming forward due to underlying fears about the abuser’s reaction to the disclosure (Mighty, 1997; Manitoba Women’s Directorate, 2005; Swanberg et al., 2006). Despite the limitations of WDVPI, it is important that unions have established these procedures as an avenue for addressing issues related to domestic abuse at work. What must now be established is whether or not unions that have not implemented these policies and initiatives are responding to domestic violence through alternative methods and, if so, what do these responses look like?

**Alternative Responses to Workplace Domestic Violence for Those Unions Without Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives**

Although five participating unions in this study had not established any specific workplace domestic violence policies, all five of these participants discussed some alternative approaches for addressing domestic violence in the workplace. In four unions, victimized members who formally disclose abuse will be referred to EAPs for counseling. EAPs are joint initiatives between these unions and employers, and are essential because they can arrange health benefits for victims in need of physical and emotional recovery, according to two participants.

When union representatives are made aware of victimization, they will normally offer assistance to the victim in addition to that offered by EAPs. For instance, one

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22 Employee Assistance Plans are available to all union members
participant stated that unions may refer victimized workers to external agencies while another participant explained that financial assistance in the form of monetary grants may be provided to victims up to a value of $2,500. However, victimized workers are not always guaranteed job protection where WDVPI do not exist. For instance, employers will sometimes pursue disciplinary measures, and possibly termination, if absenteeism and reduced productivity become a problem for workers. According to four out of five participants, if victims disclose the abuse to union representatives and explain that they have been terminated by their employers, then the union will advocate on behalf of the victim by filing a grievance. One participant asserted that the union would work to advocate domestic violence as a human rights issue in order to reverse the wrongful termination. As another participant explained,

"We do not have any policies expressly dealing with domestic violence. However, our collective agreements include occupational health and safety clauses, so to the extent that a domestic violence situation were to spill over to threaten the safety of members in the workplace, we would depend on these provisions (which would then provide the victim with specialized services, protection in the workplace, job protection, etc.)."

Therefore, it seems that although particular WDVPI have not been established by these unions, victims may still be assisted through more general initiatives designed for victims of various social problems.

One participant discussed the existence of staff abuse policies that have been implemented by most of the employers with whom the union associates with. Although these staff abuse policies are employer initiatives, the union has also developed, within its own code of ethics, provisions protecting members from harassment. This participant explained that these provisions can be extended to include the harassment of violent
partners entering the workplace. Furthermore, three participants explained that workplace bullying and sexual, verbal, and physical harassment policies developed in conjunction with the union and employers could be applied by domestic violence victims in seeking protection from abusers who interfere with the workplace. One participant asserted that workplace domestic violence would, in fact, be dealt with accordingly through a variety of policies related to violence as implemented by the union and, therefore, domestic violence did not require isolation as a workplace issue. A participant from the union that regarded domestic violence as a private issue unobserved in the workplace supported this claim. This participant stated that workplace policies responding to “non-criminal” situations exist in the union and that all incidents of workplace misconduct would be handled by management while victims would be assessed on a case-by-case basis by the executive board of members. In essence, if issues of domestic violence are brought forward to representatives of unions without WDVPI, they will be addressed in accordance with employer and/or managerial policies related to workplace misconduct.

In summary, this chapter has explored the various perceptions of workplace domestic violence held by some Canadian unions. Additionally, the existence and types of WDVPI adopted by unions have been surveyed to obtain an understanding of the measures some unions have taken to address the issue of workplace domestic violence. The next chapter will discuss these findings and where future research can go in further exploring domestic violence as a workplace issue.
Chapter Six: Discussion

Introduction

This study has explored union responses to workplace domestic violence. More specifically, the purpose of this study was to examine the types of national and provincial labour unions in Canada that have implemented WDVPI, the types of workers these unions represent, whether the membership of these unions was male or female-dominated, and what the precursor and/or main goals for adopting such policies and initiatives were. A qualitative, comparative analysis of responses from two different surveys was then conducted to provide insight as to why some unions have implemented these policies and initiatives, and why others have not.

Types of Unions with Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives, and the Types of Workers they Represent

Due to the small participant pool, this study did not produce representative results. However, as this research is exploratory in nature, the primary goal was to gather data that would provide a basis for understanding the current situation of unions in responding to workplace domestic violence. In this study, there was an overrepresentation of health care unions with WDVPI. Two out of three unions with WDVPI represented primarily female workers in the field of health care. Moreover, the third union, although male-dominated, also represented health care workers but to a lesser extent than unions 1 and 2. All three participants referred to health care as a traditionally female-dominated occupational field, which coincides with previous findings that health care, social service work, and education professions are overwhelmingly comprised of female workers.
(Phillips & Phillips, 2000; Drolet, 2001). Furthermore, workers in health care occupations are said to be among the most victimized groups at work (de Léséleuc, 2004). Therefore, it seems that the unions participating in this study with WDVPI represent workers most vulnerable to violence in the workplace. In essence, by implementing WDVPI these unions are taking notice of worker vulnerability in terms of violence in the workplace and, more specifically, workplace domestic violence. Since women are more likely to be victims of domestic violence than men (Duffy & Momirov, 1997; Johnson & Bunge, 2001; Kelly, 2003), women are more likely than men to benefit from union responses to workplace domestic violence. As such, the fact that these three unions represent mostly female workers suggests that resources available through the union will potentially reach a large group of victims.

While it is important to address victim vulnerability, domestic violence offenders are often in need of corrective support. Union 3, which is classified as a primarily male-dominated union, has adopted a policy of providing resources for perpetrators (i.e. referrals to anger management and counseling programs). As suggested by Johnson and Gardner (1999), referrals to counseling programs for perpetrators of domestic violence allows employers to encourage treatment for abusers which, in turn, may assist the victim in the long run. In the case of union 3, a referral program has been initiated that may be of use to perpetrators who are requesting union assistance. This indicates that some unions are directing attention to perpetrator rehabilitation when domestic violence policies and initiatives are adopted.

Of the five participating unions without WDVPI, only two unions were male-dominated with one of those unions being only slightly male-dominated. As a result,
only three of the eight participating unions represented workers in male-dominated occupations. This prompts the question: why were female-dominated unions overrepresented in this study? The answer to this question is not entirely clear. However, based on the fact that many employers continue to disregard domestic violence as a workplace issue (Mighty, 2004), and that domestic violence is commonly misperceived in Canadian society as a private, woman’s issue (Duffy & Momirov, 1997), it can be suggested that male-dominated unions might perceive WDVPI as unnecessary for their members. For instance, one participant in this study represented a small, male-dominated union and expressed that domestic violence would not be a union concern. Another participant, from a male-dominated union, emphasized that there are too many social problems affecting the workplace to focus specifically on domestic violence through the adoption of response policies and initiatives. As a result, representatives of male-dominated unions, in comparison to those of female-dominated unions, might not have seen the value of participating in this study; however, it is questionable as to whether these beliefs are standard for male-dominated unions and if this is why they were underrepresented as participants in this study. Since this study is exploratory in nature and does not draw from a large participant pool, further research is required to confirm the validity of these assumptions.

**Impetus for Implementing Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives**

Based on the data obtained in this study, a variety of responses were provided detailing the underlying purposes for implementing WDVPI. Most commonly, there was an agreement that the effects of domestic violence do not simply diminish once
victimized employees enter the workplace. As such, the purpose for these policies and initiatives was to provide safety and job protection to union members.

Additionally, the results show that some unions encourage employers to recognize the benefits of WDVPI when joint initiatives are in place. For instance, one participant addressed employer-related costs associated with workplace domestic violence, such as health care expenditures and stress leaves. As such, it was determined that in order to highlight the advantages of WDVPI to employers, it was sometimes necessary for the union to highlight the long-term financial benefits that the employers could receive in return. As previously noted, helping victims cope with the effects of domestic abuse on the job can save the employer thousands of dollars in stress leave expenses.

These findings coincide with those of previous research (Day, 1995; Mighty, 1997; Johnson & Gardner, 1999; Moe & Bell, 2004; Swanberg et al., 2006), which indicated that decreased productivity can impact company profits, thereby provoking employer recognition of domestic violence as a workplace problem in order to protect both victimized employees and economic capital. This suggests that the purpose for corporate implementation of such policies and initiatives could be multi-dimensional, with the impetus not only being a concern for victims, but also a concern for profit. As such, a continued focus on the economic concerns related to workplace domestic violence could prompt support from employers during negotiations to include WDVPI in collective agreements. Even still, employers may not agree to such policies and initiatives as demonstrated by Phillips and Phillips (2000) who assert that unions spend much time negotiating progressive policies and initiatives, yet employers often reject their importance.
Finally, there was an obvious need for unions with WDVPI to actively combat social problems that may lead to, or perpetuate, victimization in the workplace. As such, one union in particular explained the need for unions to become involved in the development of positive, societal change. In order to achieve this, community involvement by the union, such as through educational campaigns and conference presentations, was deemed necessary for combating social problems such as violence against women, lack of affordable child care, lack of affordable housing, and low minimum wage.

**Reasons for Unions Choosing Not to Adopt Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Initiatives**

Some common reasons for unions not implementing WDVPI, as found above, included the lack of attention paid to domestic violence as a workplace issue, lack of demand by members to produce WDVPI, and a lack of resources for implementing such policies if the union were small in size. There was, however, an underlying agreement among most participants that domestic violence is, in fact, a workplace issue; there has just not been enough demand by members and executives during the collective bargaining process to isolate it as an issue in need of specific policies and initiatives. Only one participant clearly denied this by stating that domestic violence is not a workplace problem, and that it would not receive the attention of the union.

Although some participants stressed that workplace domestic violence is a problem that has been brought forward to the union, others reported that an infrequency of domestic violence reporting contributes to its designation as a “non-issue.” This does, however, call into question whether members are not reporting workplace domestic
violence to unions because policies and initiatives do not exist, or if domestic violence has actually not occurred within these unionized workplaces. Perhaps victims of workplace domestic violence would be more likely to disclose such abuse if assistance to the matter was formally outlined in collective agreements. This question could be examined in future research related to workplace domestic violence.

Common Findings Among All Participating Unions

Although three unions in this study had implemented WDVPI, and five unions had not, there appears to be some similarities with regards to the ways in which domestic violence would be responded to if reported. For example, nearly all participating unions have negotiated with employers the availability of EAPs for their members. This means that although some unions do not have policies or initiatives that respond directly to the problem of workplace domestic violence, victimized employees disclosing abuse will be referred to the external assistance provided by EAPs. From these programs, victims may receive referrals to various social service agencies for assistance with counseling, medical needs, and legal advice.

There appears to be several benefits for members who belong to unions with specific WDVPI, however. For instance, particular union representatives may have received better training on the issue of domestic violence in order to better understand the needs of victimized workers, and they may be better prepared to adhere to the needs and concerns of victims as a result. According to one participant, for instance, a women's advocate program exists whereby certain female representatives receive extensive training on the issue of violence against women, and are therefore equipped to oversee

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23 Particularly representatives in the occupational health and safety or women's assistance divisions
problems associated with workplace domestic violence if, and when, they occur. In this particular union, victimized members will not be referred to external EAPs for assistance, but will receive assistance directly from knowledgeable union representatives themselves. Furthermore, unions that have highlighted the problem of workplace domestic violence as a concern within collective agreements, written policies, and initiatives could potentially be regarded by victims as having greater concern for the problem itself. Victims may also be more aware of existing WDVPI if the union has taken an active stance against this social problem, and may be more likely to seek the union’s assistance in escaping the abuse. For victimized members of unions without such policies and initiatives, however, requesting assistance from the union might not occur if they are not aware that the union could refer them to the services of EAPs.

**Limitations of the Research**

Although approximately 40 national and provincial unions were contacted for participation in this study, only 10 responded, with eight agreeing to participate. A wide diversity of unions was initially contacted representing a vast range of occupational categories, both female- and male-dominated. As previously noted, the most common type of union to participate in this study was that of health care. This over-representation of respondents means that the results of this study are not generalizable to all occupational categories. Also, there is an over-representation of unions representing female-dominated occupations, which means that the perspectives of male-dominated union representatives on workplace domestic violence are limited. Furthermore, the comparison of union perceptions on workplace domestic violence, as well as the
comparison of policies and initiatives themselves, has been very general due to the small sample size of this study. However, since this study is exploratory in nature, the most important goal was to seek preliminary insight into union perceptions of workplace domestic violence, and to understand their reasons for choosing to, or choosing not to, implement appropriate policies and initiatives in response to the problem. In essence, the primary goals were achievable within the limits of this study.

With regards to research methodology, qualitative studies normally generate a large number of meaningful quotes that can add to the validity of the data (Bernard, 2002). The use of email surveys in this research, however, resulted in a limited number of descriptive quotes that could be used for analysis. This was likely because many participants responded to the survey questions with brief, point form answers that lacked descriptive detail. As a result, this study does not deliver the voice of participants to the same degree as face-to-face qualitative interviews might have. For future research, then, I would consider meeting with participants in person to conduct face-to-face interviews with the hope that more thorough and descriptive responses would be elicited.

**Research Contributions**

This study has contributed to academia by directing attention to an issue that is limited in academic research. Furthermore, this study examines workplace domestic violence from the perspectives of unions, which appears to be a previously unexplored dimension of existing research on workplace domestic violence. This study provides information on the approach some unions are taking in advancing the rights and protection of domestic violence victims in the workplace. It also emphasizes the need to
draw public attention to a traditionally private problem that was once thought to have no relevance in the public sphere. As such, this study has shed light on an issue that some union representatives may not have previously considered. As a result, unions that have already adopted WDVPI may have come to realize the value in their existence while unions that have not implemented such policies and initiatives could now, potentially, give consideration to the benefits of doing so. In essence, this study has increased awareness about workplace domestic violence through consciousness-raising. Because this research is exploratory in nature, it invites future research on the subject matter that can draw from the socialist feminist criminological framework developed in this study.

Contributions to Socialist Feminist Criminology

This study has shown that some unions are recognizing that domestic violence cannot be minimized as a private problem having no affect on the workplace. Because socialist feminist criminology indicates that women are victimized as a result of the dual oppressions of capitalism and patriarchy (Daly & Chesney-Lind, 2004), the fact that some unions have adopted WDVPI demonstrates that they are attempting to minimize this violence both in the workplace and in the home. For instance, if unions can successfully adopt responsive policies, whereby the police are brought in to protect victims in the workplace during a perpetrator invasion, or, if unions can use educative strategies to increase victim awareness of community resources, then unions may be reducing the effects of such violence on their members both at home and at work.

Furthermore, this study shows that more female- than male-dominated unions have adopted WDVPI, which indicates that unions may be recognizing workplace
domestic violence as a problem stemming from the traditional subordination of women in both the public and private sphere. From a socialist feminist criminological perspective, women are victimized by male violence because the onset of capitalism has led to their oppression (Britton, 2004). More specifically, the traditional placement of women in the home, where violence is best hidden, has increased their susceptibility to domestic victimization (Britton, 2004). Because unions have been a progressive force for women in terms of initiating equality and social change in the workplace (Phillips & Phillips, 2000), the fact that unions are recognizing domestic violence as a social, public, private, and workplace problem demonstrates that unions are aware of the multiple dynamics of the violence itself. As a result, union responses to workplace domestic violence might continue to address this violence in such a way that highlights the public/private nature of this gendered problem. Future research could produce a longitudinal comparison of the changes in WDVPI over time as more unions adopt such policies and initiatives. Additional recommendations for further research will be discussed in more detail below.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

The over-representation of health care and nursing unions in this study indicates that representatives in this field felt particularly drawn to participating in a study that highlights the issue of workplace domestic violence. As such, further research could examine and compare the existence, and lack of existence, of workplace domestic violence policies in health care unions throughout Canada. Also, since health care and nursing professions are typically female-dominated, future research should compare the perceived need for WDVPI within unions that service members in female- and male-
dominated workplaces. That is, studies should further examine whether workplace
domestic violence is regarded with greater importance in certain types of unions than in
others, and if gender dominance plays a role in this perception.

Another area of research that could be expanded upon is the type of workplace
domestic violence that occurs when abusers are patients or clients at the victim’s place of
work. Alternatively, research could be conducted to examine the impact of domestic
violence on the workplace when patients or clients are victims of abuse, and their abusers
enter the premises. As one participant in this study explained, victimized patients can
present a danger to workers as secondary victims of domestic violence when perpetrators
enter the premises to harass the victim. Conversely, a study of this nature would examine
workers as secondary victims of domestic assault, as opposed to primary victims. Such
research could examine the frequency and severity of workers victimized by domestic
violence who are not necessarily targeted by their own abusers, or the abusers of their co-
workers; a concept the current study and the literature reviewed have not yet explored.

Finally, future research could build upon the data collected in the current study.
In order to expand upon this foundation, research could be conducted through one of two
streams: (1) in-depth interviews with victims of domestic violence to see how their work
experiences were affected by the abuse, barriers they faced in maintaining employment,
what their unions did (or did not do) to help them, and if they were even aware that
WDVPI existed in their union, or (2) a qualitative examination of unions at the local level
could examine whether policies and initiatives at the national and provincial levels are
being effectively managed. In essence, future research could expand upon the current
study in order to determine whether workplaces represented by unions with WDVPI are
putting these policies and initiatives into practice. In essence, while this research has revealed the existence of unions with WDVPI at the national and provincial levels, an examination of their effectiveness at both the local union level, and within workplaces directly, would provide insight into whether these unions have achieved the goals outlined in these policies and initiatives.

**Concluding Remarks**

In closing, this study has shown that unions are beginning to recognize workplace domestic violence as a problem that affects its members and the working environment in general. The fact that three out of eight unions in this study have already adopted WDVPI demonstrates that domestic violence is being regarded as a public social problem that exists not only in the privacy of the home, but also in the workplace. Furthermore, many unions in this study have not formally established WDVPI; however, a number of them are equipped for assisting victimized members when the abuse is disclosed. This indicates that the issue is at least being recognized as both a public problem and a workplace concern. Moreover, it should be noted that some participants in this study have requested the opportunity to make contact with one another in order to share their views on workplace domestic violence and the role unions should play in addressing the problem. Such active participation demonstrates a genuine interest by union representatives to bring the issue of workplace domestic violence to the bargaining table, and an eagerness to produce social change. If this study could successfully accomplish one thing only, then, the fact that it has brought the problem of workplace domestic
violence to the attention of a number of individuals who are in a position to initiate social change, has certainly been a success.

While WDVPI are clearly not designed to solve the underlying causes of domestic violence, they could at least provide some assistance to those victims struggling with abuse both in the home and at work. Furthermore, their existence could draw attention to the reality that domestic violence permeates the socially constructed public/private boundaries that divide what have traditionally been considered to be two polar domains: the home and the workplace. Perhaps, then, expansion of this issue in future research will eventually result in the widespread public awareness needed to initiate change in more unions and workplaces throughout Canada.
Reference List


APPENDIX A

University of Guelph Research Ethics Board (REB)

FACULTY AND GRADUATE
Application to Involve Human Participants in Research

Please refer to the University of Guelph Research Ethics Guidelines, found at http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/humanSubjects/guidelines.shtml before completing and submitting this application. If you have questions about this form, please contact the Research Ethics Coordinator, Sandra Auld at ext. 56606, or sauld@uoguelph.ca.

Send this form and all accompanying material by email, as attachments, to sauld@uoguelph.ca. One hard copy of the signed signature page should be forwarded to the Research Ethics Coordinator, Office of Research, University of Guelph, 437 University Centre, Guelph, ON, N1G 2W1.

If you want to change a previously approved protocol, please complete the “Change Request” form, available at http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/forms/index.shtml.

Date: 2006-10-03

(For OR use only) Protocol#: 

SECTION A – GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Title of the Research Project: Workplace Responses to Domestic Violence (tentative title)

2. Investigator Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name &amp; position</th>
<th>Dept./Address</th>
<th>Phone No.</th>
<th>E-Mail</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Faculty with Principal Responsibility</strong>*:</td>
<td>Department of Sociology &amp; Anthropology 641 MacKinnon University of Guelph</td>
<td>519-824-4120 Ext. 56028</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mdawson@uoguelph.ca">mdawson@uoguelph.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Myrna Dawson</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Vivian Shalla</td>
<td>Associate Professor</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:vshalla@uoguelph.ca">vshalla@uoguelph.ca</a></td>
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</table>
| Student: Investigator(s) | Kristi Fejedelem  
M.A. Candidate | Department of Sociology & Anthropology  
University of Guelph | 519-824-4120 | kfejedel@uoguelph.ca |
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<tr>
<td>Other: Investigator(s)</td>
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* must be advisor of any student investigators.

3. **Proposed Date**
   
a) of commencement: October 10, 2006
   
b) of completion: December 31, 2007

Note: The commencement date should be the date the researcher expects to actually begin interacting with human participants (including recruitment). The completion date should be the date that the researcher expects that interaction with human participants, including any feedback or follow-up, will be complete.

4. **Indicate the location(s) where the research will be conducted:**

   University of Guelph

   Other (please specify site): Research will either be conducted via telephone and/or email from the student-researcher's office or home address. Initial contact will be made via telephone and email, followed by the delivery of email-based questionnaires.

5. **Other Research Ethics Board Approval**

   a) Is this a multi-centered study?
      - Yes
      - No

   b) Has any other institutional Ethics Board approved this project?
      - Yes
      - No

   c) If Yes, please provide the following information:
      - Title of the project approved elsewhere:
      - Name of the Other Institution:
      - Name of the Other Board:
      - Date of the Decision:
      - A contact name and phone number for the other Board:
      - OR
      - A copy of the clearance certificate / approval

   d) Will any other Research Ethics Board be asked for approval?
      - If Yes, please specify:
      - Yes
      - No

6. **Level of the Project**

   - Faculty Research
   - PhD Thesis
   - Masters Thesis
   - Honours Thesis
   - Class Project
   - Internship
   - Practicum
   - Other (please specify):

<table>
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7. Funding of the Project

a) Is this project currently funded?  
   - Yes □  No ✗

b) Period of Funding:  From   To:
   - Agency or Sponsor (funded or applied for)
     - CIHR:
     - NSERC:
     - SSHRC:
     - Other (please specify):

   Note: Please specify the complete title of the funding source. For example, "NSERC Discovery Grant".

NOTE: If the funding source changes, or if a previously unfunded project receives funding, you must submit a Change Form to the Research Ethics Coordinator.

8. Conflict of Interest

a) Will the researcher(s), members of the research team, and/or their partners or immediate family members:
   - i) Receive any personal benefits (for example a financial benefit such as remuneration, intellectual property rights, rights of employment, consultancies, board membership, share ownership, stock options etc.) as a result of or connected to this study?  
     - Yes □  No ✗
   
   ii) If Yes, please describe the benefits below. (Do not include conference and travel expense coverage, possible academic promotion, or other benefits which are integral to the general conduct of research.)

b) Describe any restrictions regarding access to or disclosure of information (during or at the end of the study) that the sponsor has placed on the investigator(s).

c) Discuss the possibility of commercialization of the research findings.

SECTION B – SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

9. Rationale

Describe the purpose and background rationale for the proposed project, as well as the hypotheses(is)/research questions to be examined.

This project is an exploratory analysis that will examine whether the existence and types of workplace policies and initiatives that serve as responses to domestic violence differ depending on the type of
More specifically, this research will compare various labour unions in Canada that have instituted such policies and initiatives with those labour unions that have not implemented these policies.

The main research question that will be explored is: What types of labour unions have workplace domestic violence policies and initiatives and what was the impetus for implementation? Included in this broad question are the following more specific questions: (1) Of those unions that have implemented these policies or initiatives, what types of occupations do they represent and do these workplaces tend to be female or male-dominated? (2) Of the unions that have implemented workplace domestic violence policies or initiatives, what was the precursor for implementing them, what do these policies look like and what are the main goals? Developing an awareness of the types of Canadian unions and workplaces that have and have not adopted such policies or initiatives can contribute to an understanding of why specific types of workplaces have addressed recent concerns about worker vulnerability (both as direct and indirect victims).

10. Methodology

Describe sequentially, and in detail, all procedures in which the research participants will be involved (e.g., paper and pencil tasks, interviews, surveys, questionnaires, physical assessments, physiological tests, time requirements etc.)

Note: Attach a copy of all questionnaire(s), interview guides or other test instruments. These should be on University of Guelph letterhead if they are intended for public dispersal.

Initially, I will prepare a list of national unions in Canada that will be contacted as potential participants. Union representatives will then be recruited by means of telephone or email. I have prepared a telephone script that I will follow to ensure that all representatives are receiving the same introduction and preliminary information (please see attached). The union representatives will be informed that the student-researcher is conducting email-based questionnaires regarding the union’s implementation of workplace domestic violence response policies and initiatives. However, participants with limited access to email/internet will be given the option to complete the interview via telephone. The participant will also be informed that this interview will be recorded. If the union representative agrees to participate, his or her name and contact information will be recorded in strict confidentiality for follow-up purposes.

Following initial contact, I will send participants a copy of the questionnaire via email. These questionnaires will include semi-structured questions designed to illicit further discussion from participants. Participants will be given one month to complete the questionnaire and return it to the student-researcher. Email and telephone reminders will be placed every second week if participants have not returned the questionnaire. Participants will be given the option of corresponding via work email address or personal email address.

For those choosing to be interviewed via telephone, an interview date will be arranged following initial contact. Additionally, I will ask participants the same questions as in the email questionnaire. Again, participants will have the option of being contacted via work telephone number or personal telephone number for the purpose of this interview.

11. Experience

What is your experience with this kind of research?

I have completed a graduate level research methods course entitled SOAN 6140 within which I completed a small-scale pilot study involving 10 participants. This study involved the use of face-to-face interviews.

12. Participants
Describe the number of participants and important characteristics (such as age, gender, location, affiliation, etc.)

This study will consist of 20-25 participants representing various national labour unions in Canada. Representatives can be male or female and of any age. Location will be dependent upon the cities in which union headquarters are situated.

13. Recruitment

a) Describe how and from what sources the participants will be recruited, including any relationship between the investigator(s) and participant(s) (e.g., instructor-student; manager-employee).

Note: Attach a copy of any poster(s), advertisement(s) or letter(s) to be used for recruitment.

Unions chosen for analysis will be selected by means of purposive sampling. In other words, I will choose unions in a manner that allows me to make this study representative of all labour classifications in Canada. I will select 2 to 3 national unions per occupational industry. Occupational breakdown will include industries from the following: Agriculture; Forestry, Fishing, Mining, Oil, and Gas; Utilities; Construction; Manufacturing; Trade; Transportation and Warehousing; Finance, Insurance, Real Estate and Leasing; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Business, Building, and other Support Services; Educational Services; Health Care and Social Assistance; Information, Culture, and Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services, Food Services, Retail, and Other Services. These labour categories are defined by the department of Human Resources and Social Development Canada.

In total, about 20 to 25 unions will be included in the study. This is a sufficient number since two to three unions representing each occupational category will be recruited for participation. I have taken into consideration the likelihood that not all recruits will agree to participate. The purpose for this sampling method is to include unions from a broad occupational background so that they represent the vast array of workers in Canada. However, though there are unions located within the province of Quebec, these particular unions will be excluded from the study due to language barriers between potential participants and the researcher. This exclusion will be acknowledged in the thesis as a limitation to the study.

I am also examining the dynamic of gender in terms of what the impetus for implementing domestic violence response policies is. I must interview a number of different unions that represent many different occupations (both male-dominated and female-dominated) to see if unions are more or less likely to implement such policies based on gender.

b) How and where will you contact these participants?

I will contact these participants via telephone and/or email. I will retrieve contact information from the labour union directory located on the Human Resources and Social Development Canada website: http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/lp/wid/union_membership.shtml

c) Time required of participants: Approximately one hour on one occasion.

I estimate that it will take each participant approximately one hour on one occasion to complete the email-based questionnaire. For those choosing to be interviewed via telephone, I would expect the interview to take approximately one hour as well.
d) Are participants proficient in the language in which the survey is being conducted?
   Yes☐ No☐

 e) If not, is translation available?
   Yes☐ No☐

 N/A

14. Compensation

   a) Will participants receive compensation for participation?
      Yes ☐ No ☑

      i) Financial ☐ ☑

      ii) Non-financial ☐ ☑

 b) If Yes to either i) or ii) above, please provide details.

   N/A

   c) If participants choose to withdraw, how will you deal with compensation?

   N/A

SECTION C – DESCRIPTION OF THE RISKS AND BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED RESEARCH

15. Possible Risks

   a) Indicate if the participants might experience any of the following risks:
      Yes ☐ No ☑

      i) Physical risk (including any bodily contact or administration of any substance)?
         ☐ ☑

      ii) Psychological risks (including feeling demeaned, embarrassed worried or upset)?
          ☑ ☐

      iii) Social risks (including possible loss of status, privacy and/or reputation)?
           ☑ ☐

      iv) Is there any deception involved?
           ☐ ☑

      v) Are any possible risks to participants greater than those the participants might encounter in their everyday life?
         ☐ ☑
b) If you answered Yes to any of points i) through v) above, please explain the risk.

Participants will be discussing various aspects of union policies and procedures of which they, personally, may or may not agree with. This is a psychological risk because it may cause conflicting emotions with regards to personal values and employment standards. As per social risks, participants may feel uneasy about discussing the existence or lack of existence of union policies.

Questions posed will be directly related to the existence and availability of union response policies and initiatives, and participants will not be revealing any personal feelings about the policies themselves. As a result, they should not feel as though they might face work-related repercussions from their employers based on responses provided. Union policies are normally available for public viewing, and I am mostly interested in the variance among such policies/initiatives. Therefore, information discussed will not consist of personal opinions or feelings. In some instances, however, employees may feel as though their work email addresses do not ensure complete privacy. If participants are uncomfortable with using their work email address to complete the survey, then they will be given the option of using an alternative personal email address. Alternatively, they may choose to be interviewed by telephone at either their work or personal phone number if email is unavailable to them.

c) Describe how the risks will be managed (including an explanation as to why alternative approaches could not be used).

These risks will be managed by ensuring participants that their answers will be held in strict confidence. I will also inform them that if at any time they are uncomfortable with this questionnaire, they may remove themselves from the study without any consequences. They will also be informed that they are free to withhold answers to any questions posed throughout the process. (Please see Consent Form attached).

16. Possible Benefits

Discuss any potential direct benefits to the participants from their involvement in the project. Comment on the (potential) benefits to the scientific community/society that would justify involvement of participants in this study.

Participants in this study can benefit in various ways. First, participants representing unions that have implemented workplace responses to domestic violence can benefit from knowing that their unionized efforts are positively valued, and this study may lead to new ideas for improving such policies and initiatives. Participants representing unions that have not implemented these policies might benefit from this study by becoming more aware of the need for such policies in the workplace and may consider implementing them.

The academic/scientific community would benefit from this project because little research has been conducted on the issue of domestic violence in the workplace. There are various policies outlined by state agencies and unions in the United States, as well as some Canadian projects that actively encourage privately owned corporations to implement workplace responses to domestic violence. Because workplace responses to domestic violence are relatively new forms of intervention in Canada and elsewhere (Mighty, 1997, 2003), very little academic research has been conducted to reveal the significance of such response policies. It would be useful to examine the approaches that national unions are taking to address this social problem since it is a facet that has not yet been explored in Canada.

This research will hopefully result in the publishing of at least one journal article that will, in turn, add to the small amount of scholarly information on this topic. The development of this project would be useful to the community in that unions could review my research and use the findings to further improve their services to workers who are victims of domestic abuse both at home and in the workplace.
SECTION D – THE INFORMED CONSENT PROCESS

17. The Consent Process

a) Describe the process that the investigator(s) will be using to obtain informed consent, including a description of who will be obtaining the informed consent. If there will be no written consent form, explain why.

Participants will be recruited by telephone or email. I will introduce them to the study by either: a) reading a generic telephone script that will act as a letter of information or b) emailing the letter of information as part of the invitation. Following initial contact with participants and agreement to engage in the interview process, participants will receive a written consent form outlining all of the possible risks and benefits of partaking in the project. The consent form will specify that: The participant must be at least 18 years of age, the participant may withdraw from the interview at any time without penalty, and the participant may decline answers throughout the interview process. The consent form will also make note of possible psychological and social risks that the participant may face. The written letter of consent must, at the free will of the participant, be read, signed, dated, and then submitted to myself.

For information about the required elements in the letter of information and the consent form, please refer to “Instructions for the Preparing Information and Consent Letters” and the sample consent form available at http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/forms/index.shtml.

Note: Attach a copy of the Letter of Information (if applicable), the Consent Form (if applicable), the content of any telephone script (if applicable) and any other material which will be used in the informed consent process. If the document will be made public, please ensure that it is on University of Guelph letterhead.

Please see attached: Letter of Information/Telephone Script and Written Consent Form.

b) Will the information provided to the participants be complete and accurate? Yes ☒ No ☐

If no, please describe the nature and extent of the deception involved. Include how and when the deception will be revealed, and describe the specialized training of the person who will administer this feedback. It is recommended that participants have the opportunity to sign a second consent form, following debriefing when the deception is revealed, to ensure a fully informed consent.

Note: Attach a copy of the debriefing feedback and, if necessary, a copy of the second consent form on University of Guelph letterhead.

18. Consent by an authorized party

If the participants are minors or for other reasons are not competent to consent, describe the proposed alternate source of consent, including any permission / information letter to be provided to the person(s) providing the alternate consent.

N/A

19. Alternatives to prior individual consent
If obtaining individual participant consent prior to starting the research project is not appropriate for this research, please explain and provide details for a proposed alternative consent process.

N/A

20. Participant feedback

Explain what feedback/information will be provided to the participants after participation in the project. (For example, a more complete description of the purpose of the research, or access to the results of the research).

*Note: Please provide a copy of the written information, if applicable.*

It is my intention to provide participants with follow-up letters thanking them for their participation in the study. These letters will also inform participants that they will be given the opportunity to review a short synopsis of the findings once the research project has been completed.

21. Participant withdrawal

a) Describe how the participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the project. Outline the procedures that will be followed to allow the participants to exercise this right.

Participants will be informed that even after they consent to participation, they will be free to withdraw from the study at any time. They will be informed of this during initial contact and prior to the interview itself (and it will be noted in the letter of information as well as in the consent form). It will be stressed during each of these occasions that withdrawal from the study will not result in any penalties.

b) Indicate what will be done with the participant’s data and any consequences for the participant of withdrawing from the study.

If a participant withdraws from the study, all of his or her data will be destroyed. Hardcopy notes will be shredded and destroyed and computer data will be permanently deleted. There will be no penalties for participants who chose to withdraw from the study.

c) If the participants will not have the right to withdraw from the project, please explain.

N/A

SECTION E – CONFIDENTIALITY

22. Ensuring confidentiality

a) Will all participants be anonymous? Yes ☐ No ☒

b) Will all data be treated as confidential? ☒ ☐
Please note the difference: Participants' identity/data will be confidential if an assigned ID code or number is used, but it will not be anonymous. Anonymous data cannot be traced back to an individual participant.

c) Describe the procedures to be used to ensure anonymity of participants and/or confidentiality of data both during the conduct of the research and in the release of its findings.

Although great caution will be exercised in protecting the identity of participants (i.e. through the use of pseudonyms and code names), I cannot ensure complete anonymity because this is a small-scale study. Since approximately 20 to 25 individuals will be interviewed, I cannot ensure the participant that the information he or she provides will be unidentifiable by me throughout the research process.

Confidentiality will be guaranteed, as I will assign pseudonyms to the names of union representatives involved in the study, as well as to the names of organized unions. Names of locations and other people mentioned in the interviews will also be coded. Since few unions will be addressed in this study, any other identifiable information will not be included (i.e. union names, names of representatives, type of work performed by these representatives, etc.).

d) Explain how written records, video/audio tapes and questionnaires will be secured, and provide details of their final disposal or storage.

Written records and audio tapes will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in a secure location. Only I will have access to this storage unit. Computer data will be stored on my personal computer. A password will be required in order to access this data on my computer, and I will be the only person who has access to this code. Data will be kept for two years following completion of research at which time written records and audio tapes will be destroyed. Computer data will be permanently deleted.

e) If participant anonymity or confidentiality is not appropriate to this research project, explain, providing details of how all participants will be advised of the fact that data will not be anonymous or confidential.

N/A

SECTION F – MONITORING ONGOING RESEARCH

23. Annual Review and Adverse Events

a) Minimum protocol review requires the completion of a “Renewal/Completed Status Report” at least annually. Indicate whether any additional monitoring or review would be appropriate for this project.

Note: It is the investigator’s responsibility to notify the REB using the “Renewal/Completed Status Report” when the project is completed, or if it is cancelled. The form is available at http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/forms/index.shtml.

N/A
b) **Adverse events** (unanticipated negative consequences or results affecting participants) must
be reported to the Research Ethics Board and the Research Ethics Coordinator as soon as
possible.

24. **Additional Information**

(Use an additional page if more space is required to complete any sections of the form, or if there
is any other information relevant to the project that you wish to provide to the Research Ethics
Board.)

| N/A |
SECTION G – SIGNATURES

Responsible Faculty Assurance:

I, ______________________, [PLEASE PRINT] have the ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the study described in this application including my responsibilities as an advisor to any students involved in this project. I have read and am responsible for the content of this application. If any changes are made in the above arrangements of procedures, or adverse events are observed, I will bring these to the attention of the Research Ethics Coordinator.

Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________
APPENDIX B

EMAIL INVITATION

“Workplace Responses to Domestic Violence”

My name is Kristi Fejedelem and I am a second year Masters student in the Sociology department at the University of Guelph. I am conducting research for my graduate thesis under the supervision of Dr. Myrna Dawson. This study has been approved by the Research Ethics Board at the University of Guelph.

I am contacting you to request your participation in an exploratory study that I am conducting on workplace responses to domestic violence.

The purpose of this study is to examine domestic violence workplace policies and initiatives as implemented by national unions in Canada. In particular, I am interested in understanding why certain unions implement such policies and why others do not.

As a representative of the [specify union] union, I would like to arrange a time to send you an email questionnaire about domestic violence response policies and initiatives in your union. Questions will ask about the types of domestic violence initiatives your union has, or has not, implemented and reasoning for this. In some instances, employees may feel as though their work email addresses do not ensure complete privacy. If you are uncomfortable with using your work email address to complete the survey, you have the option of using an alternative personal email address. Alternatively, you may choose to be interviewed by telephone at either your work or personal phone number if email is unavailable to you. On average, it is expected that questionnaires will take less than one hour to complete.

You will not be identified by the public in any way. Only the primary investigator will have access to personal information. In summary, all interviews are completely voluntary and confidentiality will be ensured.

If you agree to participate in this study, a letter of consent will be emailed to you outlining any risks and concerns you may have about participating in this research. If you should have any further concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at kfejedel@uoguelph.ca, or my thesis advisor, Dr. Myrna Dawson, at mdawson@uoguelph.ca or (519) 824-4120 extension 56028.

Thank you for your time, and I hope to hear from you at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Kristi Fejedelem

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CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

An exploratory study on Workplace Responses to Domestic Violence

You are being asked to participate in a study conducted by Kristi Fejedelem, M.A. Candidate under the supervision of Dr. Myrna Dawson, Thesis Advisor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Guelph. The purpose of this research is to fulfill the requirements of the Masters Thesis. If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me at kfejedel@uoguelph.ca or Dr. Dawson at mdawson@uoguelph.ca or by phone at (519) 824-4120 ext. 56028.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is designed to explore the existence and types of workplace policies and initiatives that address the issue of domestic violence. The purpose of interviewing various union representatives is to develop an understanding of why certain unions choose to implement such policies. I will examine the types of workplaces these unions represent and investigate the underlying reasons for initial implementation of such policies.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Upon agreement to participate in this study, I ask that you complete a self-administered email questionnaire. If access to email is a concern for you, then you may choose to be interviewed with the same questions by telephone. Please be advised that telephone interviews may be tape-recorded.

Please answer each question honestly, but do not hesitate to decline responses to any question. At any point during the questionnaire you may withdraw from
the study without penalties. Research findings will be made available to all participants upon completion of the student's thesis.

**POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

The questionnaire will discuss various aspects of union policies and procedures of which you may, or may not, personally agree with. This poses a psychological risk because it may cause conflicting emotions with regards to personal values and employment standards. As per social risks, there is a possibility that you may feel uneasy about discussing your views on the existence or lack of existence of union policies regarding domestic violence.

These risks will be managed by ensuring that all your responses will be held in the strictest confidence. Again, if at any time you feel uncomfortable with the questionnaire, you may remove yourself from the study without any consequences. You are also free to withhold answers from any questions posed throughout the process and still remain in the study.

In some instances, employees may feel as though their work email addresses do not ensure complete privacy. If you are uncomfortable with using your work email address to complete the survey, you have the option of using an alternative personal email address. Alternatively, you may choose to be interviewed by telephone at either your work or personal phone number if email is unavailable to you.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

Participants in this study can benefit in various ways. First, participants representing unions that have implemented workplace responses to domestic violence can benefit from knowing that their unionized efforts are positively valued, and perhaps these interviews will lead to new ideas for improving such policies. Participants representing unions that have not implemented these policies might benefit by becoming more aware of the need for such policies in the workplace as well as the benefits of incorporating them into union standards.

The academic/scientific community would benefit from this project because little research has been conducted on the issue of domestic violence in the workplace. This research will hopefully result in the publishing of at least one journal article that will, in turn, add to the small amount of scholarly information on this topic. The development of this project would be useful to the community in that unions could review my research and use the findings to further improve their services to workers who are victims of domestic abuse both at home and in the workplace.
CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality of any identifying information that is obtained in connection with this study. All research notes and subsequent reports will aim to protect the identity of participants through the use of pseudonyms or code names for individuals and places. All research notes will be secured in safe locations, with computer data saved under protected passwords and written/hardcopy data stored in locked filing cabinets. The principle researcher will have sole access to such records. Upon completion of the study, research notes and other data will be destroyed.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw from the questionnaire without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. All participants must be at least 18 years of age.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact:

Research Ethics Coordinator
S. Auld
University of Guelph
437 University Centre
Guelph, ON N1G 2W1

Telephone: (519) 824-4120,
Ext. 56606
E-mail: sauld@uoguelph.ca
Fax: (519) 821-5236

If you have any further questions about this study, please contact:

Dr. Myrna Dawson, Thesis Advisor
Associate Professor
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I ____________________________ have read this consent form and agree to participate in this study. I have also been informed of the nature of this study and understand the purpose for the research. I fully realize that I have the right to withdraw from the study, and may withhold answers to any questions posed without having to completely withdraw from the study itself.

Participant's Signature

Date

Please fax or mail this consent form to:

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Thank you for your time. Your participation is greatly appreciated!
A Survey on Workplace Responses to Domestic Violence
Researcher: Kristi Fejedelem, University of Guelph

Please note that there are two separate surveys attached in this file: A survey for unions with domestic violence response policies and/or initiatives, and a survey for unions without such policies/initiatives. The participant should not feel as though his or her union is being targeted in a negative manner for not having domestic violence response policies, as the purpose of the study is to understand why some unions have them and why others do not.

Please answer only one survey and return this file via email to kfejedel@uoguelph.ca once completed. Thank you for your time; your participation is truly appreciated!

SURVEY 1: Questions for Unions Representing Workplaces WITH Domestic Violence Response Policies and Initiatives

Policies and Initiatives

1. What are normally considered, by the union, to be acts of domestic violence?

2. Can you provide a brief explanation with regards to how this union perceives domestic violence? (a crime, a private social problem, a public social problem, etc.)

3. What types of policies or initiatives exist in your union that address the needs of workers affected by domestic abuse?

4. Can you tell me when these policies or initiatives were implemented?

5. What were the main reasons or goals behind implementing such policies or initiatives?

6. What is the average yearly economic impact of domestic violence on the workplaces this union represents?

7. Who are domestic violence response policies and initiatives typically in place to protect?
8. What types of training programs or workshops (if any) exist to enhance the knowledge of domestic violence for all workers?

9. What barriers, if any, prevent this union from further implementing domestic violence response policies or initiatives?

**Victim**

10. What are the typical procedures followed when an employee reports an incidence of domestic violence in the home?

11. What are the typical procedures followed when an employee reports an incidence of domestic abuse in the workplace (i.e. abuser enters the workplace to harass victim)?

12. What procedures are followed by your union when an employee has reported that he/she suspects a co-worker is being domestically abused?

13. Do special treatments or considerations exist for employees who are victims of domestic abuse? (i.e. potential relocation, special services, protection from termination, referrals to community services, etc.).

14. How would a domestically abused employee go about receiving special treatment from the union? (i.e. time off for court hearings, medical appointments, etc?)

15. Must an employee formally disclose the abuse in order to qualify for special treatments and considerations?

16. To whom would a victimized employee be expected to report her/his situation (i.e. supervisor, manager, human resources agent)?

17. What procedures would be followed if an employee began missing a lot of work, and it was suspected that he or she was domestically abused?

18. How would your union respond to a member who has been terminated from his/her job due to the impact of domestic violence?

19. What services, if any, are offered to victims of domestic abuse? What about services to abusers?
**Offender**

20. Are there procedures in place to apprehend and/or discipline abusers (i.e. if the employee repeatedly makes harassing phone calls to the workplace of the victim during company time)? If so, what are they?

21. What policies exist, if any, to address the needs of domestic abusers employed by organizations represented by this union (i.e. counselling, etc.)?

**Demographics**

22. Approximately how many members does this union represent?

23. What types of workplaces does your union represent (i.e. retail, clerical, etc)?

24. Would you say that the workplaces represented by this union tend to be male-dominated, female-dominated, or gender neutral? Can you think of any reasons for this gender breakdown?

25. Generally speaking, of which gender are workers who report being victims of domestic violence?

26. Of what age group are victims typically a part of?

27. In the past year, how many reports of domestic violence have been brought forward to your union?

**SURVEY 2: Questions for Unions Representing Workplaces WITHOUT Domestic Violence Response Policies**

1. What types of policies or initiatives, if any, exist in your union to address the needs of workers victimized by domestic abuse?

2. Why has this union not implemented policies in response to workers involved in domestically violent situations?

3. How would this union deal with workers who have been terminated due to the impact of domestic violence on work performance (i.e. victims who have high absenteeism as a result of the violence they encounter in the home)?

4. Does this union have other policies in place that specifically address the issue of violence in the workplace (i.e. sexual harassment, criminal harassment, physical assault, etc.)? If so, please explain.
Demographics

5. Approximately how many workers does this union represent?

6. What types of workplaces does this union represent (i.e. retail, clerical, industrial, etc)?

7. Would you say that the workplaces represented by this union tend to be male-dominated, female-dominated, or gender neutral? Can you think of any reasons for this gender breakdown?

8. In the past year, have any reports of domestic violence been brought forward to the union? If so, how many?

9. Under which circumstances would domestic violence be acknowledged by this union?

10. Does this union recognize domestic violence as a crime? Why or why not?

11. What barriers, if any, prevent this union from implementing domestic violence response policies or initiatives?

12. Do you think that domestic violence a workplace issue?