INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION BETWEEN POLICE AND SOCIAL SERVICES: Responding to children exposed to domestic violence.

Author: Emily Musoke
Supervisor: Pär Gustafsson (PhD)
Course: 4SA70E
Spring 2011
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am heartily thankful to my supervisor, Pär Gustafsson, whose encouragement, guidance and support from the initial to the final level enabled me to develop an understanding of the subject.

I wish to extend my gratitude to Cecilia Kjellgren, lecturer Institute of Social Work, Linneaus University who inspired me along this topic of research. I can only say a proper thank you through my future work by helping as many children as possible.

Special thanks to my children, Jesse and Noah for the incredible amount of patience you have had with me all throughout this course. It is difficult to find the words that truly describe how much I love you both. You inspire me to be a better mother and a better person.

I would like to gratefully acknowledge the support of some very special individuals. They helped me immensely by giving me encouragement, friendship that helped me to stay sane throughout these difficult years. Thank you for your moral, spiritual and financial support Tove Nordenberg, Ewa Nordenberg, Kjäll-Andersson, Pamela Asiimwe and Miriam Ssebanakitta.

Nina Persson I cannot forget your inspiration for taking up this course, thanks for having high hopes in me and for not giving up on me.

My mother Bernadette Musoke to whom this thesis is dedicated, you have been a constant source of love, concern, support and strength all these years. Last but not least my heartfelt gratitude to my siblings, Dr. Fred Musoke, Jane Musoke, Theresa Namata Musoke and Cecilia Nanziri Musoke, I warmly appreciate your unconditional love and support all throughout the difficult years. The one above all of us, the omnipresent God, for answering my prayers for giving me the strength to plod on despite my constitution wanting to give up and throw in the towel, thank you so much my beautiful redeemer Jesus Christ of Nazareth.

Emily Musoke
Växjö, 23 May, 2011.
Abstract

There is an increasing anticipation for combined action between the Social Services and the Police to deal with domestic violence and to prevail over professional and other antagonistic obstacles. In order to ensure effective intervention for children exposed to domestic violence, multidisciplinary agencies ought to work jointly to recognize the needs of these children. Together, they are competent to tackle the complexity of family violence and its effect on children. United through a partnership, each agency can benefit from each other by means of allocation of duties as a consequence overcoming barriers. A mixed research method was used for this study using recorded semi structured interviews with professional in the Social Services and the Police in two municipalities in Sweden; A municipality in Stockholm County of which I will refer to as City A municipality and a municipality in a small city in Sweden of which I will refer to as City B municipality. A national mail survey was sent to all the 21 Police county departments in Sweden to collect quantitative data.

The aim of the study was to explore the working relationships between the Police and Social Services, the two main agencies in collaboration. It was discovered that there is a mismatch between the two laws governing the two agencies, thus leading to challenges in coordinating the two separate sets of rules governing the two agencies in cooperation. Through communication, information sharing, informal working relationships, partners are able to overcome their challenges. However, the dilemma for this study remains how to make things work easily without breaking the law.

Key words: Domestic Violence, Children, the Police, the Social Services, Collaboration
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1.0 Introduction

The recognition of domestic violence by the United Nations as a human rights abuse in the 1990s has meant that domestic violence has achieved a much greater profile in terms of law and policy development in many countries. In Sweden since 1998 domestic violence is liable to be charged with criminal offence that carries gross violation of the woman’s integrity and also warrants protection of children and other close relatives (Nylen & Heimer, 1999). The Ombudsman for Children has the task of representing the rights and interests of children and young people in the light of Sweden’s undertakings under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (The Act 2002:377). A key function of the Ombudsman for children is to ensure the effective safeguarding of children by all local stakeholders and the promotion of their welfare both in a multidisciplinary agencies approach and within individual agencies because no one agency on its own has the ability to respond adequately to the full range of problems created by domestic violence (Bragg, 2003). Such Interdisciplinary relationships where by two or more people, from different disciplines mutually work together promote the realization of common, harmonious goals that cannot be reached by each discipline singly (Bronstein 2003).

There is an increasing anticipation for joint efforts between the Social Services (Socialtjänsten) and the Police (Polisen) to deal with domestic violence and to prevail over professional and other antagonistic obstacles (Mullender, 1996). On the whole, the rationale for joint efforts is to attain effectual intervention and restrain, prevailing over the disintegration of services and take action to a variety of victims’ needs (Lewis et al 2000). The Social Services (Socialtjänsten) is normally the central agency in each community’s child protection system. More often than not it plays the lead role in coordinating all interactions and services between numerous disciplines dealing with child maltreatment thus establishing contractual relationships (Smith, Nickles, Mulmat and Davies, 2001). The Police (Polisen) share a vital role since they act as gatekeepers for the whole criminal justice system, offer critical legal and personal services to victims, and refer them to social, medical, and legal services (Heise, 1998).
2.0 Background

While all governments have services and programs to respond to victims of violence and their children and many of them are highly effective – these responses could be improved by coordinated approaches between multi-disciplinary agencies (Australian Government 2009). In order to ensure effective intervention for children exposed to domestic violence, multidisciplinary agencies ought to work jointly to recognize the needs of these children. Together, they are competent to tackle the complexity of family violence and its effect on children. United through a partnership, each agency can benefit from each other by means of allocation of duties as a consequence overcoming barriers (Smith, et al., 2001).

In the past, domestic violence has been outlined and perceived solely as a women’s issue. Domestic violence affects mostly women, but also has overwhelming consequences for other populations and societal institutions. Men too, can be victims of violence (Bragg, 2003). Domestic violence is an extensive notion that includes several forms of physical, sexual and verbal attacks coupled with a range of coercive, intimidating and assaultive behaviors that adults or adolescents use against their intimate partner and children are harmed through seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another (Bragg, 2003; Radford and Lynn, 2008).

Clear links exist between domestic violence and the likelihood of child abuse. Consequently, the same number of people who abuse their partners may also be the same number of people who abuse their children (Fantuzzo, and Mohr, 1999). Children who witness abuse are directly affected by the trauma of the violence, causing a defect in their developmental processes. Children are also actively in a constant environment of threats and intimidation thus, they live in fear for their abused parent and themselves and suffer other stress related problems (Barnett, Miller-Perrin, and Perrin, 2004). However, children exposed to domestic violence have been referred to as ‘forgotten victims or silent victims’ because they have not been given the right to be heard and thus in practice as well as in research they have been overlooked for a long time consequently falling
through the cracks of the system (Neerosh and Goddard, 2006; Smith, et al., 2001:7). Services are frequently directed towards the domestic violence victim and the perpetrator nevertheless, these vulnerable children can be helped through early intervention by both the Police and the Social Services. The Police single-handedly cannot assist children exposed to domestic violence nevertheless they can function as a vital agent to recognize children in need of social and mental health services. The Police and the Social Services can collaborate to ascertain the needs of these children, which is an effective means that can be employed to put their lives back on track and also break the cycle of violence (Smith, et al., 2001:7).

In crime prevention this requires recognition of the interdependence between legal criminal and social intervention oriented institutions in general, and Police and social work in particular (Danis, 2003). Integration of such kind can be achieved together with a variety of approaches stretching from control to compassion. In control – oriented approach the focal point is on actions intended for criminalizing domestic violence. On the contrary, in a compassion– oriented approach, the ultimate principle is that intervention to domestic violence ought to concentrate on restorative oriented social and individual actions (Gelles, 1997).

While there is a great deal of need for Police and Social Services collaboration, these partnerships are complex. There are persistent collaboration issues or points of tension and conflict that call for shared energy and attention (Lewis et al 2000). I empirically experienced this kind of tension during one of the training seminars in my masters program for social work at Linneaus University. We were grouped into different agencies and requested to act and help a child who was a victim of family violence. However, during the act, there was total anarchy among us posing to be the different agencies. There was lack of coordination, tension and blaming each other, thus the child ended up being tossed from one agency to another and in the end the child resorted to finding help through other means. To my surprise, the lecturer explained to us that, that is actually what normally happens in real life. Consequently, that compelled me to carry out a research in this particular field of study.
In practice handling of child abuse cases entails various investigating agencies, every so often lacking coordination, and also carried out by inexperienced investigators thus causing additional trauma and stress to children (Jones et al. 2007; National Board of Health and Welfare 2008). Over the years there has been a growing increase in reports of child abuse that has led to increased awareness and advancement of new child protection services in many countries. Advancement of child-friendly settings, known as Children’s Advocacy Centers (CAC) in the US and Barnahus in the Nordic countries, could probably enhance client-professional relationships (Rasmusson, 2010).

3.0 Theoretical Frame of Reference

The study’s theoretical frame of reference was based on ‘social capital theory’ which can be traced to the works of authors such as – Pierre Bourdieu, James S. Coleman and Robert Putnam. According to Woolcock, (1998) studies, the first manifestation of the theory of social capital although not previously described as such has been in existence perpetually since society formed into small communities and people interrelated with the prospect of mutually getting something in return coupled with trust for one another. Nevertheless, the concept in its current form and related connotations was widely spread amongst others by Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988, and 1990) and Putnam (1993, 2000).

The rationale behind the choice of the theory was because no single agency on its own has the ability to respond adequately to the full range of problems created by domestic violence and the concept of social capital that covers the ‘norms and networks facilitating collective actions for mutual benefits.’(Woolcock, 1998, p 155) sought to be of utmost relevance to the analysis of multi-agency collaborative partnerships. This expansive description of social capital as norms and networks that enable people to act collectively thus makes it predisposed to various interpretations and application across diverse theoretical backgrounds.
Bourdieu (1986) defined social capital as ‘the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possessions of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition’ (Bourdieu 1986: 248).

On the other hand Coleman (1988) asserted that;

‘Social capital is defined by its function. It is not a single entity, but a variety of entities with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors – whether persons or corporate actors - within the structure. Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that in its absence would not be possible.’ (Coleman, 1988:98)

Putman (1993)’s definition of social capital drawn on Coleman’s description of the productive and achievement enhancing nature of social capital, focuses on the benefit accruing to the community that is,

‘Features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating, coordinated actions’ (Putman, 1993:167) ‘While physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them.’ (Putnam, 2000: 18-19)

There are lots of potential interpretations of social capital but generally social capital can be perceived in the following forms: obligations - reciprocity (in short or long term kindness and services will be returned), informational potential (for example, sharing useful information that may enlighten some future action), norms and effective sanctions (for example, establishment of unwritten shared community values particularly trust and
shared standards of behavior), authority relations (for example, skilful leadership that informs others’ actions) and social networks especially the membership of voluntary associations. These factors exhibit themselves in several combinations and form the relations between the members of a group, organization, community, society or simply network and can be studied through numerous angles (Coleman, 1988). Thus critics have therefore described the social capital notion as ‘a wonderfully elastic term’ (Lappe and Du Bois 1997:119), a concept that stands for ‘many things to many people’ (Narayan and Pritchett, 1997:2; Portes, 1998).

4.0 Statement of the Problem

The dilemma with working with children and families is between compassion and control: between supporting parents and investigating them as abusers, preserving families versus rescuing children. Bragg, (2003) observed that to a large extent today, the different agencies working together in crime prevention and to meet the needs of children exposed to domestic violence have very different levels of awareness and discourses or understanding of domestic violence. Cleaver, Nicholson, Tarr and Sukey (2007) state that traditional policing practices are mainly paying attention to detaining and collecting evidence on perpetrators, while, ignoring the service needs of these children exposed to domestic violence. In contrast, the Social Services is dominated by a compassion–oriented model and the ultimate principle is that, intervention to domestic violence ought to concentrate on restorative oriented social and individual actions (Gelles, 1997). While the Social health sector is dominated by a medical model, seeing domestic violence in relation to health and illness, inclusive of mental as well as physical health consequently, all these differences lead to poor collaboration and coordination, especially in cases which require services from both children’s and adult services, such as agencies working with parents experiencing domestic violence and substance misuse (Bragg, 1993).

The primary relationship between the Police and the Social Services is that they are both responsive towards needy people and as a consequence, both accomplish a vital social
service role. However, there are substantial discrepancies in the connotation and the crucial importance of the social service errands in the day to day procedures of these agencies, their expertise philosophy, their operational ethos, and the manner in which they relate with clients, and the aftermath by which accomplishment is evaluated. Hence to a large degree the Police and the Social Services work individually and are mostly devoted to their own managerial actions, philosophies and principles (Holdaway, 1986).

Smith, et al., (2001) maintain that the philosophy of partnership is dependent on looking beyond investigation and arrest and including law enforcement in serving the needs of citizens. However as already stated above, the dilemma with realizing this philosophy is between compassion and control. In this regard, compassion and control represented the theoretical phenomenon of the study which was incorporated into more empirical phenomenon through the research question of establishing what kind of working relationships exist between the Police and the Social Services. That is, how do the two agencies collaborate despite the differences in ideologies?

4.1 Aim of the study

In crime prevention it requires recognition of the interdependence between legal criminal and social intervention oriented institutions in general, and police and social work in particular (Danis, 2003). Integration of such kind can be achieved together with a variety of approaches stretching from control to compassion. Consequently the study’s research aim which sought to explore the interagency collaboration between the Police (Polisen) and the Social Services (Socialtjänsten) to meet the needs of children exposed to domestic violence.
5.0 Research Questions

The study sought to reveal current practices through partnerships in Sweden aimed at helping children exposed to domestic violence. The following research questions were formulated to address the partnerships between the Social Services (Socialtjänsten) and the Police (Polisen).

- What types of working partnerships are being formed between the Police (Polisen) and the Social Services (Socialtjänsten) to meet the needs of children exposed to domestic violence? What are the goals of various approaches? What resources are needed to implement different approaches?
- Identify the factors that enable different agencies to work successfully together at the various stages of assessment, planning, service delivery and review.
- How does children’s social service respond to families where problems require the intervention by both adult and children services?
- To what extent are law enforcement departments working with community providers to help children exposed to domestic violence?

6.0 Multi-method Research Design

This section illustrates the research design, data collection methods, study area and population. It explains the sampling procedure and techniques used for selecting the sample. Specific methods of data collection, interpretation and analysis are comprehensive. As well as, anticipated ethical dilemmas were acknowledged and given due consideration.

A mixed research method (Polit & Beck 2006) was found most suitable for this study given the fact that many areas of inquiry were enriched and the evidence base enhanced through the judicious separate complementary analysis processing of qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative research addressed questions surrounding the nature of
partnerships between the multiple agencies, how or why they exist, and appraising ways in which different forms of partnerships or collaborative intervention can be made most effective. Meanwhile quantitative research was concerned with the measurement of levels of how law enforcement departments in Sweden nationwide respond to children exposed to domestic violence. In other words, both the aims and the outputs were of a quite different nature and that is what made their combined use so powerful. One of the advantages of mixed research method as pointed out by Polit & Beck (2006) is that they are complimentary that is, they represent words and numbers, which are the two essential languages of human communication thus preventing the restrictions of a single method. This is also supported by King, Keohane and Verba (1994) argument that qualitative and quantitative methods are not opposites but two styles using a single logic of inference.

6.1 Quantitative Method

A non probability sampling procedure (Polit & Beck 2006) was used, where by the mail survey was sent to all the 21 Police counties in Sweden. Special efforts were taken to obtain a high response rate. First, the survey was kept short with only two pages and formatted in a style easy to complete. Second, the survey was attached on a personalized letter explaining the intent of the survey and the importance of completing it, with the research supervisor’s contacts as a point of reference. The mail survey was originally sent as an email, but the response turned out to be very poor, eight out of twenty one counties had responded after six weeks and five out of the eight responded using ordinary mail. Further efforts were taken to obtain a higher response. First, phone calls were made to each of the counties to acknowledge receipt of the questionnaires. Still, after a week there was no response then, a personalized letter and a copy of the survey questionnaire was sent to all the county police commissioners explaining the intent of the survey and the importance of completing it and also enclosed a stamped return envelope. Thus a high response was achieved that is, 19 counties responded out of 21 coming to 90.5 percent.
6.1.1 Quantitative Data Analysis

The quantitative data was analysed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) which is a statistical analysis and data management software package (Wellman, 1998). The data collected from the survey questionnaires was then generated into descriptive statistics. The national mail survey was intended to learn how law enforcement departments respond to children exposed to domestic violence because children exposed to domestic violence have been referred to as ‘forgotten victims or silent victims’ and thus often fall through the cracks of the system (Smith, Nickles, Mulmat and Davies, 2001:7). Besides, whereas a lot has been written about the function of protective services, the response of Police, who is often the first to get to the scene of crime, has received much less attention. In spite of the fact that education and preventive intervention programs involving the Police are very much desired (Garbarino, 1992). Services too, are frequently directed towards the domestic violence victim and the perpetrator nevertheless, the vulnerable children can be helped through early intervention, which is a powerful tool that can be used to set their lives back together and also break the cycle of violence (Smith, Nickles, Mulmat and Davies, 2001:7).

6.2 Qualitative Method

Semi structured interviews (Polit & Beck 2006) were used and they provided in-depth understanding of the coordinated response by multi agencies towards children exposed to domestic violence. The semi structured interviews combined both structure (with some sense of themes that were explored) and flexibility (Polit & Beck 2006). Thus the method gave participants a direct and explicit opportunity to convey their own meanings and interpretations through the explanations they provided that were spontaneous. The method also allowed responses to be fully probed and explored. In order to ensure factual accuracy and avoid falsification, fabrication, suppression or misinterpretation of data, the interviews were recorded and transcribed word to word. A combined process of audio-taping and writing field notes was used.
6.2.1 Study Area and Population

The criterion used for the choice of study area was based on stratified purposive and convenience sampling (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). That is a hybrid approach in which the aim was to select groups that display variation on population density and multi-agency approach towards children exposed to domestic violence but each of which were fairly homogeneous, so that they could be compared (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The research was conducted in Sweden in two case study sites that were also most convenient with regard to ease of access. Two sites were chosen, that is, one municipality in Stockholm County (City A municipality) and another municipality in a small city in Sweden (City B municipality). Stockholm being the capital city was chosen. However, due to lack of resources like money and time the research only covered one Police district out of the eight districts in Stockholm County. The small city was chosen to provide a comparison of approaches used in the big city and a small city. Right from the beginning, the study population was made up of two categories of respondents. First, social secretaries in Social Services working with domestic violence issues, second, Police officers in charge of domestic violence particularly with children.

6.2.2 Sample Size and Selection

In the beginning the sample size was planned for about six respondents, four social secretaries in Social Services and two Police officers from the respective municipalities but due to the differences in the management structures of the different municipalities under study, the sample size was made up of five respondents; a social sekreterare (secretary) City A municipality Socialtjänsten (Social Services), a Child Advocacy Centre (Barnahus) coordinator in City A municipality Police station, a Police officer in City B municipality, a social sekreterare (secretary) in City B municipality and a domestic violence coordinator in City B municipality. The Barnahus coordinator at the Police station in City A municipality served as both coordinator and Police officer informant. Efforts were made to include more respondents, like more social secretaries, Police officers; unfortunately most of them were not willing to be interviewed in English.
and apparently the representatives in the partnerships constituted very few professionals from each organisation so that contributed to the small sample size as well. The Coordinators of domestic violence issues in both cities were both chosen out of snowballing or chain sampling. That is, they were suggested by professionals in Social Services who felt that, the coordinators would provide the richest and most relevant information for the study since the research was about the coordinated efforts of multi agencies towards children exposed to domestic violence. A decision was made to interview the same respondents again and explore deeper in the research questions.

**6.2.3 Qualitative Data Analysis**

The procedure of the qualitative data analysis begun with a verbatim transcription of the recorded interviews; which is basically a word-for-word reproduction of audio taped data into written text (Bryman, 2004, Poland, 1995). The audiotapes were reviewed in consultation with the field notes taken during the interviews. Besides, spoken words, numerous critics have argued as to what extent nonverbal signals for example body language, pauses or silences and demonstrative feelings and intuition expressions like crying, coughs, and sighs should be integrated into transcribed text (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009; MacLean, Meyer, and Estable, 2004; Wellard and McKenna, 2001;)

The gist here is that one has a choice to decide what details to include and not to. To prevent the possibility of misapprehension of original responses, there were no amendments made in the transcripts because the goal was to analyze the subject matter rather than the array of the narratives. After the transcription followed the categorization of data, categorization or classification data plays a vital role in analysis. It entails apportioning the data as well as allocating groups (Dey, 1993). Categories are marks or labels for apportioning divisions of connotation to the narrative information collected during a study. Categories normally are put together to portions of varying-sized words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs, related or unrelated to a particular situation in form of for example, a description (Miles and Huberman, 1994).
A similar procedure was used in the analysis of qualitative data in this study, where by key themes, concepts or categories were established by scrutinizing transcribed texts for related subject matter and constant features. The nature of these concepts and the way they were generated was based on language and terms used by the participants known as ‘in vivo’ concepts (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003:203) Others were chosen through concepts that captured the structure of an account as in discourse or conversational analysis and other terms were influenced by the study’s theoretical reference of social capital. The study’s initial tags were rather loosely defined and mundane, based on participants’ own terms, which gave a general reference to empirical instances, later developed into more analytical, definitive concepts by aid of the clear definition of attributes or fixed bench marks (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Given that multi-agency collaborative partnerships were seen as a social capital phenomenon that covers the ‘norms and networks facilitating collective actions for mutual benefits.’(Woolcock, 1998, p 155); this choice of analysis would provide a clear and realistic understanding of the given phenomena from different dimensions. A review of the field notes taken during interviews also helped to expand on the initial impressions of the interaction with more considered comments and perceptions to draw out common themes between interactions.

6.3 Research Ethics

The research study followed the following research criteria as accorded by the Swedish Research Council’s ethical principles for research in the humanities and social sciences (Forskningsetiska principer inomhumanistisk-samhällsvetenskaplig forskning);

The research criterion, that is, the research involved must be important and of a high quality which, in this case the aim of the study was to explore the working relationships between multiple agencies to meet the needs of children exposed to domestic violence (www.vr.se).
The criterion of right to Self-Determination- Sample members gave consent to their participation in the research study. In addition they were provided with information about how the data would be used, what participation was required of them and how long the interviews would take. Whether participants would be identified or comments attributed to them in any report should be made clear. They were also made aware that the research was voluntary and that they had a right to ask questions, to refuse to give information and to withdraw their participation any time. This consent was documented by having participants sign a consent form (www.nr.se; Polit & Beck, 2006).

The criterion of right to Full Disclosure- Participants were informed about the objectives of the study stipulating how data may be used, and the right to refuse to participate, the researcher’s responsibilities, and likely risks and benefits. Each one of the participants was promised a copy of the project report and they still have a right to withdraw from participation even at that stage. A risk and benefit assessment was conducted to determine whether the risk-benefit ratio was acceptable (www.nr.se; Polit & Beck, 2006).

The criterion of right to Privacy- the primary focus of the Swedish research ethics (forskningsetik) are issues relating to how researchers take into account and protect the interests of participants, informants, subjects and others affected by their research. Research ethics in that sense is concerned, for example, with how human subjects are selected, what information is provided and how, how participation affects participants during the project and on its completion, and how publication may affect participants, as well as with questions relating to third parties, for instance regarding information, publication and how such parties may be affected. The proposed conditions for anonymity and confidentiality were given particular thought, and made very clear to participants. No names were mentioned or any personal information that could be used to identify them as individuals and even when the interviews were recorded, the focus of interest was put on the content as opposed to the author of the content, likewise avoiding the attribution of comments, in reports or presentations, to identified participants and lastly since the research was conducted for academic reason – this was equally known to
all participants. The recordings would be destroyed after the final submission of the
degree report. A promise of confidentiality was guaranteed, and that any information
provided would not be publicly reported in a manner that identifies the participants
(www.vr.se; Polit & Beck, 2006).

The semi structured interviews in this case put into consideration the professional
integrity with respect for national and international law. This also helped to avoid any
unwarranted material gain or loss for any participants thus all data was treated with
appropriate confidentiality and anonymity. Lastly due to the sensitivity of the study
especially regarding participants, regular documentation of research was carried out
because, without proper records and retention of source data, it can be more difficult to
respond to allegations of research misconduct and to clear a researcher’s name
(www.vr.se).

7.0 Results and Analysis

To provide a more complete picture of the collaboration between the Police and the
Social Services, the results and analysis are presented using both qualitative and
quantitative data. An approach inspired by the grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss,
1967) was used for the qualitative data analysis and during the transcription process, the
following themes emerged;

- Child perspective in focus
- Communication and informational potential
- Obligations and the notion of ‘working together’
- Norms, effective sanctions and mismatch in laws
- Authority relations
- Social networks and acquaintances
The nature of these concepts and the way they were generated was based on the language and terms used by the participants, and others terms influenced by the literature.

### 7.1 Child Perspective in Focus

This section presents findings on the child perspective notion, analysed basing on approaches such as Barnahus system, Sirius/Glimten, Särskild företrädare (child representative) Police child interrogator and the Police involvement in meeting the needs of children exposed to domestic violence.

A child perspective in this context refers to child-friendly treatment, attitudes and measures based on the adults’ knowledge about children’s views, which means what the child sees, hears, experiences and feels (Andersson and Rasmusson 2006 in Rasmusson 2010). Children exposed to domestic violence have often been referred to as the ‘forgotten victims’ because their voices and experiences have been silenced and ignored for a long time in practice as well as in research. It has often been impossible to hear the needs and care of children exposed to domestic violence and reactions from professionals have been incoherent. Children have not often been given a chance to tell their own experiences of victimization (Neerosh and Goddard 2006).

In practice, crime investigations involve multiple investigating agencies, every so often lacking coordination, which could excessively cause additional trauma and aggravate the victims’ stress (Rasmusson 2010). Consequently in an effort for Stockholm County to develop more child–friendly environments, the respondents in City A Municipality revealed that in 2009, a decision was taken to open up six more Barnahus (Child Advocacy Centres) and City A Municipality was one of them. The respondents in City A revealed that a Barnahus is a child-friendly, interdisciplinary and multiagency centre whereby different professionals work under one roof in the investigation of any kind of child abuse. In City A municipality, it is a result of a partnership, among others between the Police, Social Services, Hospital, the state prosecution (Åklagarmyndigheten), Brottsofferjouren (BOJ), Victim Support and Women Shelters. The Barnahus is also
another factor that makes multi agencies effectively work together from a child perspective.

In other words a Barnahus stands for a movement of advocates representing and defending children’s interest, practiced by adults with different expertise (Reynaert, D., Bouverne-de-Bie, M., & Vandevelde, S. 2009). One respondent noted that;

‘the basic concept of the Barnahus is to prevent subjecting the child to repeated interviews by many agencies in different locations which are often not even child friendly and traumatizing to the child.’

Portrayed here is the importance to offer a child – friendly environment, under the same roof, for the forensic interviews, medical examination and support which includes work for as well as together with children. This substantiates the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted by the United Nations in 1989, that have played a significant influence on promotion of a child—perspective approach in research, legislation, policy making and different measures taken to realize children’s rights (Reynaert et al. 2009).

The Barnahus system brings together the work of multidisciplinary investigation teams in anticipation that greater collaboration will improve the way cases are handled and make it easier for children and parents to get adequate help without moving around shopping for help. Services such as therapeutic interventions and support for children and families among others are offered. Professionals included are social workers, school counsellors, paediatricians, medical examiners, psychologists, psychiatrists, police, prosecutors and other people working with the legal and court systems but their response vary depending on the character and reason to be handled in the case (Rasmusson 2010).

Further efforts are observed to make sure that children feel safe during the investigation for example, a respondent pointed out that;
‘I contact the school or preschool where the child is going to make sure that the child gets a person from school, who can follow the child to the Barnahus so that the child feels safe during the interrogation’.

The findings revealed that the parents are never informed when the child is going to be interrogated because in most cases they are considered suspects of the crime and thus could silence the child or even do further abuse to the child or keep the child away from school. Similarly another noted that;

‘We see that the child gets a person from school to accompany the child to the Police station because we don’t know the child and neither do the Police. So the child has to have a safe person to accompany her or him to the Police station for interrogation.’

On the contrary, the system of Barnahus in City B municipality does not exist, consequently a child has to be interrogated separately by different agencies and tell their stories as many times as maybe required. Commenting on this one respondent observed that;

‘Well, the need has not occurred yet, we have high results and they haven’t felt that the need has occurred yet. The cooperation between the attorney and Police is working very well so far, so there is no need for the Barnahus right now.’

With regard to the child perspective the respondent noted that;

‘but between the Social Services and Police, we all do our part, just because they (other counties) sit down together and discuss something for the child does not mean that it automatically becomes better for the child. For me it’s only a matter of [ ], a way to make things work, not all that have those Barnahus have it better. I have earlier worked in another county in Sweden, and they were not especially happy
about their Barnahus, so it can be good but it does not necessarily mean it becomes better.’

The findings revealed that in City B municipality their way of a multidisciplinary specialist assessment team (SATS) is called ‘Samråd’ meaning consultations. Samråd is composed of the district attorney, a representative from Barn och Ungdomspsykiatri (BUP) Child and Youth Psychiatry, a Police officer who works with children or such cases, a social worker supervisor, and a social worker who is going to work with the case. The supervisor has to decide if the case should be reported to the Police or if it is best not to because, according to Socialtjänstlagen (Social Services Act) it says that the Social Services does not have to report every case to the Police, but they should if it’s the best for the child to get rid of the problem. Something that was kind of equated to a Barnahus one respondent noted that;

‘We do not have a Barnahus here, but we have Sirius/Glimten and they work closely with the family but the Police are not involved in this Sirius/Glimten.’

‘Sirius/Glimten’ is a collaboration between City B municipality and the county municipalities. It is a place where children exposed to family violence can go and have an opportunity to talk individually with an adult about what they have been through and how they feel. Children also get an opportunity to share their experiences with other children who have gone through the same.

Findings further revealed that the Social Services always do their own investigations and see what they can do for the child. The Social Services also does a follow up and takes responsibility of the welfare of the child. As soon as the Social Services report something to the Police, they (Social Services) open an investigation and even if they (the Social Services) decide not to report to the Police, they always do an investigation to assess the child’s needs.
In an argument for not supporting the system of a Barnahus one respondent noted that;

‘the problem with the Barnahus like for example in the other county where I previously worked, when the Barnahus started, the connection between the Police and Social Services become worse because it was so formal instead and more cases or charges came in that maybe should not have come in, that Social Services should have done something before they brought it to the Police and so on. So, it is difficult to know the best way, I think the way here works here but Barnahus can be good also. Nevertheless, the perspective of the child, every agency should have it otherwise it will not be good. Just because they are under the same roof, does not mean it is much better because we have the perspective of the child here and it works.’

This is a clear demonstration of some of the challenges in coordinating the two separate sets of rules governing the different authorities in cooperation.

Similarly in both municipalities during the child investigation, findings revealed that the child is entitled to a ‘särskild företrädare’ that is a special representative for children who are under 18 and victims of crime by a relative. The särskild företrädare represents the child during the investigation and the subsequent trial. The särskild företrädare is like a lawyer or legal guardian for the child and she or he makes sure that the child’s rights are being looked after in a rightful way according to the law.

In cases where problems require the intervention by both adult and children services all respondents from both municipalities revealed that the adult and child will each be assigned a different Police interrogator. The child will specifically be assigned a Police child interrogator with special skills on such crimes. Police officers are trained on how to conduct investigation and talking to children, often with a video recording of the interview. Nevertheless, in City B municipality there is a gap in the Police department’s response to children exposed to domestic violence because there are few officers
educated to handle such cases. All Police officers should have a basic knowledge regarding domestic violence issues because everybody can be like the one responding to a call and, of late all new Police officers graduating from the Police academy are trained in domestic violence issues. It’s important for the Police to have good knowledge of what to do, where to turn to and the resources available in the area. Findings further revealed that if the Police arrive at the crime scene first, the officers will describe the services available at the women’s crisis centre and explain the effects of domestic violence on children to the non offending parent. They also give the parent a brochure that explains the effects of domestic violence on children and how to get help from various helping agencies. This was also complemented by the findings from the national survey below.

Do officers have any pamphlets, cards, or other materials to hand out to parents that explain what the helping agency / agencies do or how to contact them?

Table 1  
Give out pamphlets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If Police officers are the first ones to respond to the scene of crime, 8 counties said they give out pamphlets, cards or other materials to parents that explain what services are available from various helping agencies and how to contact them. While the majority 11 counties said they do not give out any material.

Is there a policy or protocol that requires Police Officers responding to domestic violence cases to investigate if any children were exposed to domestic violence so that no child falls in the cracks of the system?

Table 2  
Presence of Policy or protocol on violence
If yes, under what circumstances would officers ask if children were exposed?

**Table 3 under what circumstances?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everytime they respond</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only if children are present</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only if there is some evidence of children</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It depends</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18 out of the 19 Police departments that responded indicated that they have a policy or protocol that requires officers to investigate whether any children were exposed to domestic violence and only 1 Police department out of the 19 indicated that they did not have a policy in place. Under what circumstances would officers investigate to determine if children were exposed to domestic violence? Most respondents that is, 11 counties said they would investigate every time an officer responds to a domestic violence scene. While 4 counties said officers would investigate only if there was some evidence of children (for example cribs, shoes, toys, clothes etc) residing in the house. 2
counties said officers would investigate only if children were present when the officers arrived. Only 1 county said it would depend but not specifying under what condition and also 1 county did not have to answer this question, since they did not have a policy in place.

Does follow-up occur with the non-offending parent to see if services are obtained or whether further help is needed?

Table 4  Follow up with non offending parents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of the Police departments that is, 16 counties do not follow up on non-offending parents to see if services are obtained or whether further help is needed that is the responsibility of the Social Services. However, a minority of 3 counties said they do follow up on non-offending parents.

However findings from the semi structured interviews also revealed that children are not recognized as victims but only entitled to monetary funds regarding damages as a result of exposure to domestic violence. Social Service can make a decision on whether a child needs further support.

7.2 Communication and Informational Potential

This section presents findings on the importance of effective communication and information sharing analysed on the basis of both agencies having knowledge about each other’s business so as to be able to understand and appreciate each other’s competence in
the collaboration. Lack of knowledge about each other’s business also causes mistrust in each other’s competence.

All respondents in their description of the factor most important in building up effective partnerships, the professionals from all agencies stressed communication and informational potential. One respondent observed that;

‘Communication is very important in building up effective partnerships that is, through sharing of information everybody is able to recommend what to do next, who to turn to and how to help the victims.’

While another respondent also noted that;

‘We don’t think the same all the time, but they (Police) do their things and we (Social Services) do our things. And I cannot tell the Police they did wrong here because I don’t know their work.’

Portrayed here is the fact that there is lack of information sharing and knowledge about each other’s business. However one respondent observed that;

‘if a person actually has knowledge of what takes place in the other agency, she or he is then in a better position to understand why for example the Social Services cannot do that, or they did that because of this and that, and for Social Services to do this and that, the Police should give them this information before they can proceed to court. So it’s very important to have the Social Service knowledge at the Police station to be able to know why and what the Social Services requires from the Police and vice versa.’

Portrayed here is the fact that by sharing information and by being knowledgeable about each other’s business, partners are able to act independently in maintaining the
relationship over time. The easy accessibility of information that permits everyone to accomplish their errands more efficiently is related to augmented intensity of satisfaction and success of partnerships (Mohr and Spekman, 1994).

To solve the communication barriers between the Social Services and the Police, one respondent suggested that;

‘The Police should have a joint course with Social Services (the two major agencies in the collaboration) for each to understand the importance of each other’s competence, so as to have something in common which is right now lacking. The absolute best thing to do is that during training in their respective professionals they should have a course or training in each other’s law to get a glimpse of each other’s law and tasks. This will help in understanding and communicating each other’s limitations and be able to work together to bridge the gaps.’

City A municipality has taken a step to solve the problem of coordination and information sharing. Findings revealed that a social secretary with eight years’ experience in Social Services has been recruited as the Barnahus coordinator. This new recruit is now based at the Police department and getting the Police way of working through every meeting. With the skills and experience in the Social Services, this new recruit is in a better position to understand why Police and Social Services are talking passed each other because of lack of knowledge of each other’s business. In Stockholm County there are eight different Police Districts and Barnahus and they all work differently. City A municipality is the only municipality in Stockholm County with a Barnahus coordinator, that is actually sitting at the Police station and having the Social Services in the back and that’s brilliant because it helps to share knowledge which is the power of every successful partnership. This substantiates Mohr and Spekman (1994)’s argument that communication seizes the benefits of information substituted and is considered to be essential for the partnership’s vitality.
Lack of Trust in each others’ competence was another factor discovered as a hindrance to effective collaboration between the Police and the Social Services. Pruitt, 1981 in Mohr and Spekman, 1994 argues that trust is extremely correlated to an organization’s wishes to cooperate. As one respondent expressed that;

‘The main problem between the Police and Social Services is lack of communication and trust in each other’s competence.’

The above findings about lack of knowledge in each other’s business and trust in each other’s competence are supported by Shklar, (1984) in Gambetta, (2000) contention that the state of being unaware or uncertain about other people’s actions is vital to the concept of trust. It is linked to the confines of our ability to attain a full understanding of others, their intentions, their reactions to changes produced from within and outside. Trust is a cautious and fundamentally delicate reaction to our lack of knowledge, a way of dealing with the inability to envisage possible future problems or obstacles. Whilst (Zand, 1972 in Mohr and Spekman, 1994) contends that lack of trust will be harmful to information exchange, to the cooperation interchange of influence, and will bring a decline in the effectiveness of combined problem solving. To add weight to the above Anderson and Narus, (1990) in Mohr and Spekman, (1994) propose that once there is acknowledged trust, organizations discover that combined efforts will realize into effects that surpass what each organization would attain if undertaken exclusively in its own best interest.

7.3 Obligations and the notion of ‘working together’

This section presents findings on obligations and the notion of ‘working together’ as accorded by the Swedish law. It also presents findings about the aim of working together by different agencies.

The notion of ‘working together’ and joined up thinking is embedded in social work and social care discourses in Sweden. It was discovered that according to the Swedish law the
Social service is obliged to work together with other agencies to meet the needs of victims of domestic violence. The Social Services spear heads the collaboration because by law they are obliged to work with other agencies. According to the Socialtjänstlagen (Social Services Act) they must take contacts with other agencies to help victims of domestic violence and all employees in agencies whose activities affect children and adolescents are required to immediately notify Social Services if they are aware of something that may mean that Social Services should intervene to a minor’s protection. The obligation to report to Social Services is imperative and will be done without delay as accorded by chapter 14:1 in the Social Services Act (2001:453). As one respondent noted that;

‘If it is the Police that first identify the incidence of domestic violence, they send a report to Social Services called 14 kap. 1§ SOL. The Police are obliged to report to Social Services any signs of child abuse in a place of crime. They have to report that there is a child who might be in danger.’

The above findings were also complemented by the national survey results presented below.

How do officers respond when they discover children are exposed to domestic violence?
Table 5  
**Nature of response**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notify CPS</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referral to non offending parent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use other interventions</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>referral &amp; phone helping</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notify, referral &amp; phone helping</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notify &amp; referral</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notify &amp; intervene another way</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>notify, referral, call agency, on scene with agency</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>call agency, respond with agency</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What do officers do when they learn that children were exposed to domestic violence? The most common response, given by 9 respondents, was that they notify Social Services. In descending order of frequency, other answers had combined choices that is; notify Social Services, give a referral to the non offending parent to Social Services plus call a helping agency on the phone received 2 responses; give a referral and phone a helping agency also received 2; notify Social Services to respond to the scene plus give a referral to the non offending parent to Social Services received 1 response; notify Social Services to respond to the scene plus intervene in another way also received 1 response; notify Social Services to respond to the scene, give a referral to the none offending parent to Social Services, call a helping agency on the phone plus respond to the scene with a helping agency also received 1 response; call a helping agency on the phone plus respond to the scene with a helping agency also received 1 response; give a referral to the none offending parent to Social Services only received 1 response; and lastly intervene in another way only received 1 response.

How often are officers accompanied, or joined by a helping agency, at the scene?
Table 6  
Accompanied or joined by helping agency at the scene

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit advocates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School counsellors</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other agencies</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the results above, only 1 out of the respondents in the 19 counties is ‘always’ accompanied or joined by a helping agency at the scene of crime. School counselors ‘often’ accompany Police officers at the scene of crime with 1 response. Social Services got the highest frequency ‘sometimes’ accompany or join Police officers at the scene of crime by 8 responses. Non-profit victim advocates ‘sometimes’ accompany officers by 3 responses. While School counselors ‘sometimes’ accompany officers at the crime scene by only 1 response, other agencies accompany officers at the crime scene by 4 responses. Social Services ‘seldom’ accompany officers at the crime scene by 9 responses. While Non-profit advocates ‘seldom’ accompany officers by 4 responses. School counselors ‘seldom’ accompany or join officers at scene of crime by 3 responses and other agencies ‘seldom accompany officers by 8 responses. Social Services ‘never’ accompany officers at the crime scene by only 1 response. While Non-profit advocates ‘never’ accompany Police officers by 12 responses. School counselors received the highest frequency ‘never’ to accompany officers at the crime scene by 14 responses and other agencies ‘never’ accompany officers to the crime scene by 7 responses. So this shows that the collaboration is mostly between Social Services and the Police.

In City B Municipality it was discovered particularly that when the Social Services receives a report (SOL 14) from the Police, the Social Services will have to do ‘förhandbedömning’ (preliminary assessment) and if they think that they should carry on with the investigation, they can do a house call or call in other agencies. It depends on
what information they get a head in the report. The Social Services also checks if they have prior reports on the family related to any kind of violence. If it is an anonymous letter to Social Services and they see that a child has been a victim of crime they report the matter to the Police immediately to do a crime investigation. In cases where the school or day-care or an anonymous person phones the Social Services, then the Social Services will contact the attorney and they will have a meeting that is, the Social Services, Police, Children Psychiatrist and anonymously talk about the case without revealing who the child victim is. The supervisor of the domestic violence issues in Social Services has the responsibility to decide whether to make a Police report.

The relations between the multi-agencies are also influenced through a design bound by a contract, which is a set of beliefs regarding mutual obligations between various agencies. A contract ensues a deal made between two or more parties, and there is a rationale behind every deal. A deal is a way of passing on values between parties. If possible, the trust between partners is diffused through their affiliation and relations. Hence, contracts should be considered as the first measure with regard to longer-term, productive, and equally beneficial relationships (Mahoney, and Krattiger, 2007). It was discovered that in City A municipality, through a contract, the Social Services, Preschools, Schools, Police, Hospital, the state prosecution (Åklagarmyndigheten), Brottofferjouren (BOJ), Victim Support and Women Shelters work together to stop and also meet the needs of victims of domestic violence. There is a collaboration plan drawn from the relevant authorities and organizations stating the procedures and clarification of how cooperation between authorities and NGOs (Non Governmental Organisations) should work to accommodate the needs of abused women and children. The aim of the collaboration is that victims of domestic violence can get support and protection through a holistic approach in which the efforts of agencies and organizations complement each other. This cooperation and collaboration between authorities and non-government organizations has been in existence since 2003 in City A municipality. The plan for collaboration is followed up and revised annually. Whilst in City B Municipality the government officials, the Police, the Social Services, and the hospital in City B county have all agreed and signed a
contract to work together to stop and help victims of violence. They are all committed to each other and always turn up for meetings when there is a child abuse suspect.

All respondents in both municipalities noted that the motivation for a coordinated approach was due to the fact that Social Services alone could not sufficiently meet the needs of victims of domestic violence. Violence against women and children affects both judicial and social institutions such as health care and several other agencies. In addition one respondent noted that;

‘the primary objective in using a coordinated response is to see the whole picture and nothing falls in between and to decide who does what, to make sure that responsibilities lie with the right people with the right competence and avoiding duplication of services.’

Whilst another one contented that;

‘the reason for multi-agencies working together is of course to make it, so that the children will have the best possible care, that they will be helped in the best way possible and of course that means we have to cooperate giving information to each other and so on and also to coordinate when we speak to the children so that they don’t have to meet too many persons.’

Besides the Barnahus in City A municipality, the working together through a multidisciplinary approach also amount to other joined activities with established multidisciplinary specialist assessment team (SATS) like; Support and Health (Stöd & Hälsa), an organization with inter-professional competence, consisting of doctors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, speech therapists and teachers with different expertise, a total of approximately 60 people. Support and Health works for a positive all-inclusive approach, based on psychological, physical and social well-being in collaboration with respective preschool and school managers and staff. The goal is to be able to, through a
heightened attention level, discover violence at an early stage and play a part in preventing further violence and to provide adequate support to vulnerable families. Support and Health representatives in collaboration with other staff of the Liaison Group activities work hand in hand at various preschools and schools for early detection of abuse, rapid intervention and legal aid.

This substantiates Huxham and Vangen’s (2005) notion of collaborative advantage based on the concept of working together for greater success, integrating the resources and expertise of one organisation with that of another can achieve collaborative advantage. By pooling the technical knowledge, for example, of one organisation with the product design skills of another, both organisations can achieve something neither could have accomplished on their own. A good example of how this works in practice according to Huxham and Vangen (2005) is the Government’s Every Child Matters project, that is altogether various agencies concerned with providing services to children - from hospitals and schools to Police and voluntary groups - are working in new ways, in a partnership, to safeguard children and young people from harm and help them achieve their needs.

### 7.4 Norms, effective sanctions and mismatch in laws

This section presents findings on the differences between the Social Services and the Police basing on ideologies, decision making, and laws that do not really connect thus causing problems in the collaboration. However, these challenges can be overcome through; agreeing to focus on one thing, partnerships to start off as a long term process, full participation by all partners, and avoid prestige and respect the importance of each other’s competence in the collaboration.

The laws between the Police and the Social Services are very vital with regard to child protection, however all professionals in both municipalities noted that the practice or laws of each organization were quite different, at least in the way resolutions were
reached. One respondent gave a good illustration of the problem between the two agencies;

‘in every case where there is a child involved, everybody thinks that that’s terrible and everybody thinks that it’s really hard and everyone wants something to happen to this child but everybody is really into their own law and what they can do and they know where their own law fails them and yet they expect someone else to do something. So the Police wants the Social Services to do something because the Police know where their law fails them and vice versa thus, putting too much expectation on each other. As a result, if the other organization does not live up to the other’s expectation that’s where the mismatch is, except in cases where they actually can say, ‘Hey! Listen, I know that this is terrible as well but I cannot do anything anymore can we work together’ that’s when it actually becomes brilliant because I think that the Social Services and Police law do not really connect. I think communication above all is very important.’

Another respondent also expressed in this dilemma between the Social Services and the Police laws by noting that;

‘Well, one understands their (Social Services) situation, they have [ ], their decision making is quite different from ours. Sometimes you feel that the Social Services should do more but at the same time you understand that it is difficult.’

In other words, this is a clear demonstration of some of the challenges in coordinating the two separate sets of rules governing the different authorities in cooperation. However, Butterfoss (1997) in Lasker, Weiss and Miller (2001) argues that to build effective partnerships from such multidiscipline, partnerships require a course of action that utilizes different perspectives, resources, and skills consequently the group, as a whole can acquire improved techniques of handling problems. This is one of the utmost challenges of partnerships, as multiplicity can be a conduit for friction and strife.
The findings revealed that the Social Services law and Police law do not connect; they are two different laws that are not really working together. A typical example of mismatch in the two laws, as already noted the Police during their investigation according to their law, what they are looking for is proof, whether this is a crime or not. In cases where the Police can actually do something about the crime is when the child can explain, thoroughly like, ‘he hits me on the arm, five times in summer, and I got a bruise.’ It’s called rekbevis. In order to avoid convicting innocent people, there must be real evidence to do something within the crime laws. So there must be a certain amount of prove before something can be done and that’s hard because children usually don’t tell. Children often would rather protect their parents from going to jail and oftentimes children are cautioned by their parents not to reveal what happens at home to outsiders and, when that happens and they are not willing to disclose anything, the Police is forced to drop the case because according to the Police law, they have no evidence to prove that there is a crime and then it falls on Social Services alone. However, there is a problem when that happens, as one respondent noted that;

‘when the Police crime investigation fails, the Social Services’ leverage of force is limited, because if the Police cannot say that this is a crime, then Social Services cannot be as forceful because the parent can say ‘Hey! The crime investigation said it’s not a crime so I am not guilty’. Thus a child ends up being failed by both Social Services and the Police and thus continues living in abuse. The laws should be coordinated so that they can work together in cases where there is lack of concrete evidence there should be a way between to protect children who are suspected of being abused. The Police should have a leverage to say for example ‘my feeling is that something has happened here but we cannot actually convict the person’. Then the Social Services would start off from there, but unfortunately that does not exist in society because then the conviction would not be based on any concrete evidence. The problem with these kind of cases is that, these are dangerous areas the organizations are dealing in which, might either end up convicting a person who is innocent or failing a child that is getting abused at home, which is absolutely not good. But the
thing is you can’t just fake it, you need evidence so that’s the main problem and I don’t see how we are going to pass by that and that’s the real challenge.’

Findings further revealed that if the child refuses to cooperate with the Police in the crime investigation, the as Social Services then carry out their own investigation to see if there is something that they can do for the child. They can talk to the child, parents, school and people who know the family. In City B Municipality particularly it was observed that the Social Services often will introduce the child to Sirius Glimten to meet other children that have experienced the same things and being helped. The group treatment ‘Sirius Glimten’ has proved to be successful in helping children because they are working with a whole picture and the module being used is called Trappan. Or the Social Services can decide that the child should have a grown up person to meet and have some activities together or the parents to go to the family house (familjefrid) where they can talk about how to function together as a family. In cases where the situation is so bad then the Social Services can take the child away from home and place her or him in another family or institution.

It was also discovered that the different perspectives the two agencies have towards domestic violence cause a barrier in forming effective partnerships. For example the Police look at domestic violence as a crime, that is who is the victim and who is the perpetrator? On the contrary Social Services is looking at domestic violence from a familial welfare angle like, their social conditions for example their economic situation, and preserving the family environment. Whilst on the other hand the Child Psychiatric Unit is dominated by a medical model, seeing domestic violence in relation to the mental health of a child from being a victim of domestic violence. So divergence in goals between the different agencies makes it difficult to have an effective collaboration.

With regard to overcoming the differences between the respective agencies one respondent noted that;
‘In Sweden there is what is called ‘samsyn’ it means all agencies looking at the same thing regardless of where they all come from, that is for different agencies to work together they all have to look at the problem in the same way. However, it’s hard to work together when they all have different goals. That is why it’s important for all to agree about what to focus on. The partnerships should be a long term process, it should not start up as a project however, and it is difficult to convince the politicians to come up with a long term process budget.’

It was also discovered that in a partnership it is also very important to include everybody that is, the Police, Social Services, Health Services etc. All agencies need to respect the importance and role of each other in the fight against domestic violence because if there is lack of understanding then that’s when chaos arises. All agencies should have equal say in the partnership, they should avoid prestige and look at the whole picture and respond according to the unique individual needs of the victims. This is also substantiated by Lasker, Weiss and Miller (2001) contention that respect among partners is probable to be vital as it can be hard to envisage how partnerships can attain collaboration unless its partners recognize the value of the others’ input and point of view. Besides making sure that the views and actions of the group profit from the inputs of different partners, the cooperation procedure should as well utilize what each partner has to offer.

However, on the contrary, the difference in laws makes it impossible for the two agencies to have like equal partnerships in everything, as noted here by one respondent;

‘We don’t have equal partnerships because we have two different goals. In our goals we are dominant, they (Social Services) just do as they have been told and in their goals we don’t interfere. The Police concentrate on the crime. Our goal is to investigate if any crime has been committed. In the process of course we do it in the best way for the child. But the Social Services have the long term care. That’s a part that the Police has nothing to do with. How the child is being taken care of is none of
our business, that’s the Social Services. They have it all; we don’t have anything to say. They have to see, [ ] their focus is on the child, that the child will be taken care of in the long term and that is not our focus. However, the Social Services can use information that the parent is a suspect but we have no participation in those things regarding child protection matters. So we have [ ], it’s a partnership in getting information that way. That is regarding information sharing; then, it’s quite equal in that part.’

7.5 Authority relations

This section presents findings on the importance of having support from higher authority in building effective partnerships. The analysis is based on leaders’ capacity to manage and administer partnerships in terms of effective utilization of both time and human resources.

Participants in both municipalities also identified support from higher authorities as another important factor in building up effective partnerships. One respondent noted that;

‘It is very important to have support from the higher authority/bosses in the respective multi-agencies and also to understand everybody’s importance or role in the partnership.’

The leadership, administration and management, governance, and efficiency of partnerships are especially relevant in this regard, Lasker, Weiss, and Miller, (2001) argue that these aspects influence the competence of partnerships to earnestly commission an ideal combination of partners, set up an atmosphere that promotes good working relationships among partners, and merge the viewpoints, assets, and aptitudes of different partners. The administration and management of a partnership is what holds fast and enables multiple, independent people and organisations to work together. Partnerships that pursue intensified degrees of synergy necessitate methods that are more
adaptable and supportive. For example widespread distance, direction and planning, implementation, coordination of the partnership and supports are essential.

Lasker, Weiss and Miller (2001) argue that the degree to which a partnership’s kind of authority promotes collaboration may be revealed in its partners’ ease in the course of decision making, the extent to which its partners back up partnership resolutions, and the timeliness of the partnership’s resolutions. With regard to this, one respondent noted that;

‘time is one of the crucial resource needed in building effective partnerships, because everybody has so much to do (too much work load) thus time, and support from the bosses to understand that domestic violence issues should get high priority. For example, everybody should prioritize the importance of helping a child in a second. It should not be accepted that it takes a long time for Social Services, Police or Prosecutor to respond to children who are abused or witnessing family violence. The child should be a first priority to everybody.’

Whilst another respondent also observed that;

‘I think it takes too long time for the Police to do something. And when they don’t take up the case immediately, that is interrogating the child immediately, the parents usually prepare the child and say don’t say anything about our home situation. The reason for this delay is because there are very few Police officers trained for this kind of cases.’

Pertinent to this are the various ways in which efficiency maybe viewed and liable to effect the ability of partnerships to attain high degrees of collaboration. To mention but a few is the magnitude to which the partnerships utilize its partner’s financial resources, in-kind resources and time (Lasker, Weiss and Miller 2001).
7.6 Social networks and acquaintances

This section presents findings on the importance of social networks and acquaintances in building up effective partnerships. The analysis is based on getting to know each other very well and feeling free to talk without stepping on each other’s toes.

Granovetter (1973) mentions that in the scrutiny of social networks, it is recommended as a means for linking small and large levels of the sociological theory. He further argues that, the study of processes in interpersonal networks provides the most fruitful micro-macro bridge. In this research networking and acquaintances featured prominently as a vital element in bringing about effective partnerships between multi-agencies. For example in City A one element that the Barnahus coordinator has brought into the effectiveness of the partnership is that, the officer is the go between the Police and the Social Services, as already noted the officer is well acquainted with both organizations, so it’s easier for that officer to do like the whole ways of the work rather than individual agency staff sitting somewhere else and picking up the phone and talking to someone that they have never met. Due to the fact that this office is based at the Police station, she meets the Police officers everyday in the coffee room and every week she is at one of the Social Services offices, so she is well acquainted with everybody and so it is harder for each organization to blame and backstab each other because she is a go between and actually a person that they will meet and who connects both agencies.

Similarly in City B Municipality social networks between the respective agencies have been established as one respondent noted that:

‘you know, me and the district attorney, the Police officers in charge of such cases and the staff at the child and youth psychiatry, we have worked together for a long time, so we are kind of close, we know each other very well. Our relationships stretch a long way and are really good. We talk freely to each other and say what we think without stepping on each other’s toes.’
To add weight to the above, Granovetter (1973) contends that the power of a tie or personal contact is a mixture of the amount of time, the emotional strength, the closeness (mutual confiding), and the mutual services which typify the tie. Leana and Buren (1999) maintain that organisational ties do not have to be dense in order to be resilient but, instead may be weak in the frequency of interaction but made strong through association. Associability unites elements of sociability (the ability to cooperate with others) with a readiness to subordinate individual wishes to group objectives. Still, after harmonizing the different interests of organisations, the social unit must be able to realize those goals through collective action. Work ought to be divided and coordinated among members in a manner that guarantees that collective goals are attained. The presence of resilient, weak ties, actually, may reinforce the social capital within a system because it improves relations across subunits and consequently connects the system altogether. Thus, organisations strong in social capital will demonstrate resilient trust, even among individuals connected generally rather than personally. So in other words the long working relationships in City B Municipality has brought the respective agencies closer and helped to strengthen the partnerships. While on the other hand the Barnahus coordinator in City A bridges the gaps and coordinates between City A municipality Barnahus, Social Services and the Police in City A municipality based on personal contacts.

Granovetter (1973) also argues that personal contacts are crucial in whatever is to be permeated between network sectors. A person can be a link between two network sectors only if all his or her ties into one or both are weak, meaning those ties that go down to a personal level. As concisely maintained by Putman (1993: 175) that, ‘ironically... strong interpersonal ties (like kinship and intimate friendships) are less important than weak ties (like acquaintanceship and shared membership in secondary association) in maintaining community adherence and collective action. Burt (1997), for instance, observes that managers who bridge ‘structural holes’ enhance the personal reserves of social capital can also be of profit to their firms by means of their increased abilities to look for and find information that can help to get to the bottom of organizational problems. The
manager who is informed by means of his or her intra agency network may not only be more influential but also be more valuable to an organization by means of his or her potential to unite resources to solve problems (Krackhardt, 1990). In addition to this one respondent also noted that;

‘The personality of the coordinator is very important in building successful partnerships. That is the coordinator should be the kind of person who is pretty easy going and willing to step in all gaps. A coordinator should be the kind of person who enables everyone to do their assignments with ease. A coordinator should not be a prestigious person that is, should be the kind of person that goes down on everybody’s level, be acquainted with everybody in both agencies and have a rapport with everybody, where by everybody just feels free to come up to that person on her regular visits at their work places and say oh, it’s good that you are here today because I wanted to talk to you about this and that.’

It was discovered that the major task of such a coordinator is to be able to serve everybody with information; dates so that everything can just flow on. For example for every child interrogation that the coordinator plans, it takes probably 15 calls and 10 people to meet and talk to. Since this is one of the major tasks of the coordinator, she plans her day according to the number of interrogations for that day. When the coordinator receives reports from Social Services to the Police about child abuse between age of 0-18 or anything to do with family violence, the coordinator then contacts the district åklagare (prosecutor), Police and Social Services to see what kind of background the Social Services have with the family, or if they have been in contact with the Social Services before, concerning child abuse or any kind of family violence. The case is then allocated to an investigator and a prosecutor is contacted. Then the coordinator establishes what date the Social Services, prosecutor, Police are able to do an interrogation with the child. It is easier for the coordinator to quickly identify files that need child investigation and then talk to the prosecutor and establish dates when the prosecutor can be present for every child interrogation which is one of the crucial
elements so that the Police can work effectively right off because it’s the prosecutor that gives the direction in the Police errands.

Leana and Buren (1999) maintain that individual social capital enhancing performances profit the collective directly and the individual more indirectly. In addition, Burt (1997) observed that individually held social capital benefits not just the individual holding it but also the organization where such an individual is employed. This is conveyed in the findings in City A municipality, according to all respondents in City A municipality, since the introduction of the position of a Barnahus coordinator in September 2010, the feedback from everybody is like, the Social Services, the Police and prosecutor, today they are all more content, they feel that the partnership works easier, it’s easier to deal with one person who coordinates with other agencies. It is harder if each agency is to directly contact the other, it can take a week before they can actually get hold of each other due to the fact that there are other tasks assigned to those officials and in most cases each one of them will just end up talking to the answering machine of the other one.

However, in case of City A municipality the coordinator, is always available on her cellular phone, they only need to call her and tell her like for example Social Services needs to know this and that, and it’s easier for her to get hold of the Police officer in the hallway (because she is based at the Police station) and ask and immediately respond back to the Social Services. It saves time, thus leading to the effective response to the needs of children who are victims of abuse. In addition the children have benefitted from having a coordinator in this partnership because there is one person that is assigned the task of minimizing the risk for the child by evaluating what is not working and identifying the problem area, what needs improvement and how can it be fixed. Well as before it was sort of like a joint responsibility of about sixty people and no one would actually take the responsibility because everyone would assume that someone else would do it.
In both municipalities it was discovered that the partnerships are maintained through regular meetings with attorneys, the Social Services and the Police to discuss how they can cooperate and work around those crimes. Officers are also in close cooperation with attorneys and always get feedback on the investigation. However, one respondent noted that;

‘we ought to meet more frequently to solve the coordination issues as we used to in the past.’

With regard as to when the relationships can be strained, one respondent noted that;

‘sometimes when it comes to times when we interrogate children, the law does not specify who should take the responsibility to take the child to the Police station and in situations regarding the interrogation the Social Services sometimes in cooperation with the school take the child to the Police station and sometimes they don’t. So, that is one thing that can be difficult from time to time if they are willing to participate or help or not. That’s all I can think of where there can be problems.’

This is a demonstration of how coordination is linked to defining limits and clearly illustrating responsibilities each party expects the other to execute (Mohr and Spekman, 1994). Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) maintain that steadiness in an undefined situation can be attained through high levels of coordination. Otherwise a strategic course of action may not be realised, and any intended mutual benefit cannot be attained.

8.0 Discussion

This section introduces a discussion embedded on literature, theoretical perspectives and proceedings from results and analysis. The discussion focuses on a reflection of the methods; survey results; the mismatch in laws, communication and relationships among
partners; the Barnahus system from a child perspective; and support from higher authorities in building up effective partnerships.

8.1 Reflection on the Study Methods

The study aim was to explore the working relationships between multiple agencies to meet the needs of children exposed to domestic violence. Research efforts to achieve this aim were anchored on four research questions. The first research question addressed the types of working partnerships existing between the Police (Polisen) and the Social Services (Socialtjänsten) to meet the needs of children exposed to domestic violence and their goals. The second research question was about identifying the factors that enable different agencies to work successfully together at the various stages of assessment, planning, service delivery and review. The third research question focused on how Social Services (Socialtjänsten) responds to families where problems require the intervention by both adult and children services. The fourth question was designed to capture the quantitative data with the intent to document the extent to which the law enforcement departments (nationwide) are working with community providers to help children exposed to domestic violence. It was important to find out how multi-agencies despite their differences in goals maintain the philosophy of partnership in serving the needs of children exposed to domestic violence. The semi structured interviews in the two case studies portrayed a distinctive conversational analysis while the national mail survey presented a quantitative analysis using SPSS that generated descriptive statistics and both results were complementary to each other. In complementarily designs like the one used in this study, a separate analysis processing of the different data types was used because the different methods were used to measure overlapping, but also different aspects of a given phenomenon (Greene, Caracelli, and Graham, 1989)

It is imperative to note that although adherence to such principles guaranteed the validity and reliability of research results; there is no guarantee that the results took a broad view,
especially in terms of scope bearing in mind that the study was not extensive. What could not be generalized in this study is an explication of the pathway through which partnerships are managed. Besides, it turned out that even the two municipalities that were under study, managed their partnerships differently. On the other hand, generalizing in terms of factors that contributed to achieving the collaborative advantage was more likely, considering the way in which research results in both municipality generated significant links to theoretical perspectives and literature content pertinent to building effective partnerships. However the national survey results took a broad view given the fact that the response was 19 out of 21 counties.

8.2 Survey Results

The survey results indicated that the Police and the Social Services are the two major agencies in the collaboration, complementing the qualitative results that revealed that the Police and the Social Services are obliged by law to work together through a partnership. The results also indicated that the majority of the Police departments in Sweden notify the Social Services if there are children involved. In addition the survey report also revealed that the Police are obliged by law through SOL 14 to report all cases involving child abuse to the Social Services. 18 of the 19 counties that responded said that there is a policy followed by the Police departments to investigate if any children were exposed to domestic violence. Majority of the law enforcement departments in Sweden also indicated that each time they respond to domestic violence crimes they investigate if children are involved. This revealed that there are efforts made by the Police departments in Sweden to meet the needs of children exposed to domestic violence. However, the survey also indicated that majority of the Police departments do not give out pamphlets explaining available help by other agencies to the victims and, no follow up is done to the non offending parent to see that they are receiving help they need.
8.3 Mismatch in laws

The notion of working together was the fundamental topic of discussion in the interviews that were held with all professionals working for the different agencies. Consistent with past research involving joint investigation between CPS workers and Police officers (Lloyd and Burman, 1996; Brandon, Dodsworth, and Rumball 2005; Reder and Duncan, 2003), all the professionals in this study perceived that there is a mismatch in the two laws governing the Social Services and Police. The fact that these are distinct challenges for the two agencies is not a unique finding of this study (Lloyd and Burman, 1996). However the major contribution of this study is that it has described the perceptions of a diverse sample of Police officers and social workers about how they manage to collaborate despite their differences. They are two different laws that are not really working together thus causing barriers in coordination between the two main agencies in collaboration. This was alleged to be due, although in part, to the different organizational missions. Social Services because of its welfare, rather than criminal focus, adopt a different standard of proof than that adopted by the Police department. For example they can take a child out of a home on suspicion that the child is being abused, especially where the situation is so bad, they don’t have to prove things whereas the Police have to actually prove it. However in cases where the Police investigation fail to prove that there is a crime, the Social Services’ leverage of force is limited and they cannot be as forceful and that means failing a child that is getting abused or witnessing violence at home thus, the complexity of implementing the elements of the ‘rule of the law’.

According to the World Bank (2008)’s basic definition of the ‘rule of the law’, is a procedure that endeavors to safeguard the rights of citizens from irrational and obnoxious use of government authority. While on the other hand the United Nation Report (A/64/298: 2009) defines the rule of the law as a code of governance in which all persons, public and private organizations and units, as well as the State itself, are liable to laws that are publicly broadcasted, equally imposed, separately arbitrated, and which are in harmony with international human rights, customs and principles.
cautious comprehension of both definitions reveals a corresponding argument resting between two divisions. That is the government implementing its powers, and the citizens implementing their rights, with the law having authority on both divisions. The dilemma in this case both agencies that is, the Police and the Social Services have different laws governing them, of which they must abide to, but at the same time adhering to those laws leaves an abused child without protection because the agencies cannot act outside their laws. At the same time without concrete evidence the alleged perpetrator cannot be convicted because actually in some cases this person could genuinely be innocent as the expression goes ‘innocent until proved guilty’. For this reason, critics of ‘the rule of the law’ such as Fuller (1963) established these differences and recommended that societies ought to strike a balance between the different objectives in the elements of ‘the rule of the law’. Perhaps in my opinion, the government should come up with a policy that delegates more authority to Police officers to have the mandate to judge what is right or should be done regarding in each particular case. In other words what is good for society or what is good for individual cases.

The Police and the Social Services in addition to having mismatch in their laws, also lack knowledge about each other’s business, despite the fact that they are the two key agencies in collaboration. Both agencies know where their law fails them and they expect the other to fill in that gap without actually knowing what the other can and cannot thus they end up putting too much expectation on the other. As a result, if the other organization does not live up to the other’s expectation that’s where the mismatch is. One of the respondents in this study suggested that perhaps the two agencies during their training, that is, during the Police academy and the socionom (social work) training, they should have a course that they do together concerning each other’s law and business. This could actually solve many problems such as lack of trust in each other’s competence and also help to ease the flow of information between the two agencies thus solving coordination issues. Since, each one would be in a better position to understand why for example the Police needs such information and the urgency of the matter and vice versa.
The coping strategies reported by participants, regarding the mismatches in their laws included: effective communication and information sharing; informal social networks; and looking at domestic violence from all angles rather than from one viewpoint.

Through communication both agencies are able to coordinate and work around the existing gaps between the two laws. This was manifested through informal relations that promote effective communication and solve coordination issues. Sharing information in this regard takes into consideration getting to know about each other’s law, that is, the Police should have the Social Services knowledge and be able to understand their limitations and vice versa. In addition regular meetings between key stakeholders specifically Police officers, Social Workers, Prosecutors and Medical Practitioners were another technique used to achieve unified goals. Such meetings offer an opportunity for open dialogue regarding potential problems, looking at domestic violence as a whole picture and coming up with approaches that would enable the professionals to work more effectively together like shared goals and visions. Portrayed here is the value created through social capital which is absolutely and clearly illustrated in a variety of research streams that concentrate on how the construction of social ties heighten actors’ capacity to achieve their goals.

Lean and Buren (1999) maintain that the most evident method in which organizations build social capital is through the relationships that exist among their members. Organizations desiring to increase their reserves of social capital can do so by means of employment practices that, enhance steadiness among members and flexibility in how employees are installed with these stable relationships. Thus practices like downsizing and frequent use of temporary employees may weaken the ability of individuals to develop significant relationships at work and consequently hinder organizational social capital. Social capital can heighten individual and organizational functioning particularly in two ways; first social networks can ease access to information, resources, and opportunities (Granovetter, 1974); second, social networks can assist actors to mutually
bring together significant task interdependencies and to prevail over the dilemma of collaboration and combined action (Pfeffer and Salanak 1978).

All respondents described that personal aspects such as acquaintances and net-works enhanced partnership. They all noted that by getting to know each other very well, it makes it possible to freely talk to each other without stepping on each other’s toes. City A municipality particularly invested in the position of the Barnahus by ensuring that the coordinator had the necessary skills and personality to coordinate between the two agencies. While City B municipality’s acquaintances developed through partners’ working together for a long period of time, thus they have developed good informal working relationships and trust in each other. Besides, Epel, Zahavy and Peleg (2003) argue that acquaintances and net-works are two aspects that can be encouraged relatively easily, without devoting significant amounts of resources, so as to foster the development of effective partnerships. Acquaintances and informal net-works are some of the elements of social capital, as already noted in the study’s theoretical frame of reference. Adler and Kwon (2002) argue that generally social capital can be understood as the good will that is brought about through the structure of social relations and that can be rallied to smooth the progress of action. The good will that people hold towards one another is a significant resource. ‘Goodwill’ comprises of the sympathy, trust, and forgiveness given to one another through good informal working relationships and acquaintanceship. Goodwill is the substance of social capital, it brings into being the flow of information, influence, and solidarity within partnerships. Lasker, Weiss and Miller (2001) argue that to attain high degrees of collaboration, it is necessary for partnerships to create potent working relationships among the partners. It is only possible for the group to start approaching problems in new, innovative way; conceptualizing problems differently if partners are able to talk to each other and are inclined by what they are informed. To accomplish thorough interventions, partners ought to be ready to synchronize their activities. However, Byrne, (1998) argues that an organizational ethos ought to not only essentially be developed by means of stable individual relationships but, instead, by an embracing organizational philosophy that accentuates collaboration, shared learning, and
team work. Thus norms rather than interpersonal relations can create and maintain organizational social capital.

Social capital also needs maintenance, social bonds according to Adler and Kwon (2002) have to be renewed from time to time and reconfirmed otherwise they lose their usefulness. Social capital does not have a foreseeable rate of decline for the reason that, whereas it may deteriorate with non-use it does not deteriorate with use. Like information and human capital, social capital too usually grows and develops with use for example trust (maintained as a main source of social capital) that is established now naturally will be mutually shared and become greater than before in future. In this study social capital is maintained through regular meetings between agencies, other than that there are no activities done together like social gatherings, or any other ties outside working hours like being engaged in same political organizations or NGOs as extracurricular activities, which would be an ideal way to build up social capital. To build social capital both parties require mutual obligation and collaboration, a flaw by one party will tear it down (Adler and Kwon 2002).

However, behind this appealing allegory of how informal social networks can heighten the capacity of effective collaboration there can also be a dark side of social capital (Woolcock, 2000). An opaque perception of obligation and reciprocity, authority relations, social networks, information potential, norms and effective sanctions is not wholeheartedly constructive and nontoxic and therefore should not be embraced unquestioned (Portes, 1998). Social ties can be a hindrance as well as an advantage, at the institutional level, many countries and organizations have nepotism laws, in clear acknowledgement that personal relations can be used to show prejudice, falsify, and corrupt (Bjørnskov and Paldam, 2002). The elements of social capital, such as trust, the norms and networks that enable people to act collectively for mutual benefits as defined by Putnam (1993) is a deliberation to assess the capacity to collaborate and the degree of integrity in society (Bjørnskov and Paldam, 2002). Social capital, as an abstract unit, in the form of structure and norms, symbolized as social norms along a band, stretching
from formal norms to informal norms, may possibly be integrated into the rule of the law (Fakuyama, 2000). Hence, it appears instinctively apparent to presume a strong correlation between the national levels of corruption and social capital: countries whose citizens seem to be more honest ought to undergo less corruption (Mauro, 1995), and also higher levels of social capital lead to less corruption (Bjørnskov and Paldam, 2002). A review of the existing literature on corruption, according to Mauro (1995) nearly all studies corroborate that economic development leads to less corruption in itself.

Relating it to this study where findings revealed that through communication and social networks, the Police and the Social Services are able to coordinate and work around the existing gaps brought about by mismatch in laws, thus the dark side of social capital poses a risk to corruption because one may never know what is involved in the ‘working together’ through communication in cases involving a child where the two agencies cannot do anything to help the child due to the limitations in their respective laws. Could it involve compromising one another’s norms? This was a question that was not clearly established in this study. The dilemma is to make things work easily without breaking the law. Although, in case of Sweden, according to the WJP (World Justice Project) Rule of Law Index 2010 Report, Sweden was ranked first in five of the nine categories that is; government liability, nonexistence of corruption, transparent and stable laws, open government and regulatory enforcement, hence the risks of corruption are very minimal. This is also substantiated by Isham and Kaufmann, (1999)’s study which revealed that feeble, antagonistic, or uncaring governments have an extremely distinctive consequence on community life and development projects, for example, than do governments that abide by civil liberties, advocate the rule of law, respect contracts, and oppose corruption like in the case of Sweden.

8.4 Barnahus system

A synchronized endeavor across and within organizations which is also closely linked to the concept of social capital that covers the ‘norms and networks facilitating collective
actions for mutual benefits’ (Woolcock, 1998, p 155) is considered necessary in order to amass all vital proof needed to safeguard children exposed to any kind of abuse and to take legal action against the offenders at the same time reducing the need for children to be interrogated over and over again about their abusive experience (Rasmusson, 2010). The focus of discussion regarding professional collaboration with respect to having a child perspective was directed primary towards the Barnahus system. The concept entails child friendly environment, treatment and interventions, consisting of working for as well as together with children. Research presents proof of the significance for children to be given an opportunity to partake in planning and decision-making (Rasmusson, 2010).

Neerosh and Goddard (2006)’s research very much related to the theme of the child’s perspective illustrated both bad and good experiences of the Barnahus system. Unsatisfactorily were professionals who lacked knowledge and did not consider the children’s stories as true plus not bearing to listen to their very difficult experiences. While on the affirmative side, the children described good treatment, support and relevant helpful measures. Besides, the child friendly environment of the safe consultation and waiting rooms felt much better for the children. In this study City A Municipality has taken advantage of the benefits of the Barnahus system and to solve the challenges regarding coordinating the two separate sets of rules governing the Police and Social Services that are usually carried on to the Barnahus, City A Municipality introduced a position of a Barnahus coordinator who is also knowledgeable about the Social Services laws and is based at the Police station and getting to know the Police way of doing things. This coordinator acts as the go between the two agencies and since the introduction of that position all agencies are more content and the partnership works easier. This substantiates Granovetter (1973) contention that personal contacts are crucial in whatever is to be permeated between network sectors which, is also closely linked to the study’s social capital theory.

On the contrary, in City B municipality where the need has not yet occurred of setting up a Barnahus, in my opinion I would say that collaborating through a Barnahus system can
also promote all-inclusive viewpoint. By themselves for example the Police in City B Municipality doing their own investigations, often catch a glimpse of merely a slice of a problem. Whereas a group, they can analyze the whole system of beliefs, taking into account all aspects of the problem thus enhancing the quality of solutions by recognizing where various problems overlap and by encouraging comprehensive investigation of problems and prospects (Gray 1989). The Barnahus system also makes it easier for children and parents to get adequate help without moving around shopping for help. The idea of shopping around for help sometimes can result in some children falling through the cracks of the system by avoiding the frustration of moving around from agency to agency. Besides, municipalities that have not yet introduced the Barnahus system are missing out on the strength that comes about when many ‘heads’ or ‘voices’ are brought together, especially when the partners’ input are distinct in form of knowledge and viewpoint (Israel et al 1998).

8.5 Support from higher authorities

Mitchell and Shortell (2000) maintain that multiplicity puts a lot of strain on the leadership, coordination, and management abilities of a partnership. In this study need for support from higher authorities surfaced as a multi-faced condition linked to timeliness of responses from different partners, having too much work load and few officers trained for those kinds of cases regarding children. Lasker, Weiss, and Miller (2001) maintain that authority leaders are liable for administering partnerships in achieving the benefit of collaboration for example by fitting together the partners’ duties and errands with their specific interests and skills: distinguishing and ensuring adequacy of a variety of resources; being alert to the advantages of collaboration, as well as the negative aspects the partnership can allay; and seeking for leaders and coordinators of partnerships with distinctive abilities. Authority leaders can make possible the advancement of analytical devices that can aid the people who run partnerships ascertain the level to which synergy is being attained in their partnerships and discover its actual assets and drawbacks. High authorities can also support the advancement of training programs so that the people
liable for administering the partnerships are adequately well qualified to be effective in advancing partnership synergy. Authority leaders can also offer partners with resources that integrate their ideas and help them make timely decisions, and also assess the performance and development of the partnerships.

9.0 Conclusion

The main finding for this study was the mismatch between the two laws governing the Police and the Social Services, thus leading to challenges in coordinating the two separate sets of rules governing the different authorities in collaboration. However, findings also revealed that through communication, information sharing, informal social net-works among partners, the agencies are able to overcome the collaboration barriers. In order to achieve the benefits of collaboration Mohr and Spekman, (1994) maintain that effective communications between partners are essential. The quality of information is a main element of information conveyance. Quality comprises features such as the accuracy, timeliness, adequacy, and credibility of information swapped. Timely, accurate, and relevant information is necessary if the objectives of the partnership are to be attained. Sharing information and by being knowledgeable about each other’s business / laws; partners are competent to operate autonomously in preserving the relationship over time. In addition Adler and Kwon (2002) argue that to attain high levels of collaboration partnerships should build strong working relationships based on social bonds through good informal working relationship and acquaintanceship. Through good informal working relationships partners are able to offer one another sympathy, trust, respect and forgiveness which are valuable resources in building collaborative partnerships. In this case the social capital as a theoretical element, represented as social norms ranging from formal norms to informal norms was integrated into the rule of law and the dilemma remains for this study, that is, how do the two agencies make things work easily without breaking the law? Or does the ‘trust’ enable efficiency in other ways? These are questions that would cause for more research from this study.
From these perspectives one can conclude that the raw materials for collaboration are the people and organizations that unite in a partnership. Collaborations with varied members, whose diverse personalities, aptitudes, and viewpoints bring congruent influence to the table, can contain the utmost possibility for stopping domestic violence and helping victims and children exposed to domestic violence (Lasker, Weiss and Miller 2001). However, the differences in decision making, ideologies and mismatch in laws makes it rather difficult for the Police and the Social Services to collaborate thus the dilemma for this study remains how to make things work easily without breaking the law.
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11.0 Appendices

11.1 Participant Consent Form

Consent form

Title

A COORDINATED RESPONSE TOWARDS CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: Working relationships between Social Services, Police, and Community Partners

You are invited to be in a research study of the multi agency response towards children exposed to domestic violence. You were selected as a possible participant because you work closely with the Police/Social Service to help victims of domestic violence. You were identified as a possible participant through your position in the Police/Social Services that works closely with the Police/Social Services. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Emily Musoke, from the Institute of Health, and Social Work and Behavioral Sciences (Linneaus University)

Background Information

The purpose of this study is: to explore the working relationships between multiple agencies to meet the needs of children exposed to domestic violence.

Procedures:

This is going to be a semi-structured interview, which will is going to be recorded and then transcribed into the research study. The interview might take one hour, and hopefully there will not be another one.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research
records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. The recordings will be destroyed after the final submission of the degree report.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Linneaus University or with the Police or any other agency that you work closely with to help victims of domestic violence. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher conducting this study is: Emily Musoke. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact me at Movägen 90 360 43 Braås, telephone 0761747066, emusoke0705@live.com. *Or to my Supervisor Pär Gustafsson on Link http://lnu.se/personal/paer.gustafsson  Telephone 0470-708309*

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact my supervisor named above.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Signature of Investigator: ____________________________ Date: ____________________________
11.2 Structured Interview

1. What types of working partnerships are being formed between the Police/law enforcement, Social Services (Socialtjänsten) and Community Partners to meet the needs of children exposed to domestic violence?

2. What other agencies are involved in these partnerships?

3. Who spearheaded the coordinated approach? What was its impetus (motivation)? Who were its supporters and detractors (critics)?

4. What are some of the elements that each organization may bring to a working relationship:

5. What are the primary objectives in using a coordinated response to children exposed to domestic violence?

6. What techniques do you use to build these partnerships? What are the effects of these partnerships?

7. What are some of the barriers in forming effective partnerships?

8. How can these barriers / coordination issues and problems be resolved?

9. How do you respond to an incidence of domestic violence?

10. How much training is needed to educate the Police and their coordinating community partners about the importance of providing services to children exposed to domestic violence and to help them identify which children need services?

11. What resources are needed to plan and implement the coordinated response? Where do the resources come from?
12. What types of services are provided to children who are exposed to domestic violence?

13. Who pays for the services?

14. What are the gaps in services?

15. How do you respond to families where problems require the intervention by both adult and children services?

16. In your opinion, are children exposed to domestic violence better served as a result of the coordinated approach? How?

17. What evidence do you have to support your opinion?

18. If other communities want to replicate your approach, what are the elements critical to its replication? In other words, what factors enable different agencies to work successfully together at the various stages of assessment, planning, service delivery and review?

19. What pitfalls need to be avoided?

20. What would they do differently if they were planning or establishing a strategy today?

**11.3 Structured interview with Police Officers**

1. How does your department respond to children exposed to domestic violence?

2. What laws, if any, mandate how you respond to children exposed to domestic violence?
3. Is your approach mandated by policy or protocol? Describe.

4. What special training do officers receive on children exposed to domestic violence?

5. What information about children exposed to domestic violence is in the incident, arrest, or supplemental report?

6. How does your approach affect what happens at the scene? When do officers call a helping agency to the scene?

7. What helping agency is called?

8. During what hours are helping agencies available to come to the scene?

9. What is their role at the scene?

10. How does your approach affect what happens to the perpetrator? Under what circumstances would the perpetrator be arrested on enhanced charges of child abuse or children exposed to domestic violence offenses? What added power, if any, does that enhancement give your officer?

11. How does your approach affect what happens to the child? Who decides who is called in to help the child at the scene? Who decides what referrals are made to help children exposed to domestic violence?

12. Under what circumstances and why would child protective services be notified? How and when are they notified? What response does the notification trigger with child protective services?
13. Does your department receive funds to respond to children exposed to domestic violence? If yes, what funds are received and what are they used for?

14. Is your department’s response to children exposed to domestic violence being evaluated or do you have any data to document how it is working? If yes, what is it?

15. How well is your department’s response to children exposed to domestic violence working? Where are the gaps in your department’s or your community’s response to children exposed to domestic violence?

11.4 Structured Interview (Two) to both agency respondents

1. How do you get into contact with other agencies regarding children exposed to domestic violence?

2. What is the fundamental importance of inter-agency working together to help children exposed to domestic violence?

3. Do you feel that you have an equal partnership between Police and Social Services or does the Police dominate the Social Services and vice versa?

4. Are there incidents when the relationships breakdown, like when you fail to agree on some issues?

5. Do you feel any disregard / contempt for your Police colleagues?

6. Is there an overlap in terms of the roles of Police officers and social workers?

7. What does working together through a multi-disciplinary approach amount to in terms of joined up activities? Is there an established multidisciplinary specialist assessment team (SATS) which consists of an approved medical practitioner, a senior social worker and a Police officer?
8. How do you maintain the partnerships? Is there something that you do together like regular meetings, social occasions or any other ties outside working hours like being engaged in same political organizations or NGOs as extracurricular activities?

9. What are some of the barriers in forming effective partnerships?

10. How are these barriers/coordination issues and problems resolved?

11.5 National Mail Survey

1. Is there a policy or protocol that requires Police Officers responding to domestic violence cases to investigate if any children were exposed to domestic violence?

| Yes | No |

If yes, under what circumstances would officers ask if children were exposed?

| Every time they respond to a domestic violence incident |  |
| Only if children are present when officers arrive |  |
| Only if there is some evidence that there are children in the home |  |
| It depends |  |

2. How do officers respond when they discover children are exposed to domestic violence?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notify child protective services to respond to the scene</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Give a referral to the non offending parent to social service agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call a helping agency on the phone</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Respond to the scene with a helping agency</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Intervene in another way</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3. Do officers have any pamphlets, cards, or other materials to hand out to parents that explains what the helping agency / agencies do or how to contact them?

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<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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4. How often are officers accompanied, or joined, at the scene by

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Services (CPS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit victim advocates</td>
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<tr>
<td>School counsellors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other agencies</td>
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5. Are there formal procedures to review Police reports each morning to make sure officers made referrals whenever children are exposed to domestic violence to make sure that no child falls through the cracks?

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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6. Is there a model approach to children exposed to domestic violence?
7. If yes, what model approach is being used?

Is there any evidence that the approach is working?

8. Does follow-up occur with the non-offending parent to see if services are obtained or whether further help is needed?

9. Is there any special funding received to respond to children exposed to domestic violence?

11.6 National Mail Survey Introduction Letter

To the County Police Commissioner

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Hej!

My name is Emily Musoke. I am a student at Linneaus University Växjö in the International Masters Programme in Social Work. I am writing a master’s thesis and my topic of research is;

A COORDINATED RESPONSE TOWARDS CHILDREN EXPOSED TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: Police and Community Partnerships.
The research aim is to explore the working relationships between multiple agencies to meet the needs of children exposed to domestic violence.

The purpose of this mail is to request you again to be part of my research study. I am carrying out a National Survey on how the Police respond to children exposed to domestic violence I sent out the same questionnaire (attached) through an email to all the 21 counties in Sweden around the end of February 2011 and so far I have received only 8 responses. That is why I am posting the questionnaire to you with an envelope and an already paid for stamp to make it easier to respond.

I understand how busy your department is but I am kindly begging you to please assign an officer who can take 5 minutes and fill in the questionnaire for me and send back in the envelop attached. I will be very grateful if my request is granted. Here is a link to my Supervisor’s web page in case you are in doubt of my credibility. http://lnu.se/personal/PAER.GUSTAFSSON and Telephone Number is 0470-708309.

Yours sincerely

Emily Musoke

Movägen 90
360 42 Braås
Mob Tel. 076 1747066
Home Tel. 0474 30927