

## CHAPTER 5

### SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR, HIV/AIDS AND THE MISTREATMENT OF WOMEN

#### 5.1 Introduction

In the SADHS, the women's questionnaire included a series of questions about HIV/AIDS. Women were first asked if they had ever heard of AIDS and if so, whether they thought they could protect themselves against the disease through certain specific behaviours such as having a good diet or staying with one faithful partner, etc. Other questions asked include the source of information on HIV/AIDS, whether a person infected with the AIDS virus always shows symptoms or looks perfectly healthy, opinions about reporting HIV/AIDS status and personal knowledge of someone who has been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS or who has died of AIDS.

Gender issues are increasingly being recognised as critical influences on the HIV epidemic in Southern Africa. Violence against women makes women vulnerable to HIV through three main mechanisms (Maman *et al.*, 2000a). Forced or coercive sexual intercourse with an infected partner can directly result in HIV transmission. Violence may limit women's ability to negotiate safer sexual practices. For example, women fear that asking their partner to wear a condom will result in violence (Weiss and Rao Gupta, 1998). Finally, violence is associated with high risk behavior among women (Wingood and DiClemente, 1997). Experiences of forced sex in childhood and adolescence have been shown in many studies internationally to impact negatively on sexual behaviour in later years (Jewkes *et al.*, 2001). The SADHS questionnaire asked about experiences of physical, sexual and economic violence against women and girl children.

Furthermore, women were asked about their sexual relationships and behaviours. Information on age at first sexual intercourse, sexual relations of unmarried women, recent sexual behaviour and postpartum amenorrhoea and abstinence.

#### 5.2 AIDS Knowledge and Awareness

According to the Table 5.1, knowledge of AIDS is almost universal. Ninety seven percent of women age 15-49 say they have heard of the disease. The data in Table 5.2 indicate that they are well-informed about the way the HI virus is transmitted. More than 85 percent of women report that it is true that staying with one faithful partner, using condoms, using clean needles for injections, and avoiding sharing razor blades are valid means of protection against the virus.

Between 65 and 75 percent of women know that it is not true that having a good diet, not using public toilets, avoiding touching people with AIDS, and not sharing food with a person who has AIDS are effective means of protection from getting HIV/AIDS. Overall, urban women are more knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS than non-urban women.

**Table 5.1. Knowledge of AIDS**

Percentage of respondents by knowledge of AIDS and source of knowledge, according to background characteristics, South Africa 1998.

	Knowledge of AIDS		Source of knowledge						Total
	Knows AIDS	TV	Radio	News-papers	Pamph-lets	Health worker	Friends	Rela-tives	
<b>Age 5-year groups</b>									
15-19	95.1	72.7	81.3	62.1	60.3	71.8	72.4	52.7	2,249
20-24	97.6	78.3	88.7	72.1	70.1	83.6	79.8	67.6	2,075
25-29	98.0	78.4	88.6	70.8	69.6	80.9	79.5	66.9	1,857
30-34	97.6	78.6	88.4	69.4	68.9	78.0	75.7	66.4	1,654
35-39	96.5	76.5	86.6	64.5	64.3	74.6	72.9	65.4	1,636
40-44	96.1	75.4	84.2	61.8	62.0	73.1	73.9	63.1	1,294
45-49	95.2	74.0	81.7	57.5	55.6	69.5	69.2	58.6	970
<b>Residence</b>									
Urban	97.9	88.6	87.5	77.1	76.2	78.9	80.0	68.9	7,095
Non-urban	94.7	57.6	83.4	49.6	48.1	72.9	68.1	53.8	4,640
<b>Current marital status</b>									
Currently in union	96.6	75.9	86.3	63.8	63.3	74.2	72.7	62.4	5,077
Formerly in union	96.2	74.1	86.3	61.1	62.2	77.8	75.4	62.5	993
Had sex	97.7	78.4	87.7	71.0	69.3	83.3	81.2	68.9	4,121
Never had sex	94.5	74.1	79.4	64.8	61.8	65.5	67.8	48.9	1,544
<b>Province</b>									
Western Cape	98.2	89.6	80.7	75.6	75.5	69.4	70.6	49.1	1,193
Eastern Cape	95.6	59.6	81.3	50.2	46.9	72.9	68.3	58.1	1,566
Northern Cape	93.4	74.9	72.0	62.9	57.3	60.8	65.5	55.7	253
Free State	92.9	85.8	88.1	60.7	66.4	79.1	74.3	65.0	763
KwaZulu-Natal	96.0	72.4	86.6	66.9	60.6	74.2	72.0	61.6	2,364
North West	99.3	84.8	87.2	72.2	67.7	82.7	81.2	69.7	909
Gauteng	98.9	89.7	88.9	80.4	80.3	83.0	83.7	75.8	2,552
Mpumalanga	97.6	82.8	92.6	67.0	70.7	86.0	85.9	78.8	819
Northern	93.9	50.7	84.9	47.2	51.1	70.5	69.1	44.2	1,316
<b>Education</b>									
No education	90.2	44.3	76.6	19.4	22.6	63.4	54.1	45.7	804
Sub A - Std 3	93.3	56.3	81.6	37.4	39.5	72.3	62.0	54.0	1,291
Std 4 - Std 5	94.7	66.9	80.7	54.9	52.9	74.3	70.0	57.4	1,625
Std 6 - Std 9	97.7	80.6	87.2	72.4	70.9	79.9	79.0	64.9	5,181
Std 10	99.3	91.7	91.2	87.0	84.8	79.1	84.9	73.4	1,922
Higher	99.6	93.5	90.1	89.2	85.9	73.9	80.5	67.1	912
<b>Population group</b>									
African	95.9	72.1	87.8	62.8	62.0	81.4	77.0	65.2	9,147
Afr. urban	97.1	86.1	91.1	75.1	74.6	87.7	84.5	75.0	4,873
Afr. non-urban	94.6	56.1	84.0	48.8	47.6	74.2	68.4	54.0	4,274
Coloured	98.6	89.1	78.4	76.5	75.4	72.5	71.6	55.4	1,201
White	99.9	93.6	78.1	75.9	74.8	43.9	61.0	49.5	916
Asian	100	95.8	81.1	89.9	81.5	51.9	79.4	63.4	406
Total	96.7	76.4	85.9	66.2	65.1	76.6	75.3	62.9	11,735

**Table 5.2. Knowledge of ways**

Percentage women by knowledge of ways to avoid AIDS and with misinformation, according to urban/non-urban residence, South Africa 1998

	Type of place of residence			Number
	Urban	Non-urban	Total	
<b>Avoid AIDS: having a good diet</b>				
No	71.1	56.7	65.5	7,434
Yes	17.3	23.5	19.7	2,235
Don't Know	11.5	19.6	14.6	1,659
Missing	0.1	0.2	0.1	15
<b>Avoid AIDS: staying faithful to partner</b>				
Not true	7.8	9.7	8.5	968
True	89.9	83.6	87.4	9,919
Don't Know	2.2	6.5	3.9	437
Missing	0.2	0.2	0.2	19
<b>Avoid AIDS: avoiding public toilets</b>				
Not true	71.4	55.4	65.2	7,395
True	21.1	29.0	24.1	2,737
Don't Know	7.3	15.1	10.3	1,173
Missing	0.2	0.6	0.3	40
<b>Avoid AIDS: by using condoms</b>				
Not true	5.5	8.5	6.6	751
True	91.4	81.2	87.4	9,916
Don't Know	3.0	10.1	5.7	649
Missing	0.2	0.3	0.2	28
<b>Avoid AIDS: avoid touching person</b>				
Not true	82.8	61.5	74.5	8,455
True	10.4	21.8	14.8	1,680
Don't Know	6.5	16.2	10.2	1,162
Missing	0.3	0.6	0.4	48
<b>Avoid AIDS: avoid sharing food</b>				
Not true	78.5	58.4	70.7	8,018
True	13.3	24.0	17.5	1,981
Don't Know	7.9	17.0	11.4	1,294
Missing	0.3	0.6	0.4	50
<b>Avoid AIDS: avoid being bitten by mosquitoes</b>				
Not true	47.8	38.7	44.3	5,021
True	35.9	40.0	37.5	4,250
Don't Know	15.9	20.5	17.7	2,008
Missing	0.4	0.8	0.6	65
<b>Avoid AIDS: injection with clean needle</b>				
Not true	4.1	6.7	5.1	577
True	92.1	83.9	88.9	10,086
Don't Know	3.7	9.2	5.8	661
Missing	0.2	0.2	0.2	19
<b>Avoid AIDS: avoid sharing razors</b>				
Not true	7.7	6.4	7.2	818
True	86.7	84.2	85.7	9,726
Don't Know	5.2	9.1	6.7	762
Missing	0.4	0.3	0.3	38
Total	100	100	100	11,344
Number	6 949.2	4 394.5	11 343.7	11,344

### **5.3 Source of Knowledge About HIV/AIDS**

The most common source of information on HIV/AIDS among all women in the survey, is the television. According to Table 5.1, 86 percent of the women report that the television is their source of information on HIV/AIDS. The next major sources of information are health workers (77 percent), radio (76 percent) and friends (75 percent).

There is not much variation in the sources of information by background variables. But it is important to note that for any given source of information on HIV/AIDS, access increases as the level of the woman's education increases. The exceptions are observed among women with the highest level of education. Among these women, the observed pattern assumes a lower value for television, health workers, friends and relatives.

African women have the highest level of access to HIV/AIDS messages on television (89 percent), by health workers (81 percent) and friends (65 percent) than other women. Asian women have the highest level of access via radio (96 percent), newspapers (90 percent), pamphlets (81 percent) and friends (79 percent). Urban African women have greater access to the sources of information on HIV/AIDS, than the non-urban ones.

### **5.4 Perception of Risk of Getting HIV/AIDS**

Women were asked whether a person infected with the AIDS virus always shows symptoms or looks perfectly healthy. They were also asked whether they have a personal knowledge of someone who has been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS or who has died of AIDS. The results in Table 5.3 show that about 55 percent of the women say yes, a healthy person can have AIDS. Less than a third (30 percent) said no, a healthy person cannot have AIDS. On the other hand, only 17 percent report that they know someone with or who has died of AIDS.

Urban women are more likely to report that a healthy person can have AIDS (61 percent) and know more people with AIDS (20 percent) than non-urban women. The highest percentage of women who report that a healthy person can have AIDS is found in the Western Cape province. More than three quarters of the women in that province (78 percent) report this. This is followed by women in Mpumalanga (63 percent) and Gauteng (61 percent) provinces. The more educated women are, the more likely they will report yes, a healthy looking person can have AIDS. African women are the least to report yes compared to other women. The highest percentage of those who report that they do not know or did not respond to the question was found among women with no education (32 percent). About one in five women aged 45-49 years, those living in the Eastern Cape and Northern Province and women with low levels of education (below standard six) are more likely to report that they do not know.

Table 5.3 shows that more than 20 percent of women who were formerly in a union, those living in Gauteng province, those with standard 10 or more education and urban African women report that they know someone with AIDS or who has died of the disease. The highest percentage of women who know someone with AIDS or have died of the disease (30 percent) was found among women whose level of education is higher than standard 10.

Table 5.3. Perceptions of risks of AIDS

Percent of women who know about AIDS by perception or risk of AIDS, according to background characteristics, South Africa 1998.

	Can a person with HIV look healthy?			Know someone with HIV/AIDS			Total
	Yes	No	Missing/ Don't Know	No	Yes	Missing	
<b>Age</b>							
15-19	54.2	29.7	16.1	86.4	12.8	0.8	2,139
20-24	57.0	31.2	11.8	81.2	18.2	0.6	2,026
25-29	55.8	29.0	15.2	81.7	17.6	0.7	1,820
30-34	56.8	28.8	14.4	81.0	18.6	0.4	1,614
35-39	54.6	30.1	15.3	81.2	17.7	1.1	1,578
40-44	51.4	30.5	18.0	80.0	19.7	0.3	1,243
45-49	49.3	29.3	21.5	82.3	16.9	0.8	923
<b>Current marital status</b>							
Currently in union	55.3	28.6	16.1	82.2	17.2	0.6	4,904
Formerly in union	49.5	32.5	18.0	78.8	20.5	0.7	955
Had sex	54.0	32.2	13.8	80.7	18.5	0.8	4,025
Never had sex	58.0	25.7	16.3	88.4	10.9	0.7	1,459
<b>Residence</b>							
Urban	61.2	25.4	13.4	79.5	19.9	0.6	6,949
Non-urban	44.4	36.8	18.8	86.4	12.8	0.8	4,394
<b>Province</b>							
Western Cape	78.0	10.9	11.1	87.8	11.8	0.5	1,172
Eastern Cape	47.3	32.1	20.6	82.2	17.1	0.7	1,497
Northern Cape	58.3	19.4	22.3	88.3	11.5	0.2	236
Free State	50.9	34.0	15.0	83.8	16.0	0.2	708
KwaZulu-Natal	45.2	37.7	17.1	80.5	19.2	0.2	2,269
North West	53.4	30.0	16.6	85.6	11.9	2.4	902
Gauteng	61.0	24.3	14.6	74.9	24.4	0.7	2,523
Mpumalanga	63.0	28.9	8.1	79.8	19.4	0.8	800
Northern Province	43.1	42.0	14.9	91.6	7.5	0.8	1,236
<b>Education</b>							
No education	38.1	29.5	32.4	89.8	9.0	1.2	725
Sub A - Std 3	39.4	36.5	24.1	87.1	12.6	0.4	1,205
Std 4 - Std 5	46.0	33.1	20.9	87.0	12.2	0.8	1,539
Std 6 - Std 9	55.1	30.7	14.2	82.4	16.8	0.8	5,060
Std 10	66.3	25.9	7.8	77.8	22.0	0.2	1,908
Higher	76.2	19.6	4.2	69.3	29.7	1.0	908
<b>Population group</b>							
African	48.3	34.3	17.5	81.4	17.8	0.8	8,775
Afr. urban	53.0	31.0	16.0	77.2	22.0	0.8	4,734
Afr. non-urban	42.6	38.1	19.2	86.2	12.9	0.9	4,041
Coloured	73.7	15.7	10.6	85.8	13.8	0.4	1,183
White	89.3	7.4	3.3	80.1	19.9	0.0	915
Asian	60.6	25.8	13.7	94.0	5.8	0.2	406
Total	54.7	29.8	15.5	82.2	17.1	0.7	11,344

## 5.5 Opinions About Reporting HIV/AIDS Status

Women who have ever heard of AIDS were asked of their opinions about reporting HIV/AIDS status. They were asked whether they believe that people with HIV/AIDS should be told of the status, whether HIV/AIDS patients should tell their partners and whether diagnosed cases of HIV/AIDS should be reported to health authorities.

Over 80 percent of the women believe that HIV and AIDS status should be reported to the patients themselves and their partners, while 70 percent believe that HIV and AIDS should be reported to the health authorities (Table 5.4). Less than 10 percent of women report that they do not know whether HIV and AIDS status should be reported to health authorities. Place of residence plays an important role in whether a woman would say yes to reporting HIV and AIDS status or not. Table 5.4 shows that women in the urban areas are more likely to say yes than their counterparts in the non-urban areas. Furthermore, non-urban women (12 to 13 percent) are more likely than the urban women to say that they do not know whether diagnosed cases of HIV and AIDS should be reported to health authorities or not.

**Table 5.4 Beliefs about reporting AIDS**

Percent distribution of women who have ever heard of AIDS by whether they believe certain statements about divulging HIV/AIDS status to various people or not, according to urban/non-urban residence, South Africa 1998.

	Residence			Number
	Urban	Non-urban	Total	
<b>People with AIDS be told status</b>				
No	9.1	18.3	12.7	1,439
Yes	87.1	74.5	82.2	9,327
Don't Know	2.8	6.3	4.2	473
Missing	1.0	0.9	0.9	105
<b>People with HIV be told of their status</b>				
No	8.5	17.7	12.1	1,372
Yes	87.7	74.8	82.7	9,382
Don't Know	2.8	6.5	4.2	482
Missing	1.0	0.9	0.9	107
<b>HIV/AIDS patients tell partners</b>				
No	7.2	11.5	8.9	1,008
Yes	89.1	80.4	85.7	9,722
Don't Know	2.7	7.2	4.4	501
Missing	1.0	0.9	1.0	113
<b>Diagnosed cases of AIDS be reported to health authorities</b>				
No	18.3	23.3	20.3	2,298
Yes	73.1	63.6	69.4	7,873
Don't Know	7.6	12.1	9.4	1,062
Missing	1.0	0.9	1.0	111
<b>Diagnosed cases of HIV be reported to health authorities</b>				
No	18.2	23.2	20.2	2,288
Yes	72.9	62.7	68.9	7,818
Don't Know	7.9	13.2	9.9	1,129
Missing	1.0	0.9	1.0	110
Total	100	100	100	11,344
Number	6,949	4,395	11,344	11,344

## 5.6 Age at First Sexual Intercourse

Table 5.5 shows that eight percent of women in the reproductive age group who have had sexual intercourse did so by the age of 15. Almost half all women who have had sexual intercourse had their first experience by the age of 18 (46 percent). A majority had their first sexual intercourse by the age

of 20 (71 and 69 percent of women aged 20-49 and 25-49 respectively). The median age at first sexual intercourse ranges from 18.1 for women aged 15-29 to 18.7 for those aged 45-49. For all women aged 20-49 the median age at first sexual intercourse is 18.2 years.

The data in Table 5.6 show the differences in age at first sexual intercourse by current age and selected background characteristics. For all women aged 25-49, education and race show significant differences in the median age at first sexual intercourse. Women with standard 10 or higher and Asian and white women currently in the oldest reproductive age group have comparatively high age at first sexual intercourse.

<u>Table 5.5 Age at First Sexual Intercourse</u>								
Percentage of women ever having sexual intercourse by exact specified ages and median age at first sexual intercourse, according to current age, South Africa 1998.								
Current age	Percent who had first intercourse by exact age who					Percentage Number never had intercourse	Median of women	Age at first intercourse
	15	18	20	22	25			
15-19	8.5	NA	NA	NA	NA	54.8	2,249	-
20-24	7.4	52.8	77.2	NA	NA	10.6	2,075	-
25-29	7.6	48.6	74.6	85.3	90.3	3.0	1,857	18.1
30-34	8.5	47.3	70.5	80.6	85.4	1.1	1,654	18.2
35-39	8.9	43.2	69.1	81.1	86.0	0.7	1,636	18.5
40-44	6.5	38.9	64.8	79.2	85.1	0.3	1,294	18.7
45-49	5.8	41.6	63.3	76.7	83.2	0.5	970	18.7
Women (20-49)	7.6	46.3	71.0	81.8	86.2	3.3	9,486	18.2
Women (25-49)	7.7	44.5	69.3	81.1	86.4	1.3	7,411	18.4

NA = Not applicable  
 - Omitted because less than 50 percent in the age group  $x$  to  $x + 4$  had had intercourse by age  $x$ .

**Table 5.6 Median Age at First Sexual Intercourse**

Median age at first sexual intercourse among women age 20 (25)- 49 years, by current age and selected background characteristics, South Africa 1998.

	Age 5-year groups						Median	Median
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	20-49	25-49
<b>Residence</b>								
Urban	18.2	18.2	18.5	18.6	18.9	19.2	18.5	18.6
Non-urban	17.3	17.8	17.7	18.1	18.4	17.9	17.8	17.9
<b>Province</b>								
Western Cape	18.7	18.9	19.0	19.1	19.1	20.0	19.0	19.2
Eastern Cape	17.5	17.6	17.6	18.0	18.0	18.1	17.8	17.8
Northern Cape	18.4	18.6	18.7	18.9	19.6	18.9	18.8	18.9
Free State	18.1	17.8	18.1	18.1	18.2	18.6	18.1	18.1
KwaZulu-Natal	18.0	18.5	18.4	18.8	19.4	18.6	18.5	18.7
North West	18.2	18.3	18.7	18.7	18.9	18.6	18.5	18.6
Gauteng	18.0	18.1	18.1	18.6	18.9	18.9	18.3	18.4
Mpumalanga	16.8	16.9	17.0	17.4	17.3	17.1	17.0	17.1
Northern	17.3	17.6	17.6	17.9	18.1	19.0	17.7	17.9
<b>Education</b>								
No education	17.3	16.9	17.7	17.9	18.4	18.4	18.0	18.0
Sub A - Std 3	16.7	17.3	17.2	17.0	18.2	17.6	17.3	17.4
Std 4 - Std 5	16.6	17.4	17.6	17.9	18.0	17.8	17.6	17.7
Std 6 - Std 9	17.5	17.7	18.2	18.5	18.8	19.1	18.1	18.3
Std 10	18.5	19.0	18.7	19.3	19.7	21.5	18.9	19.2
Higher	19.3	19.0	20.2	20.1	20.7	21.7	19.9	20.1
<b>Population group</b>								
African	17.6	17.8	17.8	18.0	18.4	18.1	17.9	18.0
Afr. urban	17.8	17.9	18.1	18.0	18.5	18.2	18.0	18.1
Afr. non-urban	17.3	17.7	17.6	18.0	18.3	17.9	17.7	17.9
Coloured	19.0	18.8	18.8	19.2	18.9	19.4	19.0	19.0
White	*	19.4	19.6	20.2	20.1	20.8	*	20.0
Asian	*	20.8	20.5	21.0	20.4	21.1	*	20.7
Total	17.8	18.1	18.2	18.5	18.7	18.7	18.2	18.4

Note: An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.

## 5.7 Recent Sexual Activity

Table 5.7 shows that just over half (51.7 percent) of all women were sexually active in the four weeks before the survey. Seven percent were abstaining from sexual relations for post-partum reasons while 25.5 percent were abstaining for other reasons. Teenagers, women who have never been married and those who were not currently using any method of contraception were less likely to be sexually active than others. Highly educated women were more likely to have had sexual intercourse in the four weeks before the survey than other women. Asians and whites were more sexually active than Africans and coloureds.

**Table 5.7 Recent sexual activity**

Percent distribution of women by sexual activity in the 4 weeks prior to the survey and duration of abstinence by whether or not postpartum, according to background characteristics, South Africa 1998.

Background Characteristic/ contraceptive method	Sexually active in last 4 weeks	Not sexually active in last 4 weeks						Never had sex	Total	Number of women
		Abstaining (Post-partum)		Abstaining (not post-partum)		Missing				
		0-1 years	2+ years	0-1 years	2+ years					
<b>Age</b>										
15-19	18.3	5.7	0.6	18.4	1.2	1.1	54.8	100	2,249	
20-24	46.3	8.8	3.0	27.3	1.7	2.4	10.6	100	2,075	
25-29	60.4	7.4	2.7	20.6	2.9	3.0	3.0	100	1,857	
30-34	66.7	5.8	2.1	17.1	4.3	2.9	1.1	100	1,654	
35-39	65.6	4.3	1.6	19.9	5.2	2.8	0.7	100	1,636	
40-44	64.8	1.9	2.0	18.0	10.8	2.1	0.3	100	1,294	
45-49	57.1	0.3	0.9	20.7	18.0	2.4	0.5	100	970	
<b>Marital duration (grouped)</b>										
Never married	31.0	6.7	2.3	25.5	5.0	2.2	27.3	100	5,665	
0-4	77.3	7.5	1.6	11.0	0.8	1.8	0.0	100	1,165	
5-9	74.1	5.5	1.5	13.6	2.5	2.9	0.0	100	1,174	
10-14	73.0	3.2	1.0	16.2	3.5	3.1	0.0	100	1,109	
15-19	68.6	4.5	2.0	17.1	5.5	2.1	0.1	100	1,094	
20-24	65.8	2.4	1.4	19.4	8.8	2.2	0.0	100	861	
25-29	62.6	0.6	1.5	20.2	12.6	2.4	0.0	100	563	
30+	55.4	0.0	0.0	24.7	15.4	4.6	0.0	100	103	
<b>Residence</b>										
Urban	54.3	3.9	1.7	18.6	5.9	2.6	13.0	100	7,095	
Non-urban	47.6	7.9	2.1	23.4	3.5	2.0	13.4	100	4,640	
<b>Province</b>										
Western Cape	49.8	5.3	2.0	15.0	6.5	6.5	15.0	100	1,193	
Eastern Cape	44.1	7.4	2.1	26.7	5.6	1.4	12.7	100	1,566	
Northern Cape	46.6	5.5	3.8	14.5	9.2	3.0	17.4	100	253	
Free State	50.3	6.3	1.2	22.2	6.3	0.5	13.1	100	763	
KwaZulu-Natal	48.5	3.8	1.4	22.2	5.5	1.8	16.7	100	2,364	
North West	51.8	5.3	2.3	19.8	5.3	2.3	13.3	100	909	
Gauteng	60.9	3.2	1.5	18.3	4.5	2.2	9.4	100	2,552	
Mpumalanga	62.3	5.1	1.5	17.4	3.3	1.5	9.0	100	819	
Northern Province	45.2	10.8	3.0	21.8	2.1	2.5	14.5	100	1,316	
<b>Education</b>										
No education	56.6	6.5	2.1	20.7	8.7	2.8	2.5	100	804	
SubA-Std3	54.5	5.7	1.4	23.1	7.6	2.6	5.1	100	1,291	
Std4-Std5	50.1	6.1	2.2	20.2	6.1	2.3	13.1	100	1,625	
Std6-Std9	46.6	5.6	2.1	21.3	4.0	2.2	18.2	100	5,181	
Std 10	57.2	4.8	1.6	19.5	3.7	2.5	10.7	100	1,922	
Higher	62.9	3.5	1.5	14.8	4.6	1.8	10.9	100	912	
<b>Population group</b>										
African	50.7	6.1	2.0	22.8	4.7	2.4	11.4	100	9,147	
Afr. urban	54.3	4.4	1.8	21.5	5.7	2.8	9.6	100	4,873	
Afr. non-urban	46.6	8.1	2.1	24.4	3.5	1.9	13.4	100	4,274	
Coloured	47.0	5.7	3.0	16.4	7.5	2.1	18.4	100	1,201	
White	64.1	1.0	0.3	8.6	4.7	2.2	19.1	100	916	
Asian	58.4	0.7	0.0	7.9	5.6	2.6	24.8	100	406	
<b>Total</b>	<b>51.7</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>13.2</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>11,735</b>	

## 5.8 Number of Sexual Partners

Table 5.8 shows that a high percentage of currently married women (95 percent) reportedly have one sexual partner. Less than three percent of currently married women report that they have no sexual partner.

Less than two percent of currently married women report having two or more sexual partners. Sexual partnership among currently married women with two or more people is highest (5 percent) among teenage

women aged 15-19 years. Surprisingly, currently non-married women in the same age group have a much lower percentage (3 percent).

More than half (56 percent) of never married currently non-married women reported that they have one sexual partner. Only thirty eight percent of these women reported having no sexual partner. More than three percent reported two or more sexual partners. More than seventy percent of currently non-married women in the 20-24 (71 percent) and 25-29 (74 percent) age groups have one sexual partner. More than a third (35 percent) of currently non-married teenagers aged 15-19 years have a sexual partner.

The highest percentage of sexual partnership with two or more people (7 percent) was reported among currently non-married women aged between 30-34 years. Among currently married women, sexual partnership with two or three men decreases as the woman stays longer in her marriage. Place of residence did not make any major difference in the number of sexual partners a woman has whether she is currently married or not. At any level of education, most women have one sexual partner. But the highest percentage of currently married women without a sexual partner (5 percent) was found among women with no education.

The highest percentage of women with no sexual partners (81 percent) was found among non-currently married Asian women. This is closely followed by white women (73 percent). Only about a third of African women reported that they have no sexual partners. More than half of coloured women (57 percent) reported having no sexual partner. More African women reported sexual partnership with two or more people than other ethnic groups. Place of residence did not make a major difference.

## **5.9 Relationship with Last Sexual Partner**

Table 5.9 shows that the person with whom most women had their last sexual intercourse was either their husbands (44 percent) or a regular partner (38 percent). Sex with a casual acquaintance during their last sex occurred among 5 percent of the women. Most currently married women (80 percent) had their last sexual encounter with their husbands and intercourse with a casual acquaintance is quite low among them. Currently married women aged between 35-39 years tend to have their last sexual intercourse with their husbands compared to other categories.

More than half (68 percent) of non-currently married women, had their last sexual intercourse with a regular partner. Non-currently married women have a higher level of sexual intercourse with a casual acquaintance more than currently married women. As many as one in every 10 non-currently married women had their last sexual intercourse with a casual acquaintance.

Table 5.8 Number of sexual partners

Percent distribution of women age 15-49 by number of persons with whom they had sexual intercourse in the last 12 months according to background characteristics, South Africa 1998

characteristic	0				1				2+				Missing	Total	Mean	Number
	0	1	Missing	Total	0	1	Missing	Total	0	1	Missing	Total				

All women

Table 5.9 Relationship with last person with whom had sexual intercourse

Percentage distribution of women who ever had sexual intercourse by relationship with last person with whom she had sexual intercourse, according to marital status, and background characteristics, South Africa 1998

	Currently married women							Not currently married women							Total					
	Marital partner	Regular partner	Casual acquaintance	Other	Missing /no sex last 12	Total	Number	Regular partner	Casual acquaintance	Other	Missing /no sex last 12	Total	Number	Marital partner		Regular partner	Casual acquaintance	Other	Missing /no sex last 12	Total
<b>Age</b>																				
15-19	49.5	46.7	0.0	1.2	2.6	100.0	73	71.0	13.1	4.6	11.3	100.0	944	9.2	63.6	12.2	4.4	10.7	100.0	
20-24	61.4	35.6	0.8	1.0	1.1	100.0	465	74.2	10.1	4.4	11.3	100.0	1,391	22.0	57.9	7.8	3.6	8.8	100.0	
25-29	75.4	20.9	2.0	0.2	1.5	100.0	900	74.9	6.8	2.9	15.4	100.0	901	41.7	43.9	4.4	1.6	8.4	100.0	
30-34	83.9	13.5	0.5	0.3	1.8	100.0	1,008	68.0	10.1	4.1	17.9	100.0	628	54.6	31.5	4.2	1.8	8.0	100.0	
35-39	85.5	11.2	0.0	0.6	2.6	100.0	1,114	61.2	10.9	3.5	24.5	100.0	511	61.5	24.0	3.4	1.5	9.5	100.0	
40-44	82.9	11.2	0.5	0.3	5.1	100.0	865	50.8	11.6	2.9	34.7	100.0	425	58.4	21.4	4.2	1.1	14.8	100.0	
45-49	83.7	9.2	0.2	0.1	6.7	100.0	652	39.3	4.6	3.7	52.4	100.0	313	59.6	15.9	1.6	1.3	21.6	100.0	
<b>Residence</b>																				
Urban	81.2	14.2	0.8	0.7	3.0	100.0	3,038	62.1	12.1	4.4	21.3	100.0	3,133	43.0	35.6	6.6	2.6	12.3	100.0	
Non-urban	78.2	18.3	0.3	0.0	3.2	100.0	2,039	76.2	6.5	3.0	14.3	100.0	1,980	45.4	41.1	3.4	1.5	8.6	100.0	
<b>Education</b>																				
No education	67.7	24.2	0.3	0.5	7.3	100.0	518	58.4	7.4	3.5	30.7	100.0	265	48.9	31.7	2.7	1.5	15.3	100.0	
Sub A - Std 3	74.9	21.1	1.1	0.2	2.8	100.0	739	60.4	10.8	3.1	25.8	100.0	486	48.5	33.4	4.9	1.3	11.9	100.0	
Std 4 - Std 5	81.1	14.9	0.7	0.3	2.9	100.0	762	65.2	8.8	4.3	21.7	100.0	651	46.9	34.9	4.4	2.2	11.6	100.0	
Std 6 - Std 9	79.4	17.1	0.8	0.5	2.3	100.0	1,876	69.3	11.0	3.7	16.0	100.0	2,365	39.5	41.8	6.5	2.3	10.0	100.0	
Higher	87.2	8.9	0.3	0.6	3.0	100.0	748	70.4	8.5	4.8	16.1	100.0	968	42.4	39.2	5.0	3.0	10.4	100.0	
	91.9	5.6	0.3	0.2	2.0	100.0	434	69.1	9.5	3.3	18.1	100.0	379	53.3	31.0	4.6	1.7	9.5	100.0	
<b>Population group</b>																				
African	76.8	18.8	0.8	0.5	3.1	100.0	3,628	68.7	10.7	3.8	16.9	100.0	4,480	39.0	41.7	6.3	2.3	10.7	100.0	
Afr. Urban	75.9	19.1	1.3	1.0	2.8	100.0	1,810	62.7	13.8	4.7	18.8	100.0	2,596	34.6	41.4	8.6	3.2	12.2	100.0	
Afr. Non-urban	77.7	18.4	0.3	0.0	3.5	100.0	1,818	76.8	6.4	2.5	14.2	100.0	1,884	44.2	42.1	3.4	1.3	8.9	100.0	
Coloured	81.2	15.0	0.7	0.1	3.0	100.0	553	58.8	5.7	3.9	31.6	100.0	427	47.2	32.7	2.8	1.8	15.5	100.0	
White	91.3	6.0	0.0	0.3	2.3	100.0	615	63.4	0.0	7.5	29.2	100.0	126	77.1	14.5	0.0	1.5	6.9	100.0	
Asian	95.5	0.8	0.0	0.0	3.7	100.0	250	50.5	8.9	5.1	35.4	100.0	56	81.3	6.6	1.6	0.9	9.5	100.0	
Total	80.0	15.9	0.6	0.4	3.1	100.0	5,077	67.6	9.9	3.9	18.6	100.0	5,113	43.9	37.8	5.3	2.2	10.9	100.0	

## 5.10 Condom Use

Women were asked whether a condom was used during their last sexual intercourse. This question was asked as proxy for the use of condom for disease prevention purposes. As shown in Table 5.10, among women who had sex with their spouses, only 6 percent report condom use during their last sexual intercourse. A higher figure of 16 percent was observed among women who had their last sex with unmarried partners. Only 8 percent of women who had last sex with casual partners reported condom use.

Irrespective of partner, condom use decreases with age. As such, teenage women report higher condom use during their last sexual intercourse than others. Condom use is also consistently higher in the urban areas (10 percent) than the non-urban areas (5 percent) regardless of the type of partner. Women in the Free State province report higher use of condoms during their last sex than other women irrespective of the type of partner. As many as 27 percent of the women in the Free State province who had their last sex with an unmarried partner report condom use. This figure is about 12 percent for those women who had their last sex with a spouse and 11 percent for those who had their last sex with a casual acquaintance. Women in the Western Cape province report the least use of condom during their last sex with their spouses (2 percent). Those in the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal report the least use (less than 12 percent) during their last sex with unmarried partners. Similarly, women in these three provinces and Northern Province, report the least use of condom during their last sex with a casual acquaintance.

For all three types of sexual partners, the likelihood of condom use during the last sexual intercourse is positively associated with an increase in the level of education. African women are more likely to report condom use during their last sex with their spouses (7 percent) or casual partners (9 percent) than others while white women report the highest use of condom during last sex with unmarried partners (31 percent). Urban African women report higher condom use during their last sexual intercourse than non-urban African women.

**Table 5.10 Use of Condom**

Percentage of respondents who used condom during their last sexual intercourse by type of partner according to background characteristics, South Africa 1998.

	Last sex with spouse	Number	Last sex with unmarried Partner	Number	Last sex with casual acquaintance	Number
<b>Age</b>						
15-19	18.6	28	21.2	827	19.5	854
20-24	9.3	274	18.7	1,354	14.4	1,628
25-29	8.8	660	14.6	937	7.6	1,597
30-34	6.5	805	17.1	627	6.6	1,433
35-39	6.9	910	9.0	481	2.6	1,391
40-44	4.3	678	10.7	339	3.5	1,018
45-49	2.6	511	14.0	185	3.0	696
<b>Current marital status</b>						
Currently in union	6.4	3,866	8.1	849	0.0	4,716
Formerly in union	-	0	12.9	584	12.9	584
Had sex	-	0	19.1	3,317	19.1	3,317
<b>Residence</b>						
Urban	6.5	2,394	20.3	2,813	10.0	5,207
Non-urban	6.1	1,472	10.6	1,938	5.5	3,410
<b>Province</b>						
Western Cape	1.8	425	17.9	395	8.1	820
Eastern Cape	5.1	492	11.4	639	6.1	1,131
Northern Cape	4.1	77	10.8	76	5.0	153
Free State	11.8	290	26.9	238	10.9	528
KwaZulu-Natal	5.5	607	11.6	1,061	6.7	1,667
North West	9.0	277	16.9	391	9.0	668
Gauteng	6.3	950	22.1	1,077	10.4	2,028
Mpumalanga	9.5	272	16.8	397	9.5	670
Northern	6.8	475	14.3	477	6.4	952
<b>Education</b>						
No education	2.2	305	3.6	288	0.9	593
Sub A - Std 3	3.3	498	5.3	486	2.3	984
Std 4 - Std 5	5.6	586	11.9	571	5.1	1,157
Std 6 - Std 9	6.9	1,439	17.3	2,188	9.3	3,627
Std 10	9.0	642	20.2	884	11.3	1,526
Higher	8.5	396	35.1	333	15.5	729
<b>Population group</b>						
African	7.5	2,623	16.2	4,230	9.2	6,853
Afr. Urban	8.2	1,321	20.5	2,398	12.2	3,718
Afr. Non-urban	6.8	1,302	10.5	1,832	5.6	3,134
Coloured	2.9	434	14.6	343	5.6	777
White	4.7	551	30.7	122	4.3	673
Asian	5.1	232	14.2	33	1.8	266
Total	6.4	3,866	16.4	4,750	8.2	8,617

## 5.11 Treatment of Women

### *Economic abuse*

It is normally expected that men who have some resources should contribute towards basic support of their spouse and/or children, including food, rent and payment of bills, before spending money on other items. A

failure to do so has been termed ‘economic’ abuse. It results in proportionately greater poverty being experienced by women and children than would be anticipated from total household income.

In the SADHS, a question was asked about whether in the past year the woman’s partner had regularly not provided money for food, rent or bills whilst having money for other things. The results are presented in Table 5.11. One in five currently married women reported such abuse. The pattern shows very little variation across the age-groups. It was more common in non-urban areas, among women residing in the Free State and KwaZulu-Natal, and much less common in the Western Cape and North West provinces. There was less economic abuse amongst more educated women and there were large ethnic differences. White women were six times less likely to report it than African women.

### ***Physical violence against women***

Women were asked if they had experienced physical violence in the year prior to the interview. The findings are presented in Table 5.11. In total one in ten women had been assaulted in the year prior to the study: six percent by current or ex-partner and four percent by someone who was not a partner. Assault by a partner was most common amongst younger women, especially those aged under 24 years and lowest in women over 40. It was more common in those living in urban areas and lowest in the Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal, North West and Northern Province. It was more common among those who had attended school, but not completed Standard 10 and among coloured women and African women living in urban areas.

Most women reported more than a single episode of assault during the past year. The median was 2, range 1-94 and interquartile range 1-6. Twenty-eight percent of women abused by a current or ex-partner needed medical attention. Older women were very much more likely to need it than those in the youngest age group. It was most likely amongst women in Gauteng, Mpumalanga, KwaZulu-Natal, the Eastern Cape and Western Cape and much less likely in the Free State and Northern Cape. Having education beyond matric and being white were also protective.

The need for medical attention is an indicator of the severity of abuse, the proportion reporting this was very high. Whilst this obviously shows that many men are very brutal when they assault their partners, it may also point towards substantial under-reporting of less severe forms of assault e.g. slapping. It is notable that the incidence of abuse was quite low among women in the 45-49 age group, Asian women and those living in KwaZulu-Natal and yet reports of needing medical attention were particularly high in these groups. This may well suggest that less severe forms of assault are particularly under-reported in these groups. The high level of injury resulting from abuse is a pointer towards the considerable economic, social and health service costs which are associated with domestic violence. The substantial proportion of abused women who use health services also points towards a role for health providers in identifying women and referring them to places of shelter and other services.

Alcohol and drug use were more likely to be associated with the abuse of women who were older (over 35 years), living in the Eastern Cape and Northern Cape, less educated and who were coloured or Asian. The findings suggest that it was very common for assailants to be drunk or on drugs but this was by no means the rule.

In assaults by a non-partner, the perpetrator was a male relative in thirty per cent of cases (most commonly a cousin or uncle), a female relative in eleven per cent of cases (most commonly the mother), an unknown

assailant in seventeen percent of cases and in forty two per cent it was a range of other people, mostly neighbours or people known in the community or at school. It was most often reported amongst teenagers. It was more common in non-urban areas and amongst women living in the Northern Cape, Western Cape, Northern and Mpumalanga provinces. It was also most common among women with Standard 4-9 schooling and least often reported among women with no schooling. Coloured, white and (urban) African reported it more frequently. Only 31 respondents (0.3 percent of women interviewed) reported physical violence by both a partner and a non-partner in the previous year.

Assault by a non-partner had mostly occurred on one occasion. The median number of episodes was 1, the interquartile range was 1-2, but the range was 1-94. Assault by a non-partner was much less likely to result in injuries which required medical attention, although the proportion (eighteen percent) who reported this is still high. It was more common amongst older women (over 35), those living in non-urban areas, living in the North West and Free State, those without education and African or coloured women. Alcohol and drug use were also often reported to have been associated with episodes of assault by non-partners, but overall it was less common than with partner assault. Assailants always using substances were more likely to be in the Western Cape and Northern Cape, and assaulting women with no education.

These data show that adult women are more than twice as likely to be assaulted by a current or ex-partner than they are by anyone else. Furthermore assault by an intimate partner is likely to occur more frequently and to be more severe, as indicated by the greater likelihood of it resulting in injuries requiring medical attention. Abusive partners are more likely to be using drugs or alcohol at the time of the assault than other assailants.

**Table 5.11 Mistreatment of women in last 12 months**

The percentage of currently married women who reported that their partner regularly does not provide economic support while having money for other things, the percentage of women who reported that they had experienced physical abuse in the last 12 months and the percentage distribution of the reported use of drugs or alcohol by the assailant at the time of the abuse, according to partner type and background characteristics, South Africa 1998

Background characteristics	Economic abuse				Physical assault, most often by a current or ex-partner						Physical assault most often by non-partner					
	Per cent partner not providing	Number CMW	Abuse by partner	Percentage alcohol at time of assault	Percentage assailants on drugs or alcohol at time of assault			Percentage abused women needing medical attention	Number ever had sex	Percentage abuse by non-partner	Percentage assailants on drugs or alcohol at time of assault			Percentage abused women needing medical attention	Number of women	
					Always	Sometimes	Never				Always	Sometimes	Never			
<b>Age</b>																
15-19	22.3	73	7.3	23.8	16.8	58.3	1.2	12.0	1,017	8.9	12.3	26.3	54.6	6.8	2,249	
20-24	22.6	462	7.9	30.3	23.6	43.6	2.6	24.7	1,856	3.8	20.4	19.1	49.4	11.1	2,075	
25-29	19.9	895	6.0	38.8	29.7	31.6	0	30.2	1,801	3.3	36.6	17.0	35.6	10.8	1,857	
30-34	18.4	993	7.4	37.3	29.4	33.0	0.2	27.8	1,636	1.8	30.2	17.6	46.0	6.2	1,654	
35-39	19.9	1,104	6.5	47.0	33.9	18.6	0.5	27.8	1,624	1.8	30.2	7.0	39.5	23.4	1,636	
40-44	18.3	856	4.0	60.6	16.7	21.1	1.6	22.6	1,290	1.5	29.0	8.5	32.4	30.0	1,294	
45-49	18.6	638	3.5	43.5	34.6	19.1	2.9	54.7	965	2.5	25.4	15.5	41.7	17.5	970	
<b>Residence</b>																
Urban	17.6	2,997	7.0	40.1	25.9	33.4	0.7	26.9	6,171	3.6	22.3	17.9	45.0	14.9	7,095	
Non-urban	22.1	2,024	5.3	34.4	28.1	35.5	2.1	26.7	4,019	3.9	18.7	24.2	51.8	5.3	4,640	
<b>Province</b>																
Western Cape	13.7	539	8.0	53.5	16.3	30.2	0	24.9	1,014	5.0	36.6	15.6	43.3	4.5	1,193	
Eastern Cape	18.2	579	5.4	31.5	46.9	21.0	0.7	27.1	1,367	2.7	19.4	26.6	46.1	7.9	1,566	
Northern Cape	18.4	118	7.2	61.3	19.1	17.9	1.7	19.1	209	6.9	34.8	15.3	45.6	4.3	253	
Free State	25.4	353	7.3	51.2	23.7	23.4	1.8	18.9	662	2.5	25.6	13.3	48.4	12.6	763	
KwaZulu-Natal	25.6	945	5.4	32.4	23.4	41.3	2.9	27.2	1,969	3.6	21.2	21.1	45.4	12.3	2,364	
North West	15.6	350	4.2	38.0	35.2	23.7	3.1	26.8	788	2.9	11.8	48.0	36.3	3.9	909	
Gauteng	17.9	1,197	7.3	39.0	21.3	39.7	0	31.2	2,311	3.2	17.4	11.6	46.4	24.6	2,552	
Mpumalanga	19.5	307	7.6	36.4	18.0	43.0	2.7	26.4	745	4.6	16.0	7.5	68.6	8.0	819	
Northern	18.5	633	5.3	19.2	44.2	36.7	0	25.2	1,125	5.0	12.3	31.4	51.0	5.2	1,316	
<b>Education</b>																
No education	22.7	511	4.6	59.0	26.8	14.3	0	21.9	783	1.4	36.4	32.9	20.1	10.6	804	
Sub A-Std 3	25.5	734	6.5	43.5	27.5	25.8	3.2	28.2	1,225	3.0	32.1	13.5	49.4	5.0	1,291	
Std 4-Std 5	23.8	753	7.5	52.7	22.0	24.5	0.8	30.3	1,412	4.3	20.3	16.9	51.8	10.9	1,625	
Std 6-Std 9	17.1	1,851	7.2	34.0	28.8	36.7	0.6	26.8	4,241	4.6	20.7	22.9	46.5	9.9	5,181	
Std 10	18.7	741	5.2	23.0	28.5	47.1	1.4	23.1	1,716	2.6	17.6	22.2	47.5	12.7	1,922	
11+	9.2	431	2.9	35.9	9.9	51.4	2.7	29.1	812	3.3	7.6	11.9	57.8	22.8	912	
<b>Population group</b>																
African	23.0	3,589	6.1	32.7	28.9	37.0	1.4	26.3	8,108	3.6	16.5	23.8	50.0	9.7	9,147	
Afr. urban	23.0	1,784	7.0	34.7	28.1	36.3	0.9	26.0	4,406	3.3	16.2	21.0	46.9	15.9	4,873	
Afr. non-urban	23.1	1,805	5.0	29.5	30.1	38.2	2.2	27.0	3,702	3.9	16.7	26.4	53.2	3.7	4,274	
Coloured	16.5	548	10.3	57.3	19.4	23.1	0.3	29.8	979	5.3	49.8	14.0	36.2	0	1,201	
White	4.4	604	3.8	49.8	20.9	29.3	0	29.3	741	3.9	12.6	6.3	47.9	33.2	916	
Asian	10.1	250	4.3	56.8	14.4	28.8	0	28.0	305	2.4	9.7	9.7	43.6	37.0	406	
Total	19.2	5,021	6.3	38.1	26.6	34.1	1.1	28.0	10,190	3.7	20.8	20.5	47.8	10.8	11,735	

### ***Lifetime experience of domestic violence***

Table 5.12 shows the proportion of women who have ever been assaulted by a current or ex-partner- overall twelve per cent of women reported this. There was very little difference across age groups. Urban women were more likely to report abuse, as were women living in Gauteng, the Western Cape and Mpumalanga, those with some schooling but not post-school education, and coloured and white women.

Women who reported having ever been assaulted by a current or ex- partner were asked whether this had occurred during pregnancy. Four percent reported that it had. This was more common amongst women in urban areas, living in the Western Cape and Gauteng, and coloured and white women.

Ninety four percent of women who were in an abusive relationship, reported that they had ever ended a relationship because of physical abuse. Background characteristics made very little difference to the proportion reporting this, although there were some interprovincial differences. It was less likely in the Northern Cape, North West and Eastern Cape and more likely in the Northern Province. The number of women who reported having left abusive partners was quite high. There are some possible reasons for this. The question did not distinguish between women leaving forever and leaving and returning. The latter is very commonly reported in abusive relationships. Another possibility is that the women who disclosed abuse to the interviewers experienced more severe abuse and so were more likely to take action about this than women experiencing lesser degrees.

### ***Sexual abuse***

Sexual abuse was explored through questions which asked about whether women had ever been ‘forced to have sex against their will’ or ‘persuaded to have sex when they did not want to’. This second question was included as research indicates that sexual coercion is perceived to lie on a continuum of degrees of force used ranging from persuasion (which may include blackmail or threats) to physical forcing (Jewkes and Abrahams, In press). The word ‘rape’ was not used in the questionnaire because it is usually reserved only to refer to the actions of strangers or gangs (Wood *et al.*, 1998). Table 5.12 shows that four percent of all women had been forced and seven percent of women who had ever had sex had been either forced or persuaded to have sex at some time when they didn’t want to. Having been forced to have sex was most commonly reported by women under 35 years, in urban areas, in Mpumalanga, Gauteng and the Western Cape provinces and with higher education. It was much more commonly reported by white and coloured women than those of other population groups.

Table 5.12 shows the proportion of women who were forced to have sex who sought help from the police. Fifteen percent reported the rape to the police. Older women and urban women were less likely to report than younger women and those in non-urban areas, but there was not great variation with age and area of residence. Women in Mpumalanga, Northern Cape and Gauteng were more likely to report. There were very marked educational differences, having no education appears to be a major barrier to contacting the police after rape and women with post-school education were eight times more likely to report rape than uneducated women. White women were most likely to report rape and Asian women were nearly half as likely. These data suggest that certain groups in the population have considerably less access to police services after rape. The reasons for this very substantial inequity need further investigation and strategies need to be developed to improve access for all women.

### ***Measuring violence against women***

The inclusion of questions on the treatment of women represents a first attempt to get national indicators of the prevalence of abuse. The data are likely to under-represent the true magnitude of violence against women as under-reporting is a common problem in surveys. The main reasons for this are that women are afraid of recriminations, feel ashamed, see it as a private matter, do not wish to speak badly about their husband or do not see themselves as abused because they have been raised to believe men will discipline women (Heise *et al.*, 1994). Dedicated studies of violence against women normally find a higher prevalence of abuse when compared with surveys such as the SADHS, the difference is attributed to field work factors (Ellsberg *et al.*, 2001).

In order to gain an insight into possible under-reporting a study was conducted which would provide external validation of the SADHS findings in three provinces, the Eastern Cape, Mpumalanga and Northern Province (Jewkes *et al.*, In press). This validation study closely followed the SADHS methods, with interviews conducted in 1 in 6 EAs in the Eastern Cape and 1 in 2 in the Northern Province and Mpumalanga. There were some differences in the sampling strategy which mean that one would expect the findings of the two studies to be broadly similar but there could be minor differences. The validation study found substantial under-reporting in two of the three provinces. In the Eastern Cape the proportion of women physically abused by a partner in the previous year was twice that found here (10.9 percent vs 5.4 percent); in Mpumalanga it was one third higher (11.9 percent vs 7.6 percent), whilst in the Northern Province it was slightly lower (5.3 percent vs 4.5 percent). The proportion of women reporting having ever been assaulted by a partner was much higher in the validation study. In the Eastern Cape it was 26.8 percent compared with 8.7 percent in the SADHS; in Mpumalanga it was 28.4 percent compared with 15.2 percent in SADHS; and in the Northern Province it was 19.1 percent compared with 8.8 percent in SADHS.

Table 5.1.2 Mistreatment of women

Percentage of women who reported ever experiencing various types of mistreatment according to background characteristics, South Africa 1998

Background characteristics	Abuse in pregnancies				Abuse by sexual partner				Rape					
	Percentage		Number ever pregnant		Ever abused by partner		Ever abused and left due to abuse		Ever forced or persuaded to have sex against will		No. Ever had sex	Ever forced to have sex (rape)	Ever forced and sought help from the police	All women
<b>Age</b>														
15-19	4.7	308	11.9	91.2	9.7	1,017	4.9	13.2	2,249					
20-24	4.3	1,246	14.2	96.7	8.1	1,856	4.9	18.8	2,075					
25-29	4.2	1,542	12.0	87.3	7.4	1,801	5.1	17.2	1,857					
30-34	3.5	1,564	14.9	94.9	7.9	1,636	5.3	12.4	1,654					
35-39	3.5	1,576	12.8	94.1	5.4	1,624	3.6	16.4	1,636					
40-44	2.2	1,250	10.3	99.4	5.3	1,290	2.8	15.2	1,294					
45-49	4.3	932	9.7	96.7	5.1	965	3.2	9.6	970					
<b>Residence</b>														
Urban	4.5	4,972	14.8	93.6	8.1	6,171	5.0	14.5	7,095					
Non-urban	2.4	3,445	9.2	95.7	5.3	4,019	3.6	16.8	4,640					
<b>Province</b>														
Western Cape	7.5	816	16.9	95.4	12.4	1,014	6.5	13.3	1,193					
Eastern Cape	2.9	1,071	8.7	90.4	4.4	1,367	2.9	14.3	1,566					
Northern Cape	3.1	190	13.2	82.3	4.7	209	3.8	17.2	253					
Free State	2.5	550	12.4	96.8	4.1	662	2.6	12.1	763					
Kwazulu Natal	3.0	1,708	10.3	94.9	6.4	1,969	3.3	12.5	2,364					
North West	1.5	653	6.8	87.7	2.9	788	2.3	13.7	909					
Gauteng	5.2	1,899	17.8	94.4	9.6	2,311	6.5	15.7	2,552					
Mpumalanga	2.4	592	15.2	94.8	10.5	745	7.1	25.2	819					
Northern	2.5	939	8.8	100.0	3.9	1,125	3.3	10.9	1,316					
<b>Education</b>														
No education	2.5	755	9.4	98.5	3.7	783	2.6	3.1	804					
Sub A-Std 3	3.3	1,136	13.5	96.7	6.1	1,225	3.8	11.5	1,291					
Std 4-Std 5	3.7	1,241	15.2	94.6	6.8	1,412	4.0	15.5	1,625					
Std 6-Std 9	4.2	3,374	12.9	93.1	7.5	4,241	4.9	15.5	5,181					
Std 10	3.7	1,294	11.9	92.4	7.0	1,716	4.1	14.4	1,922					
11+	2.5	617	9.5	95.8	9.6	812	5.5	23.3	912					
<b>Population group</b>														
African	2.8	6,599	11.4	93.5	6.0	8,108	3.8	14.4	9,147					
Afr-urban	3.5	3,480	13.9	92.6	6.9	4,406	4.4	14.5	4,873					
Afr non-urban	2.0	3,119	8.3	95.6	4.9	3,702	3.2	14.3	4,274					
Coloured	8.2	870	19.7	92.8	12.0	979	6.5	15.5	1,201					
White	6.4	626	15.8	97.8	13.0	741	8.7	18.9	916					
Asian	3.5	274	12.6	100.0	3.7	305	2.3	10.1	406					
Total	3.7	8,417	12.5	94.1	7.0	10,190	4.4	15.2	11,735					

### *Use of and need for services*

Table 5.13 shows the proportion of women who had been physically abused in the past year or raped who used or would have liked to have been able to use various services. Only thirty percent of raped women had used any service, half of these women had been to the police. Only six percent of raped women had been to a health facility and very few had used other services. Forty three percent identified services which they would have liked to have had help from. Counselling, the police and social workers were the most commonly identified services. Twenty six percent of physically abused women had used any service, just under half of these had been to the police and small numbers had sought help from other sources. Thirty eight percent of women identified services which they would have liked to have had help from after physical abuse. Most commonly these were social workers, counsellors or the police. None of the physically abused women used a shelter, but five percent indicated that they would have liked to have been able to do so. Some women indicated that they had tried to access the police and found them unhelpful and thus expressed persisting unmet need for help from the police. This pattern of reporting was not found with other services.

Table 5.13 also shows the proportion of women reporting physical abuse by a current or ex-partner in the previous year who used or wanted services by province, and by type of service. For most provinces the proportion using any service was between twenty and twenty-six percent. The proportion of women in the Northern Province seeking help was twice this (forty nine percent). Much of this difference was due to a large number of 'other' sources of help being recorded. These included religious figures, indunas or headmen and family members. The proportion seeking help in the Northern Cape was only fourteen percent. There was much greater variability in the proportion reporting unmet need, this ranged from sixty-two percent of women in KwaZulu-Natal to three percent in the Northern Cape. The large differences are likely to be influenced by the severity of the abuse reported, the extent to which it is regarded as 'normal' or something women must endure, the availability of services, reputation of services and perceived risks associated with help seeking. The large inter-provincial differences in services which are normally provided by the NGO sector, i.e. counselling, shelters and women's centres, may reflect the uneven distribution of these services in the country. The provinces with the greatest need for shelters, counselling and women's centres, were Gauteng, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. These are also the ones where there is greater provision, although very few women interviewed used these services.

**Table 5.13 Service use and needs for abused women**

Percentage of women reporting having used various types of services or wanting services which were not available according to type of abuse and province, South Africa 1998.

Type of abuse	Proportion of abused women using or wanting help from services by type of service																	
	Shelter		Counselling		Women's centre		Social worker		Police		Clinic/hospital		Other		Any service		Total	
	Used	Needed	Used	Needed	Used	Needed	Used	Needed	Used	Needed	Used	Needed	Used	Needed	Used	Needed		
Rape	0.2	1.9	3.9	14.5	1.0	4.2	3.6	11.9	15.2	6.0	6.7	6.4	6.0	29.7	43.1	520		
Physical by partner in last yr	-	4.6	3.4	8.9	0.7	5.4	3.8	13.1	12.1	8.9	4.1	7.1	5.2	26.3	38.2	652		
<b>Proportion of women abused by a current or ex-partner in last year who used or needed help by services type and province</b>																		
<b>Province</b>																		
Western Cape	-	9.8	6.5	24.0	-	9.5	6.5	12.6	17.4	4.9	2.8	4.7	-	27.0	49.5	81		
Eastern Cape	-	-	2.3	4.4	0.9	3.8	4.7	6.0	9.8	10.2	7.5	1.6	1.9	24.2	31.6	74		
Northern Cape	-	-	-	-	-	1.5	1.5	1.5	4.5	1.5	-	4.6	-	13.5	2.9	16		
Free State	-	-	1.6	8.2	-	8.1	4.8	19.6	9.7	13.5	1.6	6.7	8.5	21.3	40.3	49		
KwaZulu-Natal	-	8.4	0.9	13.6	-	11.6	5.4	28.9	8.1	10.3	6.6	9.1	10.5	22.9	62.0	107		
North West	-	-	-	3.0	-	-	2.7	2.7	8.8	6.0	-	14.5	-	26.0	11.8	34		
Gauteng	-	6.9	6.2	7.6	1.4	4.1	2.8	9.7	13.8	11.0	2.8	4.1	8.3	25.5	40.7	173		
Mpumalanga	-	2.7	2.7	4.6	2.7	-	1.5	9.2	13.0	7.3	4.6	2.3	3.5	20.3	21.9	56		
Northern	-	-	1.9	-	-	1.8	1.8	11.3	15.0	5.6	1.8	22.7	1.9	49.0	20.5	61		

### *Childhood sexual abuse*

The sexual abuse of children is a subject of growing concern amongst the general community. In order to investigate the prevalence of child rape and sexual abuse, women were asked questions about experiences of having been ‘touched against your will in a sexual way’ (discussed here as ‘fondling’) and ‘forced to touch a man’s private parts against your will’, in addition to the questions about ‘forced’ sexual intercourse or being ‘persuaded’ when you didn’t want to (both constitute statutory rape) if the girl/woman is under the age of 16 years). Respondents answering in the affirmative were asked the age at which the act first happened and who did it. Women who said they had been raped were not asked the other sexual abuse questions. The data are indicative of minimum levels of child abuse as other forms of sexual abuse, notably flashing or exposing children to pornography, physical abuse and sexual abuse of boy children are not included.

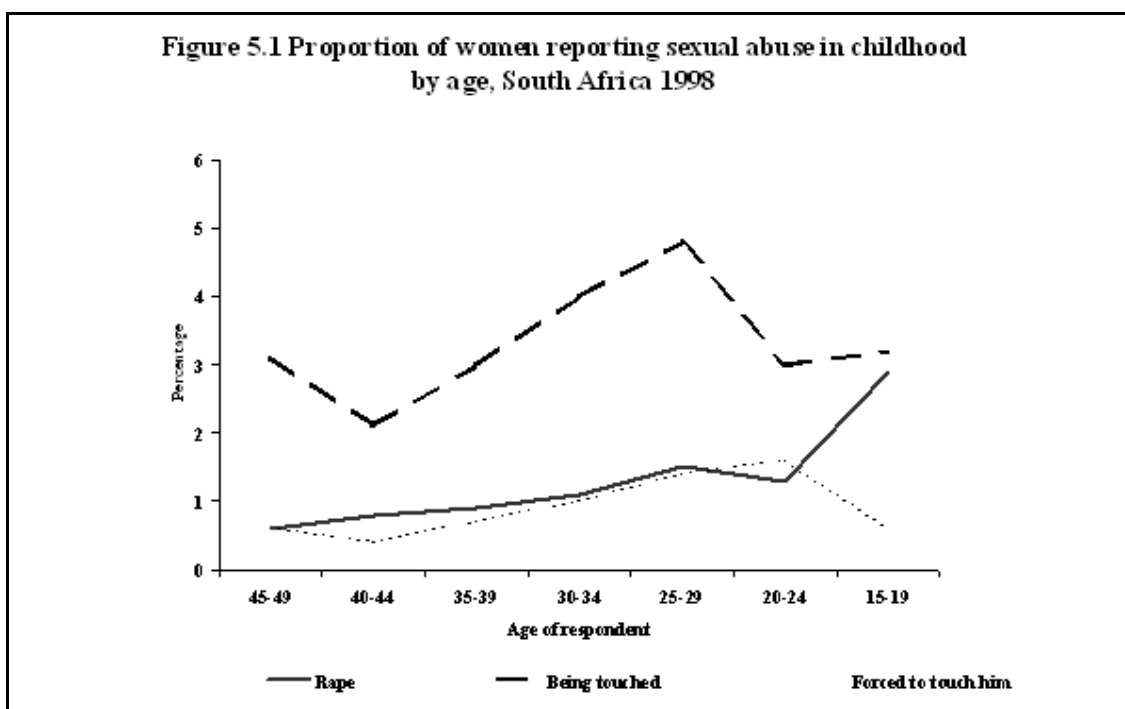


Figure 5.1 shows that there has been a steady increase in the proportion of women reporting having been raped before the age of 15 and women who were 15-19 years at the time of interview were almost twice as likely to report having been raped than those aged 20-24 years. One possible explanation for this is recall bias, but it is unlikely that this is present to a substantial degree as similar trends are not seen in the proportion of women reporting having been touched or made to touch a man. Table 5.14 shows the ages at which sexual abuse occurred and the identity of the perpetrator. The vast majority of child rape was perpetrated by men who were in positions of trust with respect to the child: school teachers, family members, family friends and lodgers. Teachers formed the single largest group of child rapists. Men who were not particularly in positions of trust, for example men or boys known from the neighbourhood, school or church, or strangers were much more likely to fondle girls than rape them. Twenty-one women reported having been raped by gangs of between three and ten men.

**Table 5.14 Sexual abuse**

Percentage distribution of age when first sexually abused and percentage distribution of the identity of perpetrator for rape, fondling and being forced to touch a man, South Africa 1998

	Rape	Fondling	Made to touch him
<b>Age</b>			
0-4 years	*	1.0	*
5-9 years	14.6	18.5	24.4
10-14	85.4	80.5	75.6
<b>Identity of man</b>			
Father	5.1	2.3	4.8
Brother	4.8	3.7	4.0
Other relative	11.3	18.7	20.0
Family friend/lodger	11.1	9.1	13.0
School teacher	32.8	2.5	3.4
Stranger/recent acquaintance	20.2	18.3	10.3
Stepfather/mother's boyfriend	3.6	0.8	0.8
Boyfriend	8.3	7.6	9.3
Man/boy from neighbourhood/ church/school	0.8	36.3	33.4
Landlord/farmer	0.7	*	*
Other	1.4	0.6	1.1

Note: An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.

Table 5.15 shows that all forms of child abuse were more commonly reported by women in urban areas and in the provinces of Gauteng, Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape. The highest level of rape reported was among white and coloured women and the highest level of unwanted fondling was also amongst white women. It is very difficult to know whether these racial differences are real or result from different thresholds of reporting in the different groups.

The findings suggest that there may have been an increase in the prevalence of child rape, with the problem particularly occurring in urban areas. Research on adolescent sexuality has shown that forced sexual initiation is very common (e.g Buga 1996 found 28 percent of initiation to be 'forced'), the information on perpetrators indicates that the reports in this study were rarely of the actions of boyfriends. It is likely, therefore, that there has been substantial under-reporting of forcing by boyfriends.

**Table 5.15 Child sexual abuse**

Proportion of women reporting child sexual abuse by selected background characteristics, South Africa 1998

Background characteristics	Raped	Fondled	Made to touch him	Number of women
<b>Age</b>				
15-19	2.9	3.1	0.6	2,249
20-24	1.3	3.0	1.6	2,075
25-29	1.5	4.9	1.4	1,857
30-34	1.1	4.0	1.0	1,654
35-39	0.9	3.0	0.7	1,636
40-44	0.8	2.1	0.4	1,294
45-49	0.6	3.1	0.6	970
<b>Residence</b>				
Urban	1.7	3.7	1.1	7,095
Non-urban	1.0	3.0	0.7	4,640
<b>Province</b>				
Western Cape	2.3	3.2	1.1	1,193
Eastern Cape	0.8	1.4	0.6	1,566
Northern Cape	0.8	2.2	0.4	253
Free State	0.3	3.3	1.3	763
Kwazulu-Natal	1.2	3.1	0.6	2,364
North West	0.3	1.7	0.8	909
Gauteng	2.5	5.5	1.5	2,552
Mpumalanga	2.6	5.2	1.5	819
Northern	0.7	2.6	0.7	1,316
<b>Education</b>				
No education	1.0	2.8	0.4	804
Sub A-Std 3	1.2	2.8	1.1	1,291
Std 4-Std 5	1.6	2.6	0.9	1,625
Std 6-Std 9	1.6	3.0	0.8	5,181
Std 10	1.3	3.9	1.1	1,922
Higher	1.5	6.9	1.9	912
<b>Population group</b>				
African	1.2	2.8	0.8	9,147
Afr. urban	1.4	2.9	1.0	4,873
Afr. non-urban	0.9	2.6	0.6	4,274
Coloured	2.2	2.9	1.1	1,201
White	3.6	10.1	2.8	916
Asian	0.7	4.2	0.9	406
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>3.4</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>11,735</b>

