



# **Analysis of Media Frames in Femicide: An Action Research of Print and Broadcast Media in Lesotho**

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Public Administration – Peace Studies  
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## DECLARATION

This doctoral thesis, **The Analysis of Media Frames in Femicide: An Action Research of Print and Broadcast Media in Lesotho**, was done at the International Centre of Non-Violence (ICON) Faculty of Management Sciences, Durban University of Technology from January 2017 to November 2021 under the supervision of **Dr Sylvia Kaye** and co supervision of **Prof Geoff Harris**. I solemnly declare that the thesis is my own independent work and has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other university. All figures, tables, and panels, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons, are mine. Where use has been made of the work of others, it is duly acknowledged.

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I hereby approve the final submission of the following thesis.

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(Co-supervisor)

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to the memory of my late father **Lefu Clement Ramakoele** for his steadfast non-violent fatherhood and my late mother in-law 'Majoele Thinda for etching in my heart that faith is a prerequisite in life. It would be remiss of me not to dedicate this noble work to the *sheroes* who have lost their sacred lives through intimate partner femicide and their *herstories* as well as to those who still suffer intimate partner violence.

*'This is a political requiem of defiance seeking  
gender justice'*

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To all participants I thank you for seeking justice for the abused and the dead. Let us recall that victims of femicide cannot demand justice but by participating in this study you did



## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AR:	Action Research
CDA:	Critical Discourse Analysis
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Domestic Violence Against Women
DV:	Domestic Violence
FGDs:	Focus Group Discussions
GBV:	Gender Based Violence
GDP:	Gross National Product
GSJM:	Gender Sensitive Journalism Manual
IPF:	Intimate Partner Femicide
IPV:	Intimate Partner Violence
IEMS:	Institute of Extra Mural Studies
KPMG:	Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler
LGBTIQ+:	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer
MGYSR:	Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sport and Recreation
MISA:	Media Institute of Southern Africa
STEM:	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics

## ABSTRACT

Women abuse by men in Lesotho is pervasive and it is normalised and sanctioned by culture. The status of women in Lesotho has for ages been that of a perpetual minor where their participation and representation were not a matter of contention nor a prerequisite in any social discourse. The laws of *Lerotholi* that uphold marital powers were overtaken by events from 2006 when the Equality of Married Person's Act 2006 (abolished marital power) and the Land Act 2010 (women to hold tenure) were passed. Logical expectation would be that gender-based violence and femicide will tremendously decline but violence and femicide are still ongoing. Media is a strategic ally but sadly, in Lesotho, the media is on *auto-pilot* due to a lack of key legislative frameworks such as the Media Policy and Media Act. The purpose of this study is to examine media frames of intimate partner femicide. The research was qualitative and it had an action research design with the aim of improving media capacity on framing intimate partner femicide. Fairclough critical discourse analysis adapted by Anabella Carvalho was used as a tool for analysis of interviews and newspaper archives from 2006-2016. The study found frames of femicide and that femicide is as an individual pathology (episodic) instead of a social problem (thematic). A capacity training for journalists on gender-sensitive journalism was done to assist journalists to thematically frame intimate partner femicide.

*Keywords:* Femicide, Intimate Partner Violence, Intimate Partner Femicide, Domestic Violence, Critical Discourse Analysis, Media.

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background to the study

*“National Unity without the support of the women of our country is worthless. It becomes a phrase reminiscent of the days of slavery when some bestial men considered themselves overlords when, perhaps for tactical (and bad tactics) reasons we arrogate to ourselves the right to deny our women the fundamental right to participate in the declared policy of universal franchise, stated by us both inside and outside the country. For us today to exclude the full participation of our women in the management and the ruling of the country is, to say the least, the height of hypocrisy and dishonesty...” (Robert Matjie).*

The worth of women and quest for social and gender justice have been an integral part of Lesotho and the Basotho for quite some time. In 1960, a male politician by the name of Robert Matjie articulated such a strong call in support of women. Curating gender care and harmonious relations has been part of Basotho attempts to establish an egalitarian society that not only views women with a reproductive role lens but also with a productive role lens. Despite this view of women, ironically violence against women is still a feature in Lesotho. Intimate partner femicide is the global leading cause of premature deaths of women and girls (Mathews *et al.* 2013; McCormick 2015) and Lesotho is not immune as it appears fifth on the global rankings of murder rates. Violence against women is pervasive, although it has remained unaddressed for decades (Joanna 2016; Anderson 2017; Ilkcaracan and Rima 2017). Gender-based violence indiscriminately affects women irrespective of their class, religion, sexuality, and race (Nechama 2020; Spies 2020).

In this century, humanity can no longer afford to witness the onslaught of femicide rolling uninterrupted because intimate partner femicide is bringing about global collapse – from food insecurity to environmental degradation, and most importantly, human rights and sustainable peace are seriously becoming wishful thinking (Campbell 2002; Lopez-Ekra *et al.* 2011; KPMG 2014; van der Gaag 2014). Intimate partner femicide is not a problem to a particular location but it is a global widespread which if it remains unchecked it puts a serious risk on the rights of women and global development as a whole (Choquette 2012; Branch 2019; Spies 2020).

Lesotho’s situation, when it comes to murder in general terms, is peculiar. According to World Population Review (2021), Lesotho stand sixth on the global murder rates and third in global rape rates as noted by Nation Master (2021). This state of affairs in Lesotho clearly indicates that something systemically and structurally is wrong in Lesotho with this high murder per

capita and spiralling rape. Women bear the brunt of this violent situation as they are disproportionately murdered by men and raped as well. It is important to review how media frame women cases that have been murdered by their intimate partners.

There is need for timely intervention to avert normalisation of violence and femicide— therefore, a diagnosis of the problem of intimate partner femicide has to be quick and an appropriate advocacy, policy and justice approaches have to be instituted to protect women and girls from patriarchal and misogynistic violence. There have been a number of global efforts to address gender-based violence and most importantly, intimate partner femicide, through legislative blueprints such as CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women) and the Beijing Platform for Action. Locally, Lesotho has introduced the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2006, the Sexual Violence Act 2011, and the Land Act 2010 as measures to secure women's rights and combat gender-based violence. Currently, Lesotho's setback is the lack of an anti-domestic violence act as it is still a bill and as such, there is no act that specifically targets gender-based violence.

The efforts are evident in addressing gender-based violence but there is a need to target the media to not only complement these efforts but also to act as a catalyst in achieving gender justice. Thus, the importance of targeting media is crucial to complement the criminal justice system (Abrahams *et al.* 2012; Anderson 2017). There is a need to bring gender justice consciousness to the society and the media need to be a target as a producer of content to position it to produce content that is gender-sensitive (Govender 2015). The media has an overwhelming power to influence the public and shape its perception and conclusion on any issue. Media representation of intimate partner femicide is key in ending the scourge. Essentially, the study aims to analyse the media frames used by the media in intimate partner femicide and in the study, being action-oriented, the journalists were workshopped on gender-sensitive journalism.

## **1.2 Context of the research**

Lesotho is a country landlocked by South Africa with an area of approximately 30,000 km<sup>2</sup> and with a population of 1.8 million (Bureau of Statistics 2006). Lesotho has broad socioeconomic challenges since half of its population lives below the poverty line and is exacerbated by a high prevalence of HIV/AIDS which is second globally (World Bank 2019). The World Bank report acknowledges that there is high inequality and logically, being a patriarchal society means that

women are not as privileged as men. The notion that poverty is feminised is typically reflected in Lesotho's poverty assessment report where poverty by household characteristics demonstrates that women are poorer than men (World Bank 2019: 30). Women's poverty is an outcome of their exclusion from the public sphere and them being held to reproductive roles only. Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Lesotho is a national crisis because 86% of women experience at least one form of violence in their lifetime (Chipatiso *et al.* 2014; World Bank 2019). There is a view that these numbers are not a true reflection since many incidences go unreported and even those that are reported get lost in a porous reporting line. In light of this, it is axiomatic that violence against women is rife and needs an immediate coordinated response.

Lesotho has made fair strides in addressing challenges such as poverty which is one of its major challenges. Gender-based violence has been a challenge in Lesotho, and it has been normalised and institutionalised by customary legal codes such as the *Laws of Lerotholi* promulgated in 1903, which legislated and normalised women's minority status which ensured and sustained women's subordination (Juma 2011: 95). There are dissenting voices in the form of anecdotes that speak for cultural practices and customary law which have to be acknowledged. There is view that women within the Basotho cultural sphere were/are not oppressed but given a special recognition. For instance, in wearing a mourning garb after the death of the husband, the view is that this ought to be construed as a practice of curating gender care for this bereaved woman because during the mourning her basic needs were cared for by family, the community and the chief. The practice of wearing the mourning garb was merely to distinguish her and give her an appropriate identity. However, these cultural practices and many others have been perverted to oppress women or inadvertently, they no longer fit the current state of affairs. The dynamics have changed but remnants of these cultural practices are still available and continue to perpetuate gender inequality and the violation of fundamental women's rights.

To catapult itself towards a gender-equitable society with strong economic development, Lesotho has been the signatory to a plethora of legal frameworks and policy instruments, both locally and internationally, in a bid to address gender violence and inequality. Examples of such are the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Maputo protocol, and the Capacity of Married Persons Act of 2006, to mention a few. Specifically, the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act (LCMPA) is a legislative blueprint that aims to eliminate marital power. These are some of the frameworks in place to redress and mitigate gender inequality and gender injustices of which

women are victims. At least one would acknowledge that in theory, there are mechanisms in place to effect social justice and gender justice, and the question that remains is that of implementation – the transition from theory to practice. According to International Alert (2013), Lesotho is ranked tenth amongst the most violent countries in the world, with 33.67 violent deaths per 100,000. There has not been any scholarly work on gender-specific murders in Lesotho unlike in the sister countries. In South Africa, Abrahams *et al.* (2012) note that every eight hours, a woman is killed. This state of affairs has been declared a national crisis by President Ramaphosa in 2019. In Mexico, Branch (2019) maintains that femicide is the new norm where she considers all women as tomorrow's victims and walking cadavers. In Australia, Geldenhuys (2018) and Johnson *et al.* (2019) claim that intimate partner femicide is a public health crisis that is long overdue. Botswana, although known for being peaceful, is not immune to intimate partner femicide (Jankey 2009). In Turkey, this form of violence is also noted with concern by Cetin (2015).

A systematic challenge is that Lesotho does not have disaggregated crime records even to the simplest variable of sex. The latest statistics by the Bureau of Statistics (2016: 2) indicates that in 2015, there were 897 murder cases reported. The report does not disaggregate the numbers such that the audience can have a clear understanding of the dynamics of crime as well as its gendered nature. However, there is acknowledgement of a steady increase in homicides and sexual violence in Lesotho (Government of Lesotho 2012; OSAC 2016). The crime incidences reports are inaccessible and in cases where they are available, they are not properly prepared. The only site to access crime reports is from the Bureau of Statistics where only aggregates are reflected. This alone makes it difficult, if not impossible, to give a proper analysis of crime and to have firm crime dynamics. This study attempts to contribute to a systematic understanding of the social representation of intimate partner femicide in mainstream media. The hope is that if the media can represent intimate partner femicide systematically, this will have a spill-over effect as to how crime reports are prepared.

Having highlighted these ominous statistics of Lesotho, it is worth mentioning that the fourth arm of the state, being a systematic media, was born as early as 1863 in the form of print media called 'Leselinyana la Lesotho' and broadcast in 1964 as Radio Lesotho (Kunene 1977). It is important to point out that the indigenous form of media and communication in the Basotho culture has always been the *pitso* (social gathering by the chief). It must be acknowledged that post 1833, when missionaries came and Lesotho became a British protectorate, that was also a *pitso* government where a government official would address people whom the chief had

summoned to gather. The *pitso* gathering was called by the man who was nominated by the chief and he was called *Seboholi* (plural *liboholi*) (town crier/s). At sunset, these town criers would choose strategic village points and shout the message that the chief needs to see his subjects the following day. That which is important with this format of media and communication is that it was only males who were town criers, meaning that by default, they framed the message as per their masculine view. Secondly, there was a monopoly of information as it was from one source which was the chief, but it must be noted that the Basotho have immutable faith in their chiefs and governance system. Thus, even if there was/is alternative media, it was/is going to find it difficult to influence them.

The print media followed the arrival of missionaries in 1833; it was established by the Paris Evangelical Missionaries Society (PEMS) and it was predominantly religious, although later in the 1880s, the content started to accommodate secular issues (Kunene 1977). In the same vein, the radio was also inceptioned at the height of political independence rhetoric, and as such, its entire content was inclined into chanting political independence rhetoric, whilst core social issues such as *liretlo* (medicinal killings) and social injustices were ignored. The mainstream media content has not changed from being dominated by *power politics* content and social justice issues such as femicide are still considered peripheral or are inadequately covered (Kunene 1977; Freyenberger 2013; Nyarko 2015; Branch 2019; Nechama 2020).

A logical enquiry is why and how could society decide to abdicate its inherent protective nature by ignoring social problems? The Basotho society is not immune from a strict patriarchal protocol that sanctions male violence and absolves males thus securing male privilege and maintaining the subordination of women. Therefore, one reasonable answer would be that violence and women subordination have been normalised and trivialised (Constantino 2006; Namusoga 2016). The extent of violence against women is widespread in Lesotho due to cultural attitudes and beliefs that women are minors and sexual objects (Matlho 2014), although the Marital Act has technically removed the minority status of women that were reflected in the Laws of Lerotholi. Femicide (killing of females), being an extreme form of violence, suffers from social bias that transcends the police, media, and the criminal justice system which leave women as vulnerable figures in the perpetual cycle of violence. Currently, the media reflects a biased picture which still perpetuates women's subordination and the glorification of violence against them (Kuypers 2002; Jóhannsdóttir and Einarisdóttir 2015; Nechama 2019, 2020). Media, as a fourth estate and a strategic instrument to address social issues with precision and

immediacy (Nyarko 2015), is favourable in addressing the gender-sensitive social representation of violence against women and femicide.

The Lesotho media is trying to maintain a global pace with platforms such as radio (currently there are 21 radio stations), social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), newspapers (there are currently 11 local newspapers in circulation), and television (there is one television station and it is state owned which runs from 5 am to 10 pm) (MISA Lesotho 2019). In this study, the media refers to the press and broadcasting. Media literacy is still in its infancy in Lesotho and as such whatever media propagates, either genuine or fake, is taken to be true and factual. Bilali, Vollhardt and Rarick (2016) contend that the media has proved to be an effective peacebuilding tool in addressing conflict in places such as Rwanda and Burundi. The infancy is also not from the consumption (audience) but also from the production (journalists). The mediascape is occupied mostly by people who are not qualified journalists and those who are qualified lack the capacity which makes it a challenge if ever they consciously frame their news content or they just do 'mirror reporting' (reporting what you see or hear only).

It is against this background that the study has chosen media as a strategic tool to capacitate it with gender-sensitive journalism. The framing of issues in the media hinge largely on the profit aspect in private media, whilst in the state media, it is largely ideology persuasion. Media in Lesotho is virtually privately owned since the government media outlets are Radio Lesotho and its youth-targeting sister radio station called Ultimate FM, and print outlets *Lentsoe La Basotho* with its English version called Lesotho Today.

The big question is who controls the media in Lesotho? Since the majority of media ownership is private, the expectation is that they have control of the media houses. It is important herein to distinguish between 'control' and 'ownership'. The researcher submits that in Lesotho, the ownership of private media, without debate, belongs to the owners but control is wholly by the state. How and why? The private sector in Lesotho is very small for media to rely on and sustain itself in terms of revenue from adverts and other profit-generating issues. The state, being financially well resourced, therefore becomes the only media sanctuary for operational sustainability. Therefore, the state indirectly 'controls' that which every media house publishes or broadcasts in the sense that if any media house is seen to have published or broadcast anything that upsets the government, then it will withhold its support in terms of adverts and programmes purchase. Private media objectivity and impartiality remain an issue because government support affect editorial tendencies (Adebayo 2015; Nyarko 2015; Namusoga

2016). Therefore, it is safe to conclude that in as much as the government media footprint appears insignificant, it is larger than that.

### 1.3 Research Problem

Violence against women is a serious human rights violation that has continued for ages with little practical efforts to address it. Violence against women was at first even nameless – meaning that it was uncomfortable for women and they could not exactly point or call it out. Succinctly put in her classical book entitled *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan (1974: 11) states that “the problem lay buried, unspoken, for many years in the minds of ... women”. Weil (2016: 1) contends that femicide has been either hidden or obscured for too long. The phenomenon of femicide being hidden is similar to the discourse that the female body should remain hidden from view (Butler 1990; Anderson 2017). This marks how far gender-based violence has come if at one time the victims were there but could not fathom what it was that oppressed them and assaulted them while it was unspoken. Later, the ‘problem’ was diagnosed and named to be domestic violence which indiscriminately affects women and girls alike. The diagnosis was accurate but the naming was problematic and counterproductive in the sense that the violence was seen as a domestic matter that warrants no external intervention. At times, it was even conflated or mistaken to be internal terrorism. It is important to recall that “language is a means of social construction: language shapes and is shaped by social structure” (Xu 2020: 177). This issue highlights the importance and value of language in the quest for social and gender justice since it has the capacity to (re)produce as well as legitimise toxic ideologies if proper semiotic choice (and framing) is not achieved (Fairclough 2003). Language is not only about naming but also proposes a response to any issue raised. It is so because naming the violation of women’s rights as domestic violence implies then that the solution or intervention proposed was domestic, meaning that the government resolved not to intervene with programmes and policy.

Friedan (1974) further indicates that the problem was ‘unspoken’ of – it is so because the problem was relegated within the domestic sphere (private sphere). The public sphere is a male-reserved site of privileges and power (Anderson 2017). There is a need to acknowledge the political implication of language by the renaming of domestic violence to gender-based violence to achieve social and gender justice because of the view that appropriate language in reporting gender-based violence matters a lot to the response and interventions (Muller 2017).



Language is and has proven to be a fundamental variable if solutions to women's rights violations and gender-based violence are to be achieved.

Violence against women and with particularity, intimate partner femicide, is still a global public health problem (Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2014; Sutherland *et al.* 2016; Weil 2016; Wright and Tokunaga 2016; Ndlovu *et al.* 2020). Lesotho media per capita is satisfactory and from the fact that media in all its forms still remains the platform that informs the nations, there is a fundamental need that media remains capacitated to frame intimate partner femicide to effect accurate social representation of this violence. How then does a media that is staffed with personnel who are a product of a patriarchal society become consciously gender-sensitive in reporting gendered crime. The fact that the Basotho are a patriarchal society means that males are privileged and considered the default while females are disadvantaged and considered deviant. It is important to mention that the subordination of women was legislated in Lesotho under the Law of Leretholi and as such, even in the new dispensation of the Married Persons Act, the vestiges of archaic law are still alive and well.

Noting the fact that journalists are social products of a patriarchal society in writing about incidents of intimate partner femicide, it has been seen that they do not challenge the status quo of violence against women but instead entrench and sustain it through their framing (Bullock 2007; Anderson 2017; Nechama 2020; Spies 2020). In terms of policy and other legislative texts, strides have been made but there is a dire need to analyse media frames that are used in Lesotho. The study was an action research study, and the action part of it was to undertake a gender-sensitive training for journalists to capacitate them.

#### **1.4 Research Aim and Objectives**

The main aim of this research is to assist journalists to understand and adopt a gender-sensitive journalism in their reportage with specific reference to intimate partner femicide as an attempt to ensure peacebuilding. This research is, from a bigger outlook, an attempt to curate an interpersonal harmony through bringing consciousness in the use of language and how best its use can bring about change in highlighting the *normalised* problem of femicide through setting appropriate agenda and framing the problem precisely.

In the quest to position journalists to use language in a gender-sensitive approach, the study adopted the following objectives:

1. Examine the causes (motives), extent, and implications of femicide.
2. Examine media frames in femicide and their influence in the Lesotho context.
3. Analyse how media reports femicide: Individual pathology or Social Problem.
4. Develop and test a training manual for journalists.
5. Undertake preliminary evaluation of the training manual.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

The study sought to examine the media frames used in reporting intimate partner femicide. Media is a purveyor of dominant norms, values and understanding and as such it is critical that it be explored as to what views it continues to shape. The following questions are posed in order to achieve the understanding of media framing of femicide in Lesotho:

1. What are the causes (motives), extent, and implications of femicide?
2. Which media frames in femicide are used and what is their influence in Lesotho context?
3. How does media reports femicide in Lesotho: is it reported as individual pathology or social problem?

## **1.6 Rationale of the Study**

The rationale for this study primarily is to contribute to the existing body of knowledge that interrogates the intersection of intimate partner femicide with the media. Most importantly, it is a pioneering study in the case of Lesotho that analyses media frames that are used in intimate partner femicide. The study's overall intention is to assist the media to meaningfully participate in addressing the global public health problem of intimate partner femicide by framing it in a manner that will seek accountability and justice for the victims.

The study inherently challenges the normalisation, tolerance, and inadvertent glorification of violence against women through frames. That is, the study echoes Catharine MacKinnon's clarion call that "when will women be human" in the sense that it calls on the media to be political in writing about intimate partner femicide news stories by seeking justice for the victims and not writing about them as numbers or continuing to tolerate (through insensitive)

male violence through frames that do not seek accountability and acknowledge women as victims and men as perpetrators.

The literature reviewed first highlighted how the media is strategic in shaping people's attitudes, developing an understanding and cajoling them to develop a desired perception on a particular matter. On this account, it is important to be in light of how to use language effectively to frame intimate femicide in a manner that challenges not only attitudes towards women but also seeks accountability and justice for the victims. The media is considered the fourth state arm and as such, it has to be capacitated to play an oversight role. The media rises and falls on language hence why the study's action part of the research aimed to capacitate the journalists on gender-sensitive journalism training to position them to be aware of where gender and media intersect and how best to (re)present gender violations or crimes.

The study bolsters the current efforts such as laws, policies, and research in addressing intimate partner femicide by adding media as another tool that can be used strategically to address this global health problem. The importance of the media cannot be overstated in terms of how effective it is as a tool for peacebuilding (Adebayo 2015).

## **1.7 Scope of the study**

### **1.7.1 Delimitation**

Delimitations are stated to be those factors that the researcher can control such as objectives, populations and sample, and the research questions, etc. The choice of analysis of media's intimate partner femicide frames is in itself a delimiting factor because the researcher has rejected consideration of other issues to focus on this one. That is, delimitation is the parameters that the researcher sets as the area of focus. Theofanidis and Fountouki (2018: 157) conclude that delimitations are consciously set limitations by the researcher as to *why s/he did it like that instead of why s/he did that*.

This study basically looked at media frames of intimate partner femicide with the view to analyse frames that the media engages in the phenomenon of femicide. Specifically, the focus was on language as a power tool and power in itself – how it is used since it has the power to re/create inequalities and it is a window to individual biases, attitudes, and stereotypes. The study's focus was on newspapers archives from 2006-2016. The two selected newspapers were Lesotho Times (private ownership) and Lentsoe La Basotho (state ownership). The initial

intention of the study was to also analyse the radio programmes but a technical challenge was that the local radio stations indicated that they do not keep programmes tapes for long because they have to reuse them due to financial constraints. In cases where the programmes archives were available, there was a notable reluctance and reservation to release them coupled with red-tape to access them. The researcher therefore resolved to omit the radio programmes' archives (initial data collection) but for the interviews (subsequent data collection) and training, the radio personnel were part of the whole study.

### **1.7.2 Limitation**

Limitations are potential weaknesses in the study that are not envisaged by the researcher (Korrapati 2016). They may arise from the data collected, tools for data collections, statistical models, or funding, to mention a few. Theofanidis and Fountouki (2018: 156) succinctly state that limitations are *imposed* restrictions that are beyond researchers' control.

It is important to raise that failure to secure radio programmes archives for analysis was one of the outstanding limitations of the study. The second glaring limitation is that the training was only attended by participants who were in Maseru due to Covid-19 restrictions and protocols. The participants' attendance must also be acknowledged by that the attendance was by junior journalists and as such, the impact and change may be minimal in the absence of editors and administrators.

## **1.8 Research methodology and Data Collection**

The study was an action research study for a number of reasons that action research offers as opposed to other research designs. Action Research (AR) is a design that primarily aims at positively changing practice – that is, it is practical in nature. It targets improving practice by involving the practitioners in identifying the problem and identifying the solutions to the problem together (Townsend 2013). Babbie and Mouton (2001) corroborate that AR simultaneously identifies the problem with the system while engaging the members of the system to come up with alternatives to improve the system. In this study, the media was engaged in identifying the media frames that they use in the representation of intimate partner femicide and the action part of the research engaged them in a gender-sensitive training workshop to assist them in gender-sensitive framing.

The study is qualitative in nature since it offers an opportunity for an in-depth analysis of the subject matter at hand. The data collected was purely qualitative in nature. There are two methods that were used to collect data: document analysis and interviews (personal interview and group interview). Document review, at times referred to as artefacts or archives, is not intruding and as such helps the researcher understand the situation in all its purity. Documents may vary from letters to diaries and newspapers. The two purposively selected newspapers from 2006-2010 being Lesotho Times and Lentsoe la Basotho were the newspapers used for the analysis of stories of intimate partner violence. The major advantage of document review data is precision – there is no make-up of data to fit a certain mood (Grady 1998). Fifty-four stories of intimate partner femicide were retrieved and analysed using critical discourse analysis to see media frames that are used in the representation of femicide.

The second data was from the interviews. There were four sets of data from the interviews. The first set was from personal interviews with a cluster of listeners/readers (n=20), the second cluster was journalists (n=25), the third cluster was administrators/editors (n=10), and the last cluster was focus group discussions with journalists. The data collected from the document review was, in a way, that which the researcher refers to as a benchmark (point of departure) and the interviews' data was, in a way, to triangulate data from the archives. In a quest to achieve validity of the study, homicide data was requested from the police and part of it was availed, and the researcher must admit that it was of great help even though it was not wholly given. All data, except police homicide reports, was analysed using critical discourse analysis as a tool for analysis to assess the frames that are used in representing intimate partner femicide.

The action part of the research basically followed the action research cycles of exploration, design, implementation, and evaluation. The exploration phase is where data was gathered in order to inform the design where a gender-sensitive training workshop content was designed and subsequently implemented. The evaluation of the training followed with the analysis of selected journalists' content on any area because the likelihood of femicide cases happening was not determinable and time was a factor.

## **1.9 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework that guided the study was the agenda setting theory, framing theory, and structural violence theory. The agenda setting theory by McCombs and Shaw (1972) is key because the media has an agenda and the study is essentially about how to frame that agenda to

be gender-sensitive. The crux of the agenda setting theory is how best the media can suggest to the audience what matters. The framing theory by Goffman (1974) is often seen as an extension of the agenda setting theory. Pertinent to it is the selection of certain aspects of the story and making them more salient. It is essential in gender-sensitive reporting because it guides on which aspects need to be flagged in femicide and which need to be backgrounded. The last theory is the structural violence theory by Galtung (1969) which is key since the study is about conflict that is gendered. The theory is essential in providing understanding on the typology of violence. Since the study's focus is on physical violence (intimate partner femicide), it is also important to appreciate the underlying invisible types of violence such as cultural and structural violence as other forms of violence that intersect with physical violence.

### **1.10 Thesis chapter preview**

The thesis is divided into eight chapters:

1. Chapter 1: this chapter presents the background to the study, context of the research, research problem, research aims and objectives, rationale of the study, scope of the study, and research methodology and data collection overview.
2. Chapter 2: this chapter reviews literature and outlines the theoretical approach of the study.
3. Chapter 3: in this chapter, there is a discussion of the research design and methodology as key concepts that the study is going to adopt.
4. Chapter 4: this chapter entails the presentation of the results in respect of the set research objectives of the study.
5. Chapter 5: the discussion of the results is undertaken in this chapter – the discussion attempts to see if the results are consistent with the reviewed literature and theoretical framework.
6. Chapter 6: the study is action research and as such, action that emanates from the results have to be put into practice. This chapter is an outline of the journalists' training on gender-sensitive language.
7. Chapter 7: in this chapter, there is an evaluation of the training to assess its impact in light of improving pedagogy or content.
8. Chapter 8: this chapter is the conclusion of the study and the recommendations.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This section reviews literature on the concept/phenomenon of femicide with particular focus on intimate partner femicide. The overview of women and media is reviewed as it is a conceptual passage to tie women and the media as two key aspects in the study. A detailed interrogation of the violence continuum that ultimately ends with femicide will be mapped out. There will also be a discussion of intimate partner femicide causes (motives), extent, and media frames that are used on its media representation as well as the implications of it. Lastly, the review will focus on whether intimate partner femicide is framed as an individual pathology (aberration) or a social problem.

### **2.2 Theoretical Approach**

#### **2.2.1 Agenda Setting Theory**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the power of mass media cannot be argued against or taken for granted in setting national agenda in all public affairs. The agenda setting theory is associated with Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw (1972). Central to the agenda setting theory is that the media has no business in telling the public what to think but its core business is suggesting to the public what to think about (setting agenda) and how to think about it, and more importantly, channel conclusions and opinions. The media successfully tells the public what is worthy of discussion. McCombs and Ghanem (2001: 31) assert that the more an issue is emphasised in the media, the more it is given priority and attention by the public. Listeners/readers not only learn what is filtered to them by the media but also how much importance to attach to it depends basically on the emphasis, amount of airtime, frequency, positioning, and depth of a news story (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007: 11). This is achieved through making some issues within news stories more salient than others and others invisible (Kuypers 2002; Choquette 2012).

In addition to that, the issues covered are purposely selected by the media to legitimise or delegitimise them within the public domain. That which readers/listeners know about the world (world view) purely depends upon what the media has decided to be newsworthy (McCombs 2002: 2). Muller (2017) echoes that the media does not cover everything, and most importantly, equally but rather has a way of determining which events are newsworthy. It is therefore clear

that journalists have a stake in that which the public knows and discusses. For instance, media content on matters such as drugs, healthcare services, murder, and education are social issues in which the media has a stake in framing them to the audience. The media not only informs but also shapes public opinion in virtually all the issues. Therefore, what is written on femicide and how it is written is purely a media un/conscious agenda. The notion of un/conscious agenda is echoed by Stiegelbauer, Tirban and Onofrei (2012: 317) that setting the agenda at times becomes an intentional attempt or unintentional attempt. In agenda setting, diction is very important as it tends to generate public action.

This theory maintains that if the media consistently presents the issue, that issue becomes *the agenda* in the public domain (McCombs and Shaw 1972). Hence the media successfully dictates that which the public should be debating about and the perspective and the insights that should be drawn. Agenda-setting gives alternative explanations as to why some issues become available to the public for discussion and debate while others are either obscured or totally omitted. This process, in turn, leads to how public opinion is shaped around certain issues and how such opinions proceed to be part of policy making and dialogue. For instance, if fatal violence meted by men to women, leading to femicide, is omitted by the mass media, it will simply not be part of public discussion, debate and public policy as well as identifying responses. Therefore, violence against women will likely be normalised and to continue without any adequate intervention. Subsequently, femicide frames that does not demand accountability, fails to position violence against women as a public agenda which will lead to policy dialogue. Summarily put, positive agenda-setting is a recipe for social change and social stability (Dearing and Rogers 1996), meaning that if femicide agenda is set in a positive manner, public debates, policy, and response will lead to a halt of structural violence against women and bring in social peace and harmony.

A note should be taken that the use of the word ‘agenda’ is not pejorative. McCombs (2002: 2) corroborates that the word ‘agenda’ is used in this instance in a descriptive manner hence there is no underlying malicious intent. Dearing and Rogers (1996: 2) echo that “an agenda is a set of issues that are communicated in a hierarchy of importance at a point in time”. In this case, male violence and femicide (intimate partner violence) are issues that the media communicate to the populace. It is therefore incumbent upon mass media to decide what is deemed or raised as legitimate concerns within the issue of femicide that merits public attention as well as the response.



With regard to agenda-setting, albeit perceived as a modern scientific theory which can be traced as far back as Lipmann (1922), the researcher would state herein that it is quite an older theory than it is currently seen to be. The researcher would credit the likes of Lipmann and others for calligraphy (the art of writing). From time immemorial, in any given society, communication and information have forever been not only inseparable but also invaluable concepts. The researcher would use the African and Western contexts to espouse that the concept of agenda-setting has been, is, and will forever be at the heart of every society. In the two contexts, pre-media era, “town criers”, with the appellation as traditional newsman or bellman, were entrusted with the communication and dissemination of information about upcoming events, news, proclamations, and bylaws (Aziken and Emeni 2010).

The ‘town criers’ were agenda-setters of the Medieval era and their tool was either a bell, a gong, or any instrument in the form of a drum. As mentioned in the case of Lesotho, there is a *Seboholi* who is a male figure appointed by the chief to summon subjects for the *Pitso* (public gathering). The *Seboholi* is synonymous with a town crier from other cultures but he uses his voice to shout the king’s message. The question is which characteristics of agenda-setting did the ‘town criers’ employ – Aziken and Emeni (2010) assert that beating the gong or drum harder to make loud sounds and the increased frequency with which an issue is being thundered determines the importance that the audience ought to attach to such an issue. A similar agenda setting characteristic is engaged by the *Seboholi* because the intonation differs when he emphasises the crux of the message. It is therefore apparent, as advanced by Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007), that similar characteristics that contemporary mass media is engaging – of salience, frequency, and increased airtime – are not new but instead a refined practice manifesting within mass media in this literate society. The lingering question would be: were the town criers setting the agenda or merely conveying the orders perhaps from the authority to air the message? The researcher thinks that this question is legitimate to establish the context of today’s media if it is only conveying the message or pursuing a particular agenda.

#### **(a) Media Agenda and Public Agenda**

Much has been covered on the media agenda and less on the public agenda. The two ‘agendas’ constitute a much-debated concept of agenda. It is a generally accepted notion that the media sets the agenda for the public, but does this mean that the public is a “clean slate”? Certainly not, the public too has its own agenda and the researcher also maintains that the very same media is part of the society and as such, it is prudent to claim that the media draws its agenda from the society. In other words, it is safe to conclude that media and public agenda are mutually

connected. Public agenda is what the public consider to be the issue/s that matter (Anderson 2017: 76). Stiegelbauer, Tirban and Onofrei (2012: 316) underline that both the transmitter (media) and the receiver (the public) have a bearing on the agenda. Therefore, this sums up that the media has an agenda and the public likewise does. The issue of femicide emanates from the public as its agenda and subsequently ends up as an agenda for the media. Although there is a propensity of the media to draw its agenda from the public agenda, the power and influence of the media agenda has proved to be more effective and has a sense of legitimacy and authority. Delshad (2012: 178) acknowledges that the media agenda appears to be stronger because the media agenda comes mostly from elites. However, the elites are still part of the society underlying the fact that both the public and media have unmatched capacity in influencing one another (Delshad 2012: 177). Nechama (2020: 187) suggests that there is a dynamic and reciprocal relationship of public agenda and media agenda – “news shape public agenda. Public interest influences the news”.

On the balance of a scale, the blame tips to the media as to how it frames and sets agenda on femicide. The framing of intimate partner femicide matters not only on media representation but because the representation goes further to inform public understanding and response as well as policy response. If the media sets the agenda of gender as a binary concept where men are considered superior and women inferior, one is therefore certainly going to see femicide cases surge, and the absence of positive public dialogue and policy response to address femicide. There is solid evidence that male violence has been normalised and condoned (Choquette 2012; García-Moreno *et al.* 2015). Therefore, it is paramount that the media sets femicide agenda using the frame of equality, empowerment, and accountability as that will ensure that femicide cases will decline considerably due to informed appropriate responses. Femicide, when situated/framed as an outcome of unique violence that is not spontaneous but premeditated, leads to policy and intervention efforts that better address it (Johnson *et al.* 2019; Nechama 2020). A human rights framing approach to femicide is another avenue that can position women’s lost lives as a matter of concern. In other words, perhaps it would be interesting that the femicide agenda points with certainty to the perpetrator, the victim, and motive for continued violence against women which lies in gender inequality (male hegemony), and lastly situates the problem of femicide within the social domain and not the individual domain.

Surely there are elements that shape and influence agenda setting in totality – media, and public and policy agenda. The fundamental area to be explored is: is the media agenda shaped and led by profit whilst the public agenda is purely motivated by issues relevant at the material time to

the public (ideological)? Public agenda is motivated by those issues that draw public attention and ultimately these issues stream to become policy agenda. A key question is what and how the media agenda is influenced. This legitimate concern will take the researcher back to the question of whose agenda truly is being advanced – the town crier/media or an authority behind the scenes (e.g. the king in previous era/the editors in current era) who dictates how issues should be framed. Boydston (2013: 1) claims that the media agenda “does not ebb and flow; rather it fixates and explodes”. Femicide too is a matter that is ‘*on and off*’ media coverage (Anderson 2017: 70) and as such, the audience’s opportunity to understand violent crimes and victimisation is missed. Media agenda, in other words, does not axle around the ‘come and go’ situation but instead remains focused on an issue at the material time. As pointed out, media agenda and public agenda are two sides of the same coin. If femicide is a public agenda, then it translates to be a media agenda.

There are many dynamics when it comes to media and the study will discuss profit and human rights in the context of intimate partner femicide:

- Profit:

The media is guided by some determinants to consider an issue as newsworthy. The issue must pass a strict protocol such as being an uncovered issue such as the Roman Catholic child sexual abuse saga, involve people in power such as the President Clinton and Monica sex scandal, involve a tragic episode such as the MH370 flight disappearance and Brexit, to mention a few. It becomes clear that behind every agenda lies the incentive (profit orientation) (Govender 2015; Anderson 2017). It is important to mention that *profit* (not strictly referring to monetary outcome) can be monetary especially for private media while it can be ideological subscription for state media. This answers the question that in times of town criers, perhaps subscription to the ideology and unity were the profits accrued whilst in the modern era, financial accumulation as profits due to increased listenership and readership is the sole target. It is apparent that the private media is more concerned with the pecuniary effect than the misrepresentation of women subjectivities because successful sales have usurped the accuracy and authenticity of news. For instance, donors have a considerable influence in the framing of media issues - the Catholic donors in all their platforms - where they provide financial assistance and then censor promotion of contraceptives and abolition. Consequently, portrayal of men and women in media is guarded by profit (Brüggemann *et al.* 2016; Anderson 2017; Xu 2020).

Since the operational buoyancy and sustainability within the corporate space is profit, private media finds itself left with no choice (Allcott and Gentzkow 2017; Anderson 2017: 87), while on the other hand, state media is more inclined to ideological motives rather than profit. However, it is important to recall that in the case of Lesotho where the private sector is small and nearly insignificant, the private media profits emanate from government adverts. Therefore, there is a symbiotic relation that leashes private media to self-censor its content not to be in conflict with state expectations and ideologies (nationalism).

- Human Rights (Right to life)

In this light, femicide becomes a public agenda since it attracts public attention – mega femicide cases such as those of O.J. Simpson and Oscar Pistorius pulled massive global attention. However, the researcher argues that herein the public agenda is also influenced by status, race, and gender, as Butler (2010: 17) succinctly states, some lives are more grievable than others. It is also paramount to re-brand George Orwell’s dictum that *some lives are more important than others* and this is equally echoed by Butler (2004, 2010) as she articulates that some lives are more liveable and grievable than others. In this regard, it is evident that the public agenda and its depth and breadth axle around whose life was considered liveable and whose death was grievable. Often, if it is a woman and for that matter a black woman, public agenda is not vociferous (Meyers 1997; Stillman 2007; Mellado 2013). In the case of Steenkamp’s murder by Pistorius, the mediascape framed Steenkamp in terms of attractiveness and celebrity status (Marais *et al.* 2014: 81).

On the other hand, there is truth that public agenda rises with social status, race, and gender, as in the case of O.J. Simpson and Oscar Pistorius. That which is peculiar within this is that the victims are un/wittingly omitted from the public agenda thus testifying that gender is also key in the public agenda (Bullock 2007; Sutherland *et al.* 2015). Monckton-Smith (2012: 65) brings to attention factors that influence the “newsworthiness” of a story: “relevance, timeliness, simplification, predictability, unexpectedness, continuity, composition, elite people, elite nations, and negativity”. Branch (2019: 11) also contends that the ‘*unusualness*’ of the story is one of the factors that commands a story to receive more attention. Secondly, the victim and perpetrator characteristics also determine the newsworthiness of the story. That is, newsworthy determinants range from the peculiarity of the crime to the location, race, victims, and perpetrators.

There are a number of motives in framing: race is one paramount motive in news media coverage in most intimate partner femicide cases. For instance, the femicide case of Oscar Pistorius was virtually concurrent with the one of Sebolai, a fellow black South African who was a radio Disk Jockey (DJ). The case of Sebolai hardly saw the headlines which therein factors the question of what motivates framing. It is important to understand that not only is race key in framing but other factors such as voyeurism, class, and the pattern (drama) of femicide determine framing. Gekoski, Gray and Adler (2012: 1212) corroborate that some homicides are deemed to be of '*perfect victims*' and receive more coverage than the others that are seen to be of '*deserving victims*'. Herman and Chomsky (2010) also content that media has tendency to treat and categorise victims as either worthy or unworthy. There are different variable or elements that are used by media to reflect un/worthy victims. Race is one variable that stimulates in/sufficient coverage of the crime. The fact that Oscar's murder case received more airtime than that of Sebolai attests that factors such as race, class, and drama precede in setting the agenda. Joanna (2016: 126) corroborates that crime news reports black men as dangerous and criminals as compared to white men. White men, at times, enjoy the privilege of being framed as victims of circumstances and vulnerable since their news coverage of violence contains excuses and justifications (Joanna 2016: 129). In the case of Oscar Pistorius, the circumstance of vulnerability was the fact that he has a disability so that aided the agenda to be set along the lines that would stimulate public sympathy. Ogundola (2013). Kim, Lee and Oh (2017) affirm that a sympathy frame suggests that people with a disability lack choices since they are vulnerable; in a sense this exonerates the perpetrator because focus tends to be on his/her disability as opposed to his/her ability to commit a crime that must be accounted for.

A comparison of public agenda and media agenda power sheds light on the role of agenda-setting. There is an ever-tantalising propensity to put media agenda and public agenda in hierarchy as to which one has power over the other. McCombs (2002: 2) maintains that issues prominent in the media circles/agenda become alive in the public agenda. Therefore, despite the media agenda sourcing its agenda from the public, media agenda have influence over the public agenda. McCombs and Ghanem (2001: 67) emphasise that "the core idea is that elements prominent in the media's pictures become prominent in the audience picture". In other words, this underscores the dynamic nature and reciprocity of public and media agenda (Nechama 2020: 187).

The agenda matrix therefore would be media agenda, public agenda, and public policy. Femicide becomes a media agenda and aspects set to be important trickle down to be part of

the public agenda. Ultimately, what is at the heart of public discussion becomes a point of interest to policy makers hence policy agenda. Ideally, the matrix aspects being media agenda, public agenda, and public policy have a feedback loop. That is, they are related and influence one another. For instance, media and public agenda are reciprocal (Anderson 2017; Nechama 2020). That is, violence is what takes place within the public (media agenda) and its representation is a reflection of what has transpired – but what has taken place when it reflects in the media is that which has been *refined* in the sense that it is framed to fit a particular narrative by making some aspects of that violence more salient than others and backgrounding some information etc. The outcome of public and media agenda suggest/inform public policy (Berns 2001; Spies 2020).

It is safe to conclude that media agenda is given and ultimately constructed and/or reshaped (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007: 17). Therefore, it becomes apparent that the media, in setting the agenda, has a choice to reshape issues such as femicide by using frames of non-violence and objectively challenge patriarchy. Dearing and Rogers (1996) succinctly state that agenda setting “is inherently a political process”, and a social, moral, and ethical process. The agenda setting theory, therefore, is an appropriate tool to address politically motivated and gendered violence against women which ultimately strips women of their freedom of life and ends their lives prematurely. The agenda setting theory sets the agenda that informs precisely the policy response (Spies 2020: 52). That, in a way, will be a clinical diagnosis of femicide which will lead to the appropriate prescription.

#### **(b) Medium of Agenda Setting**

The medium in agenda setting is a method of communication that the interlocutor decides to use with the audience in putting across the message. In the mediascape, the core variable is the message from the producer to the consumer, and what becomes a point of interest to research is the medium and/or the method of communication that the producer decides to engage. There are verbal, written, or non-verbal methods of communication, and which amongst the three is more effective? Perhaps it has proved to be an inappropriate question because the audience is diverse and has different capacities and abilities. For instance, a blind individual will find it more appropriate if the message is written than if it is visualised. However, on average, a hybrid of verbal and written methods have proved to be more effective.

### (c) **Social Media and Agenda Setting: A new paradigm**

Media has over time and space changed drastically to what it is today. The historical trajectory of media in this study has been drawn from the time of town criers. Central to media is the transmission of information from the transmitter to the receiver. The concern here is how and what is included and/or excluded by the media house as an entity that has the means of production and distribution of news. There has been much scrutiny on the traditional forms of media being the radio and newspaper. The study is yet to look at how newspapers and radios in Lesotho set the agenda for femicide.

However, there is a compelling need to discuss the impact and effect of social media and agenda setting in this new age and digital space. Gone are the days when traditional media had a monopoly of news production and distribution. There is now an entertaining rivalry in the name of social media. There is evidence that social media is an emerging powerhouse in setting the public agenda (Vargo, Guo and Amazeen 2017: 2030). What is this social media? Social media is a form of media that is used to transmit or share information to a broad audience (Edosonwam *et al.* 2011: 4). In the 1800s, radio and telephone were commanding the mediascape but now they face a challenge from social media and citizen journalism. The concept of agenda setting therefore ought to be reviewed in the wake of social media as it has an ability to set its agenda. Due to the fact that the agenda setting theory was developed while traditional media held a monopoly on the creation, arrangement, and distribution of news content (Meraz 2009; Martin and Grüb 2016), the arrival of social media warrants a need to be discussed. Meraz (2009: 701) claims that the traditional media's agenda setting power has been greatly diminished because social media is at the centre of power re-distribution between traditional media that is exclusive and social media that is participatory.

One would ask, what distinguishes social media from traditional media because the latter also transmits and shares information to a broad audience. Table 2.1 presents the differences between traditional media and social media.

**Table 2.1:** Traditional versus Social Media.

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Traditional Media</b>	<b>Social Media</b>
Responsibility for content	Controlled by the organisation (single author)	Controlled by the users (a lot of authors)

Production	Produced and printed/released afterwards	Constant refinement
Delivery	One-way communication	Two-way communication
Feedback mechanisms	“Letter to the editor” and static comments which may be commented on by the organisation	Instant feedback which may be commented on by other users

Source: (Martin and Grüb 2016: 41).

It appears that the traditional media agenda setting sphere of influence on the public opinion is now shared with social media. Social media is dynamic and responsive as opposed to static traditional media. Social media tends to set an agenda that is more appealing to the audience because it can be constantly changed or refined since there is real-time communication and response.

#### **(d) Fake News and Agenda Setting**

Vargo, Guo and Amazeen (2017: 2029) ponder, “has fake news disrupted the ways *real news* report? Does fake news have the ability to shift journalistic attention—especially ... to and from issues?” Fake news, in a true sense, shifts the dynamics in agenda setting. The agenda setting theory has to do with what is trending in the news and how such affects and/or shapes public opinion.

Fake news is that content that appears credible at face value but that is not genuine. Fake news is predominately anecdotal and lacks fairness, objectivity, and balance (Herman and Chomsky 2010; Vargo, Guo and Amazeen 2017: 2029). Allcott and Gentzkow (2017: 213) define fake news to be news stories that are intentionally and verifiably false and aiming at misleading the audience. The purpose of fake news is disinformation of the public where the aim is political influence and financial gains (Vargo, Guo and Amazeen 2017). Fake news is not a recent phenomenon, and notably, it is as old as civilisation. It has its roots in the printing press and it is not only limited to it since rumours are part of fake news which aim at spreading character assassinations of people and, in most cases, innocent ones. Fake news is evolving with digital space and its capacity to set an agenda is at a peak. However, fake news and agenda setting can be traced as far back as the 4<sup>th</sup> century with the infamous *Donation of Constantine* which is, to date, known as “*the best forgery*” (Whitford 2008: 28). The forgery was conjured because the Catholic Church wanted to take control of states from the ruling class. The church claimed that it had land rights from Constantine I’s donation letter until around 1440 when the Italian humanist and priest, Lorenzo Valla, proved that the letter was fake. The church and papacy,



under this fake claim, went on to conquer vast territories and gained more political control over kingdoms. This fake donation letter sets an agenda of proprietorship where nations felt that they and their land belonged to the church.

In approximately 1445, in the city of Kent in Northern Italy, a priest named Bernadine Afletti claimed that local Jews had murdered a child and drunk his drained blood as a celebration for Easter. This fake story prompted hatred and unprecedented killings of Jews as they were accused by Christians for feasting on the blood of children. With this fake news, Afletti was consciously setting an agenda of hatred, power and wealth accumulation. Central to the agenda setting theory is that it taps into that which the masses already believe or have in mind. In the two instances, the agenda was set successfully because people believed the elite hence they could not question the church's claim about the donation and in the second instance, Afletti manipulated unsavoury relations of Christian and Jews.

It is important to analyse today as to how fake news pulls the strings in agenda setting. The recent USA political elections, where Donald Trump was victorious, laid bare how effectively fake news sets public agenda. For instance, a fake news story by [wtoe5news.com](http://wtoe5news.com) reported that Pope Francis had endorsed Donald Trump's presidential candidacy (Allcott and Gentzkow 2017: 214). The news was shared over one million times on Facebook thus indicating that it not only managed to set a public agenda but also influenced the public opinion. Vargo, Guo and Amazeen (2017: 2031) state that the content of fake news precipitates towards inflammatory claims, sensationalisation, and omission of pertinent details with the intent to misinform the public. Fake news sets the agenda for financial gains and to stir controversy where the producers of this become the ultimate sole beneficiaries. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter use algorithms to harvest data from the users which in turn is used to set a manipulative agenda that perpetuates controversy, mistrust, and anger. Therefore, great caution must be exercised when it comes to the content from social media because it is often loaded with lies, extremism, and racial bias.

#### **(e) Agenda Setting and Feminism**

The symbiotic relationship between the media and the public is fundamental in understating the nexus between media agenda and public agenda. Media sets the agenda and equally, the public sets the agenda, hence there is a positive feedback loop where the media feeds from the public agenda and the public also feeds from the media agenda.

Setting out an enquiry into the effects of agenda setting and femicide automatically draws attention to feminism as a measure to establish a logical explanation of how agenda setting interacts with femicide. Since femicide is a manifestation of patriarchy and misogyny, it is prudent therefore to insert feminism since it is an ideology that seeks to underscore that women's safety, liberty, and rights should be secured and considered equally as important as those of male counterparts. Feminism, an instrument to fight for gender equality and equity, focuses on patriarchy and its fatal manifestations such as femicide. Where then do the agenda setting theory and patriarchy intersect? Agenda-setting relies on the use of 'text' to convey messages to the audience. That which is propelled to prominence within a news story is achieved through a selected pattern of text. Text itself is inherent of power and likewise feminism seeks to empower the disempowered due to patriarchy that creates superiority and inferiority binaries.

Agenda is set through 'text' that has an exclusive inherent ability to (re)produce meaning that (re)produces dominant ideologies that maintain superiority and inferiority binaries. Texts and visuals basically (re)produce ideologies, and legitimise and naturalise them (Xu 2020). That is, linguistic aspects are used to shape reality instead of reflecting reality and making certain issues salient and emphasising them makes them more important than others. A classical echo from Fowler (1991: 11) states that "a world of the press is not the real world, but a world skewed and judged". Thus, basically text (linguistic features) is the feature that is used to skew the reality through selective use of language and choice of which realities become part of the news content.

It is profoundly important that the media agenda on femicide should employ an agenda (text) that is in synergy with feminism's clarion call that patriarchy should be abolished since it privileges the male gender over the female gender. Agenda is achieved through the utilisation of "linguistic aspects such as syntax, lexical structures, modality and speech act" (Carvalho 2008: 163). In sum, agenda setting on femicide should seek to re-establish gender justice which will respond to Catherine Mackinnon's (2007) concern of "when will women become humans".

#### **(f) Effects of Agenda-Setting**

Agenda-setting, as it has been belaboured, is about conscious selection and salience in news. Media professionals have the privilege to select certain attributes of a news story and give them not only emphasis but also salience. This act, in a way, has a profound effect on how the public will think of the news story because what listeners/readers listen to/read is nothing but censored news. It is evident that the opinions formed and attitudes developed by the public after listening

to/reading a news story is *disingenuous* or perhaps, lightly put, it is not a solid and conclusive opinion because it is formed on a few selected attributes. This picture is vivid in the case of Ray Rice when he assaulted Janay Palmer where at first the public opinion was as usual, soft on Rice, that it was an accidental outcome, but the release of the second video wholly changed the public opinion that violence against women is not accidental but perpetual and structural (Anderson 2017: xii). This unfortunate incidence of Rice indicates that the pattern of communicating an issue has an effect, be it positive or negative, on the audience. In other words, communication is an action that produces results, it has consequences (Stiegelbauer, Tirban and Onofrei 2012: 316). When Rice's assault was communicated differently, the public was influenced differently which underscores the importance of setting the femicide agenda cautiously in a more gender-sensitive and victim-oriented manner.

McCombs (2005: 549) outlines three effects of agenda-setting: "forming an opinion, priming opinions about public figures through an emphasis on particular issues and shaping an opinion through an emphasis on particular attributes". The public opinion is largely focused on which news stories have been consumed. The researcher will focus on femicide since it is the centre of this study. The opinion and attitude that the public have on victims/perpetrators of femicide largely depends on the agenda set by the media on femicide. If the media reports femicide from an *accomplice* position as opposed to an activist position, the public is led to make an opinion that femicide is normal.. At first, the media produced a half picture of the assault incidence and a different public opinion was made which changed when the second video was released. Therefore, this sums that femicide, as with any other news discourse, needs to be entirely covered and that it will lead solid public opinion about the issue at hand.

The second effect of agenda setting is priming opinions about certain issues. Priming is embedded in cognitive psychology where the target is on human memory. Media professionals, when they write/broadcast about any news story, strive to pattern the news story to coincide with background knowledge/culture. This is executed manipulatively by journalists because they know very well that news patterned in a manner that resonates with prior knowledge or cultures is easily understood and accommodated. For instance, with femicide, often what is advanced by the media is the objectification of victims (women) (Easteal, Holland and Judd 2015; Sutherland *et al.* 2015). Perhaps this is attributed to the fact that in patriarchal societies, women are considered, erroneously as the researcher must underline, inferior and as sexual objects. Therefore, the media rides on the tide that women are considered inferior and portrays them as inferior in light of the fact that the media already knows that the public have a culture

that is unfriendly to women, hence their news stories will not be scrutinised but will be accepted and reinforce baseless underlying assumptions which are indeed toxic to women.

The third effect of agenda-setting is shaping public opinion through the emphasis of certain attributes. Media, in any case, seeks to grab public attention to successfully set the public agenda. It is truthful to a degree that the media is biased against women and in cases where men are at fault, the media uses positive attributes of the perpetrator and puts more emphasis on them. Nechama (2019: 101) acknowledges that there is indeed a systematic bias in the media. For instance, if intimate partner femicide has occurred, the media will usually frame the *couple* as happy and sociable, and the perpetrator as a loving man and caring husband (Mellado 2013). When these positive attributes of the perpetrator are raised, the researcher submits that it is the media's un/conscious attempt to conceal the atrocity committed, a call for public clemency for the perpetrator, and displacement of the violence against women within the social spectrum to an individual one thus implying that the violence is accidental.

### **2.2.2 Framing Theory**

In the field of communication, the origin of the framing theory is attributed to Erving Goffman (1974) in his ethnographic research that dealt with how individuals interact and make sense of their environment and interpersonal interactions. The framing theory is construed to be an extension of the agenda setting theory. It is also considered to be the second level of the agenda setting theory which fairly indicates that these two theories should be considered as two sides of media theory. Entman (1993: 52) posits that:

To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.

Freyenberger (2013: 7) echoes Entman's definition of frames that it is about how the media presents an issue and personality to the audience. Framing is an exercise where, consciously or unconsciously, some aspects of the story are omitted and some are included, thus they have a notable importance in promoting the significance of the issue at hand and influencing audience conclusion as well as shaping its attitudes and perceptions. Succinctly put, Gillespie *et al.* (2013: 225) define frames as "prepacked social constructions that function as fully developed templates for understanding a given social phenomenon". It is important to note that in the 'prepacking', the act may be (un)conscious. Namusoga (2016: 54) sums that framing is about selection that ultimately ends with emphasis thus defining to the audience what issue is of

importance and worthy of discussion. This has a fundamental bearing on the opinion that the audience will make having read or listened to the story.

McCombs and Ghanem (2001: 70) outline that framing comes from photography and cinematography referring to the angle of the camera, “perspective in the styling of a visual image”. The photo and the image therefore depend on the individual behind the camera, pen, or microphone.

It is therefore apparent that the audience’s conception of a news story relies on how the story is being framed – issues included and omitted. The issues that are selected and made salient in the whole picture of the story will not only determine but equally influence how the audience understands the story. That is, what is inserted, how it is patterned, and what is omitted have a profound bearing on how the news story will be interpreted and understood. Freyenberger (2013: 11) sums that the pattern with which a news story is displayed has a profound impact on how the audience will perceive and interpret the story. That which is included and omitted un/consciously has a significant bearing on the understanding of an issue.

#### **(a) Functions of Frames**

Entman (1993: 52) defines frames succinctly and broadly as “a selection of perceived reality and make them more salient in communicating text in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”. This explanation of framing sets a context from which to depart in defining functions of frames in the news. Basically, there are four distinct frame elements: identification of the problem, identification of causes, provision of evaluation, and lastly, recommendation of a solution. In short, frames in news stories diagnose the problem and prescribe the remedy. Putting in context these four outlined functions, in the advent of femicide, the manner or pattern that the media employs leads the audience to identify what the problem is with femicide cases, what the causes are, and provides an analysis and recommends solutions to the challenge. For example, in mega femicide cases such as the ones of O.J. Simpson and Oscar Pistorius, media frames that were used to define the problem and determine the causal agent alluded to psychological stress to which perpetrators are exposed. In this frame, the athletes were exonerated and femicide pathologies were dismissed, and as such, the diagnosis was wrong hence the prescription.

The media does not explicitly point to the athlete being the perpetrator outright but instead points to other factors such as stress. This framing takes away the audience's ability or propensity to demand accountability from the perpetrator and collapses everything into public sympathy instead. It could be a media-conscious attempt to protect and preserve male hegemony or an unconscious bias that is instituted by patriarchal ideology.

Since the media operates within a patriarchal society, it is perhaps inclined to pay allegiance to patriarchy – be pro-men. This is where the concept of media becomes integral in the quest for gender equality. Media should and must be used as a tool to fight patriarchy and all its manifestations. The media is seen as the fourth republic (Nyarko 2015) which is mandated with oversight. Therefore, human rights and sustainable development are key aspects for which the media ought to strive. The question now is if the media frames femicide in a manner that it exculpates men, stimulates positive public debate and response, and appropriately locates it as a social problem rather than individual pathology. Scheufele and Tewksbury (2007: 11) argue that framing “is based on the assumption that how an issue is characterised in news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by the audience”. If media frames femicide in a binary approach where men, as perpetrators, are lumped under positive self-presentation and women, as victims, under other negative presentations, then it is evident that the audience is hoodwinked to believe and see men (righteous) as good and women (provocative) as bad. However, the seminal work of Kahneman and Tversky (1984) examined how a news story presented differently but with one outcome affects the understanding and conclusion of the audience. Furthermore, as Entman (1993) indicated that frames recommend action, the options presented in media frames seem to have a profound stake in the decision making of the audience, as evidenced by Kahneman and Tversky's (1984) study of psychological roots of framing. It is now an accepted view that the public does not act or respond to frames emptily – they rely on their schemata and cultural background as evidenced by Goffman's sociological foundations of framing (micro-construct).

Kahneman and Tversky, in their study, offer this ground-breaking example of how frames operate and the effect of suggested remedies as to how they affect the understanding and decision making of the audience:

Imagine that U.S. is preparing for the outbreak of an unusual Asian disease, which is expected to kill 600 people. Two alternative programs to combat the disease have been proposed. Assume that the exact scientific estimates of the consequences of the programs are as follows: if program A is adopted, 200 people will be saved (72%). If program B is adopted, there is a one-third probability that 600 people will

be saved and a two-thirds probability that no people will be saved (28%). Which of the two programs would you favour? (Kahneman and Tversky 1984: 343).

In this experiment, 72% of people opted for program A whilst 28% opted for B. In the subsequent experiment for the same above situation, there were two identical solutions offered but framed in terms of death rather than the lives to be lost. “If program C is adopted, 400 people will die. If program D is adopted, there is one-third probability that nobody will die and two-thirds probability that 600 people will die”. In this instance, there was an inverse outcome to the first scenario – program C saw a massive decline and scored 22% whilst program D came out with 78%.

That which this illustrates is that there is a delicate interplay between media frames and audience schemata. The pattern in which an issue is framed does not mean that the audience will blindly assimilate it or be randomly influenced. The schemata and cultural background are concepts that mediate the influence of frames to the audience. Freyenberger (2013: 11) underlines two constructs in framing: macroconstruct and microconstruct. The macroconstruct is where the news producers frame an issue in such a way that it will appeal to or resonates with that which the audience already know. For example, one can look at the front page of The Times newspaper published on 15 February 2013 following Steenkamp’s killing by Oscar Pistorius, as depicted in Figure 2.1.



Figure 2.1: The Times Newspaper, 15 February 2013.

One would argue that the choice of framing the headline as ‘Oscar’s darkest day’ is a perfect example of a macroconstruct because the journalist knew very well that the audience has knowledge of Oscar Pistorius’ brightest days in winning Gold at the Olympics and being the highlight and inspiration for people and athletes living with disabilities. Thus, in a way, this darkest day will be easily understood and perhaps be set aside as a tragedy to their hero. It is important to note that this framing not only sets aside guilt, but is also seen and/or construed as an isolated incidence (*out-of-the-blue incidence*). More often, Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is framed as an isolated incidence when it is not (Bullock and Cubert 2002; Gillespie *et al.* 2013).

The microconstruct level is where the audience forms an opinion with the issue they have received. This headline also serves to outline how the media frames the news – this type of headline and the choice of diction invokes a search for the brightest days and overlooks this rarely darkest day. It is a construct that foregrounds clemency to Pistorius on this perceived ‘tragedy’ and invites the audience to remember the ‘Hero’ Oscar in the midst of all this premeditated murder.



In this way, it clearly shows that framing is indeed an extension of the agenda setting theory. The journalist has set the agenda of forgiveness foregrounded in the darkest day or perhaps what is envisaged as the darkest day. This agenda, in one way or another, compels the audience to discuss Oscar's brightest days as opposed to this one darkest day, thus exonerating him from this brutal killing of Reeva. Another fact is that the newspaper headline sets the agenda of making the perpetrator a victim (exoneration), thus sanitising the perpetrator of foul play. In the advent of exonerating the perpetrator, the victim is automatically blamed. The headline is a frame that is concerned about Oscar's fall from grace and careless about Reeva the victim. This headline exemplifies how the framing theory is an extension of the agenda setting theory.

In the case of this study, to what extent the public is aware of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and the cultural perception of domestic violence will mediate frames of femicide. The media femicide frames' influence will depend upon the breadth and depth of IPV awareness. Entman (1993: 52) asserts that frames have four areas of interest in the communication process: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture. These four areas should operate in unison for the message to be effectively communicated. Stated differently, Galtung (1969: 169) states that there is an influencer, an influence, and a mode of influencing which the researcher sees as perfectly dovetailing with Entman's assertion.

The communicator is stated to make an (un)conscious framing in the construction of a message to the audience. The text equally will reflect the position of the communicator through the choice of words (diction), metaphors, and phrases that are used. Of great importance in the text is not only what is not included but also what is omitted because frames are about selection and salience. Sweeney (2012) underscores that in communication discourse, what is more important is that which is not written – what is silenced. The receiver must have a requisite ability to be affected by the frames and background knowledge/culture. When it comes to culture, the media focuses on what the dominant ideology is within and targets it and makes it more salient. In this case, the media will target the maintenance of patriarchy since it is a dominant culture.

#### **(b) What influences Framing**

It has been belaboured that the media houses' main objective is not only to set a public agenda but also to determine how it should be discussed and the opinions to be formed. Thus, what influences framing? Scheufele (1999: 109) outlines three sources of influence, the first being

journalist-centred which has to do with the construction of frames to fit existing patterns of knowledge. Frames are made to correspond with attitudes, ideologies, and professional norms. The second source of influence is called organisational routines – it has to do with the political orientation of the media house. The third factor of influence is external sources. This has to do with political actors, authorities, and interest groups.

In sum, looking at the theory of structural violence by Galtung, cultural and structural violence are key factors in influencing framing. Frames are nothing but a reflection of one's cultural and structural attitudes, ideologies, and norms (Scheufele 1999: 109). There are multiple factors that come into play when framing an issue: the journalist attitude, world view, the organisational orientation, and interest group. Put in context, in Turkey, femicide is framed as '*honour killings*' which clearly reflects the cultural attitude and obsession towards the chastity of women (Cetin 2015). Therefore, framing is clearly influenced or anchored on ideology be it cultural, religious, or political.

The interpretation and understanding of femicide is influenced by media frames used in femicide. According to Scheufele (1999: 105), the audience's reception of news stories is influenced by "pre-existing meaning, structures and schemas". The underlying knowledge and attitudes are some of the factors that contribute to the acceptance or rejection of the news story. Galtung's theory of structural violence becomes key in understanding how the audience is influenced by frames. Underlying direct violence is cultural and structural violence which are, in a way, abstract. Direct violence is a manifestation of both structural and cultural violence at play. In the same vein, the audience's acceptance and effect of frames lies in the audience's predispositions – audience's structural and cultural position.

Framing is also influenced by voyeurism – the insatiable need for the audience to empathise or passively relate to the incidence. Framing is influenced by voyeuristic curiosity: how the murder happened while necessarily the concern should be why it happened (Sweeney 2012: 154). Choquette (2012: 3) warns that framing motivated by voyeuristic perspective runs the risk of hoodwinking the audience to focus on the body (cadaver spectacle) rather than focusing on the life (lost). Framing influenced by voyeurism makes women as victims salient and not the structural and cultural causes of violence (Taylor 2009; Spies 2020). The journalist, in framing femicide, will have to cautiously decide how this heinous crime is framed in such a manner that it will call for accountability instead of being a narrative of pleasure that makes the audience a

voyeur as opposed to an agent that can seek accountability and prevent the crime (Choquette 2012: 110).

### (c) What influences the Audience

There are two most important elements that influence the audience: selection and salience (Scheufele 1999: 106). The media, in any news story, decides what is newsworthy and it is that that will be given salience to inform the public agenda. Kuypers (2002) points out that the tools for frames are keywords, visuals, metaphors, symbols, and concepts un/consciously used to advance a desired understanding. Figures 2.5 and 2.6 in Section 2.3.5 vividly illustrate how framing can influence and impact on the understanding of the audience. For instance, in Figure 2.5 in Section 2.3.5, the front page reads “*Legless Olympian Arrested*” – this phrase is purely aimed at invoking public sympathy for legless Pistorius to be jailed. The journalist of the story had nothing to do with Reeva’s life being prematurely taken by her partner. The aim was to project the public to a sense of concluding that the police and the judicial system are heartless. The atrocity that Reeva went through as the victim is not only suppressed but also obscured. In Figure 2.6 in Section 2.3.5, the front of the newspaper reads “*Blade runner held for shooting*”. Once more, the headline does not put Reeva as the victim at the centre but concentrates on Pistorius. The headline is ambiguously phrased where it can mean that a blade runner is held for jumping the traffic light (*shooting*) or perhaps taking a picture in an area where there is a restriction to take photos.

The interpretation of how the media frames femicide depends on the audience’s ability and analysis. In other words, the audience, in every social problem, is given half of the whole picture to form an opinion and therein the veracity of the opinion depends on the type of audience. Sutherland *et al.* (2016) corroborate that the “media have a tendency to offer their audiences overly simplistic, inadequate and distorted representations of the extent and nature of the problem”. However, it should be noted that the distortion is not always deliberate; it is equally unconscious because it is driven by underlying individual attitudes hence Sutherland, McCormack and Eastaugh should have been precise. There should be a clear distinction between conscious distortion aiming to steer a particular understanding and subconscious distortion that may arise out of unknown circumstances to the messenger. The circumstances could be incapacity, and journalists and editors being the products of a patriarchal and exploitative society and as such, fail to disengage from such. Nechama (2020: 186) corroborates that journalists and editors are societal moulds that typically reflect internalised values that manifest in their content output and framing.

According to Scheufele (1999: 105), there are three types of audiences. Active processing is that type of audience that seeks additional sources of information on the news story with the knowledge that the media provides a half picture. The second type of audience are reflective interrogators who give a news story a thought and engage in talking with other fellow readers/listeners to establish a common understanding. The third and last type of audience are called selective scanners – this is the type of audience that seeks information that is only appealing to them. The media therefore engages different frames to target the diversity in the audience in an effort to achieve setting the agenda for the public.

#### **(d) Framing Femicide, Peace Journalism, and Peacebuilding**

Framing entails how news stories are patterned to solicit a desired understanding and appropriate action on the matter at hand. The framing theory appears to be core in addressing IPV which ultimately leads to femicide. It has been argued by Entman (1993) that frames may be (un)conscious outcomes. Frames are existing social constructions that function as '*post sings*' to help the audience reach a particular understanding pertaining to a phenomenon. Reese (2010: 20) posits that "frames are constructed and promoted to achieve a predetermined outcome". It is imperative that the media actively frames femicide in a manner that challenges the stereotypical patriarchal mode to achieve peacebuilding and gender equality. Media frames should challenge male hegemony which will lead to peace and harmony. The source of injustices that women suffer is the power imbalance between men and women and if media frames target that, peace is inevitable. Media frames should target patriarchy and bring to salience its manifestation such as femicide. These frames will lead to peace because perhaps the current frames focus on men as individuals and not on patriarchy as an institution and as such, men become defensive thus stalling the process of peacebuilding. Men should be invited on-board the femicide challenge and journey of peacebuilding for them to feel that they are not targets but that patriarchy is. Using carefully selected frames "can exert great social power when encoded in a term like affirmative action" (Entman 1993: 55).

The question that is uncontested is the need to reimagine the framing of femicide and how the media is channelled to adapt to this new approach. Peace journalism appears to be an answer as it is a concept that seems to have the capacity to lead journalists into writing/broadcasting news stories that will challenge stereotypes and maintain not only genuine but sustainable peace. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) contend that Peace Journalism (PJ) "is when editors and reporters make choices – about what to report, and how to report it – that create opportunities

for society at large to consider and to value non-violent responses to conflict”. The caveat is what will editors and reporters choose to pick in news stories? If they perpetuate “war journalism”, violence shall be considered as an alternative to conflict by the audience, but if news stories are framed from a peace journalism perspective, a non-violent response to conflict will therefore be adopted. Govender (2015: 31) shares a similar sentiment that positive media acts as a site and instrument of transformation. Peace journalism turns a new page in media discourse as it advocates for advancing non-violence as an alternative to every conflict situation. In the case of femicide which results from intimate partner conflict that escalates to violence, peace journalism is relevant as it will help people realise that conflict is inevitable but violence is a choice.

There is a reason why the peace-journalism approach should be adopted in framing femicide. It is a form of reportage that seeks to create opportunities for the audience to consider and value non-violent responses to conflict (Adebayo 2015: 30). The peace-journalism approach is discussed herein because it will weigh in on the content of the training manual to be designed to train journalists on reporting femicide. Two selected outstanding tenets of PJ pronounced by Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) are that it:

- explores the background and contexts of conflict formation, presenting causes and options on every side, and
- gives a voice to the views of all rival parties, from all levels.

There is consistency in literature that femicide is reported as an accidental episode of an isolated form of violence whereas it is a terminal end of the series of assaults (Jankey 2009; Mellado 2013; Sutherland *et al.* 2016; Anderson 2017). PJ therein becomes key in the reportage of femicide because it has been established that news stories of femicide lack background and context thus implying that femicide is an accidental outcome. Background and context are paramount and emphasised in PJ. An example of how important background and context are is seen in the case where Ray Rice assaulted Janay Palmer. At first, as Anderson (2017: 3) argues, the incident is often framed as accidental, meaning that in this case of Ray Rice, the framing was such that it was an accidental assault of Palmer. When *TMZ* released the second surveillance video footage of Rice assaulting Palmer, in a different incident, it was only then when the media and public narrative changed since it dawned that the phenomenon of violence is perpetual and has a history. Media frames changed from treating violence as an isolated individual pathology to a social problem where power and gender are at play.

The second tenet of PJ is that of giving a voice to all parties from all levels. It is axiomatic that oftentimes the victims of femicide cannot speak for themselves because they are dead. The question is how can the media recall the victims' voices and opinions from their graves? Accounts of violence should be heavily drawn from family members and friends rather than the police who only give the criminal side of the story devoid of the history of violence prior to death. In this way, the feelings, experiences, and opinions of the dead shall be re-lived and voiced.

### **2.2.3 Structural Violence Theory**

Johan Galtung is the pioneer of the structural violence theory. In 1969, Johan Galtung made a profound breakthrough in the discourse of peacebuilding by interpreting the interplay between structural violence, cultural violence, and direct violence. Following Galtung's theory of structural violence came Lederach (2003) conflict transformation theory the aspects of which will be discussed as it feeds and truly complements the structural violence theory for this study. That which Lederach opines in the conflict transformation theory parallels and converges with the structural violence theory hence the discussion herein will draw from both.

Femicide is a result of a conflict that was not managed and ended up escalating to terminal violence. What is this conflict to start with? Many peace scholars have ushered in several definitions about conflict, all of which tie to the fact that conflict arises out of incompatible views at the interpersonal, national, and supra-national levels. One of the most popular definitions of conflict is tendered by Coser (1967: 8) that "it is a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources in which the aim of the opponents are to neutralise, injure, or eliminate rivals". A continuum of the definition can also be accessed from Wilmot and Hocker (2007: 9) as they assert that "conflict is an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals". It is apparent that conflict is born when two parties do not share a similar goal. This is evident in the case of intimate partners when they hold different views and conflict arises which unfortunately often escalates to violence that ultimately ends with the loss of life (femicide). "Communication is the central element in all interpersonal conflict" (Wilmot and Hocker 2007: 10). This suggests that the media, as a form of communication, is key in addressing the issue of femicide as it will tap into transforming attitudes towards women. Lederach (2003: 21) also argues that "dialogue is essential to justice and peace on both an interpersonal and structural level". There are two key observations that the researcher has made in the definition of conflict – one is that dialogue is an essential buffer

to thwart escalation and two is that conflict exists in different levels: at the personal level (where it is interpersonal conflict), at the structural level (structural conflict), and at the cultural level (cultural conflict). This tripartite view of conflict appeals to Galtung's view of violence and rightly so because violence is on the end of the conflict spectrum.

It is important for this study to conceptualise what violence is: "violence is that which increases the distance between the potential and the actual, and that which impedes the decrease of the distance" (Galtung 1969: 169). Galtung gives a somewhat philosophical but interesting definition, the potential of which the researcher would put as ideal and actual as practically that which is transpiring. Galtung (1969: 169) details a good example of that during the Neolithic period, where a life-expectancy of thirty years was acceptable although in today's time, the same life-expectancy, be it due to wars or any form of social injustice, is considered as violence. This view therefore gives a picture that violence is not '*static*' but dynamic. Lederach (2003: 20) posits that since violence is dynamic, peace should also be construed as dynamic and multifaceted.

Bessel (2015: 1) posits that violence "may be planned or deliberate or it may be an eruption of uncontrolled passion; it may be lauded or it may be condemned; it may be overt or it may consist largely in the threat". The definition of violence indeed has evolved from narrowly meaning the use of physical force to beyond. The latter definition of Bessel is questionable where it states that violence is the "eruption of uncontrolled passion". This claim of uncontrolled passion feeds directly into this study as literature does suggest that this is an excuse (cultural violence) that perpetrators put forth when they have killed females. However, Bessel (2015) provides a redeemed definition of violence that includes the aspect of power. Power is key in femicide because the choice to perpetrate violence is largely due to power inequality. Galtung made a clear distinction of two types of violence being structural violence and direct violence. Structural violence is also seen or referred to as indirect violence. Structural violence, which embodies cultural violence, and direct violence are intricately connected. Structural violence is that concept that has punctuated several fields from medical anthropology, peace studies, and anthropology. Structural violence from peace studies has taken commendable strides perhaps as Bessel (2015) underscores that violence has glossed everyone's mind as the world is becoming more violent day by day. Farmer *et al.* (2006: 1686) define structural violence as follows:

[Structural violence is] social arrangements that put individuals and populations in harm's way. The arrangements are structural because they are embedded in the

political and economic organization of our social world; they are violent because they cause injury to people (typically, not those responsible for perpetuating such inequalities).

Structural violence is about inequality and skewed power distribution and/or hierarchised power which in all fairness privileges virtually all men while women become victims. Galtung (1969: 170) posits that structural violence/indirect violence is that type of violence where there is no direct actor whilst in direct violence, there is a clear-cut actor.

[S]tructural violence is present when social arrangements created and/or maintained by one set of people enable harms for a different set of people while marginalizing the ability of the harmed people to transform those arrangements in ways that protect, preserve or restore their well-being (Srikantia 2016: 227).

For instance, in the case of femicide which is a gender-motivated killing of women, it is a phenomenon that embodies direct violence, structural violence, and cultural violence. Firstly, it is direct violence because there is physical force from men in killing women. Secondly, it is structural because it is a phenomenon that albeit brutal and unjust, to which the state machinery is not responsive to it. They are unresponsive because social institutions are still in a patriarchal mode of operation where women are still perceived as subordinates. Standish (2014: 111) claims that structural violence persists because support interventions and prevention strategies to challenge male privilege are non-existent or feeble. This is evidenced, for example, by insignificant conviction rates, light sentences, and cultural practices such as 'honour killings' (Jankey 2009; Mathews 2010; Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015) because men are perpetrators or actors/agents of violence against women and are still largely in all institutional leadership positions where victims seek justice. An example of structural violence in the discourse of femicide is insignificant conviction rates of murderers which basically stems from the uncondusive atmosphere of reporting violence, poor investigation capacity, and the bias of the judicial system (Rude 1999).

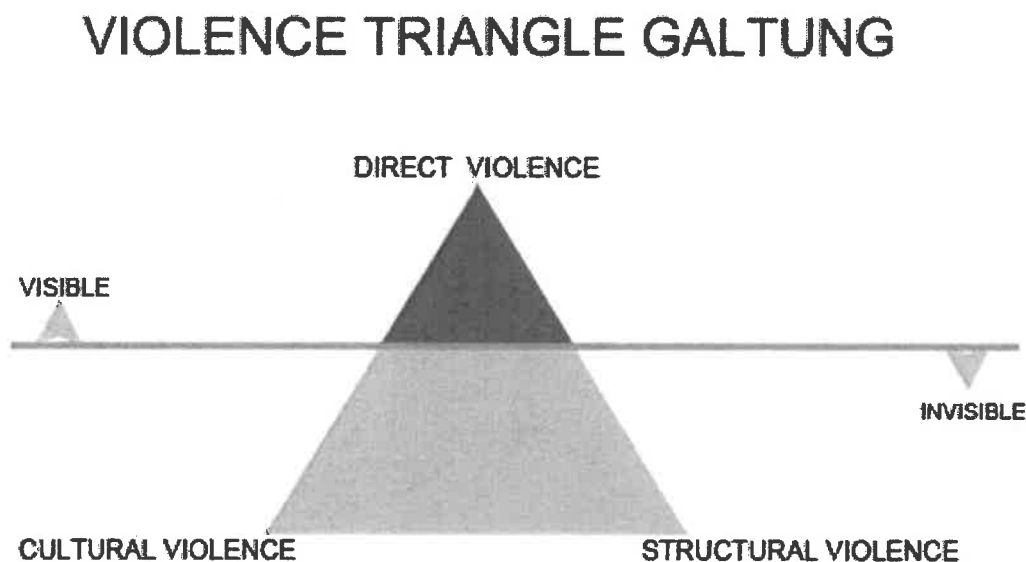
Structural violence summarily is that form of violence that emanates from social and institutional structures which impede individuals from attaining their rights or basic needs. Structural violence is unobtrusive, invincible, and often there is no specific person to be held responsible for it. The flip side of the structural violence is direct violence, which is visible and the actor is a person or group that can be held responsible and accountable for their deeds.

In these two concepts, structural and direct violence, Galtung (1990) added the third concept in his typology of violence which he called cultural violence to complement his tri-view of



violence. “Cultural violence [are]... aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence – exemplified by religion and ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science (logic, mathematics) – that can be used to justify or legitimize direct or structural violence” (Galtung 1990: 291). There is a symbiotic relationship between these three types of violence. Cultural violence axles around institutions such as religion which often have oppressive practices where no one accounts for all the injustices (structural/indirect violence) done unto individuals. Cultural violence is ‘sedative’ since it makes direct violence and structural violence appear good (glossed) or innocuous. Cultural violence is that type of violence that gives reason for structural and direct violence in the sense that it gives an explanation, justification, and excuse. There are several cultural violence episodes done in the name of culture that are gender-motivated. For instance, clitoral removal or honour killings (executed under the guise of culture and religion) in the name of culture is violence that is not individually owned but causes unbearable premature disease, mortality, and disability to women who are direct victims.

Galtung proposed a triangle of violence, as evidenced in Figure 2.2.



(Source: Galtung, 1990)

**Figure 2.2: Triangle of Violence**

The positioning of a triangle invokes different stories but in any case, direct violence is an event whilst structural violence and cultural violence are processes that ebb and flow. From Figure 2.2, it is evident that femicide as a form of direct violence is an event, perhaps one single episode, and structural violence (complacent media which perpetuates male hegemony) and

cultural violence (those practices that objectify women) are continuous and takes place every day to subordinate and intimidate women. The triangle of violence can be flipped on either side – it is not that direct violence should be at the tip or top of the triangle. Violence is fluid: in the vicious triangle, violence can spring from any corner and spill over to the other corner – there is no definite logical formula of how violence is transmitted. However, the presentation of violence at the tip of the triangle eases the interpretation. Direct violence at the tip of the triangle is visible and below are structural and cultural violence which are invincible and it is difficult to seek accountability from them. One would conclude that in the wake of any type of violence, there is a significant drainage of resources resulting in a serious needs deficit hence complicating the efforts of peacebuilding.

The thesis ultimately seeks to train media practitioners on gender-sensitive reportage after a careful analysis of media frames that are used in Lesotho's print and broadcast media. This attempt harbours transformation elements which make it imperative to touch on the conflict transformation theory. In general, the conflict transformation theory by John Paul Lederach is construed by the Berghof Foundation (2012: 23) to mean the following: "conflict-transformation is best described as a complex process of constructively changing relationships, attitudes, behaviours, interests and discourses in violence prone settings". Conflict transformation fundamentally addresses underlying structures, institutions, and cultures that perpetuate violence. At its heart, it seeks not only to end undesired relationships but also to build new conducive patterns, structures, and attitudes. This building of new structures, attitudes, and patterns will be realised through a training manual that will be designed post the femicide frame analysis. In this manner, the study will be touching on aspects of the conflict transformation theory because it will seek to transform attitudes towards women which will be revealed by news stories, and increase peace and justice.

#### **2.2.4 Association of Theories**

Language is a common thread amongst these theories. First, the agenda setting theory dictates that the public is given an agenda by the media – what issues to think about, how to think about them, and practically what conclusions to reach about proposed issues. Ironically, these issues are set by the media through a selective angle of reportage (framing). This, in a way, details a symbiotic relation of the agenda setting and framing theories. Agenda setting is about issues/news that are given prominence and coverage (accessibility) but what is given prominence falls into the framing theory. Therefore, the framing theory is often termed the second level of the agenda setting theory because it takes from the agenda setting theory

(McCombs 2005; McCombs, Shaw and Webster 2014; Adebayo 2015). Basically, the agenda setting and framing theories are two sides of the same coin.

Frames target certain aspects of information about the news story and omit others un/consciously-targeted aspects are brought to salience. Galtung's typology of violence outlines three types of violence – direct, structural, and cultural violence. This typology dovetails with Lederach's (2003: 23) four modes of how violence impacts individuals. These are:

- Personal: this involves the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels.
- Relational: at this level, it is about enhancing communication capacity because violence has a tendency to exterminate patterns of communication lines and interaction. In this mode, poor communication and dialogue techniques are enhanced.
- Structural: the root cause of conflict is targeted here. How social structures (in this study, the pertinent one will be patriarchy), organisations, and institutions are built to re/produce violence and how conflict brings about change to them. Structural transformation is key in enhancing relationships and ensuring peace and justice through access to basic needs.
- Cultural: these are the practices that undermine peace because they provide a justification and excuse for violence – the adage that states “*habitual thoughts are the ones we question the least*” wholly underscores the normativity of these practices albeit toxic to relationships, peace, and justice. One example of this is one Sesotho saying ‘*khang ea monna e khaoloa ke letlaka*’ (literally translating that if two men have a misunderstanding, fighting is the solution). These are cultural perceptions that ought to be transformed where more attitudes must be transformed and dialogue must be the alternative.

Galtung's theory suggests three thematic areas: direct, structural, and cultural as three areas in which violence is manifested. Lederach's four modes of how violence affects individuals fits into Galtung's three thematic areas showing clearly that there is a symbiotic relation of these two theories. Personal and relational modes fit into direct violence since targeting them has a bearing on direct violence. Structural violence obviously correlates to the structural mode as cultural violence does to the cultural mode.

Femicide, fanned by patriarchy, is a manifestation of all these theories and as such, it is a form of violence that leads to unequal power and life choices. Conflict transformation correlates with the agenda setting and framing theories which axle on language and its use since it advocates for dialogue which can be and is only achieved through communication. Language has power and it can '*hit or hurt*'. Perhaps it should be outlined that language also has the unprecedented potential to effect change hence why this study is undertaken. At the end of the study, ideally there is hope that the media will be capacitated to use language for justice, fairness, and equality. In this space, language and its use are evidently key in the construction of what is considered knowledge. Burr (1995: 3) opines that knowledge, a social construct, influences virtually every social action. Media is still inclined to talk of women as sexual objects and subordinates of men and it is this attitude that needs to be transformed (Buthelezi 2006; Choquette 2012). This is where the framing theory comes in: if the media does not frame femicide in such a way that male supremacy and violence are challenged while achieving peace and justice, then the media will be creating a toxic knowledge of normalising the subordination and oppression of women and this is structural violence because *no one* can be held accountable to such. Language is used to oppress, subordinate, and maim women but equally can be used positively as a tool to empower and free women from the shackles of patriarchy. Language is a common denominator in the agenda setting and framing theories. Language in the former is the one used to create knowledge, and in the latter, it is used manipulatively to solicit a predetermined comprehension of a news story. In sum then, language is a weapon that depends on the user if s/he decides to use it positively or negatively. Language is an overarching variable in all these theories that can be used to maintain the oppression and subordination of or empowerment of women.

The other common factor in these theories is the subject and object relationship. Galtung (1969: 169) opines that in any form of violence, there is a perpetrator and a victim. The structure that exists at the sentential level (subject and object) and syntax is very crucial as it has a bearing on the meaning. Syntax contributes to and embodies the structure of the sentence hence why it is key (Locke 2004). Any form of violence without a subject and object is surely structural. In this study, the objects are women for one reason – because they are the victims, and the subjects are men on account that they are the perpetrators. This relationship of subject and object is fundamental in language which encompasses the agenda setting and framing theories. Syntax is very important in grammar. The arrangement of the subject and object in a sentence is key in putting the message across. For instance, the passive form which is the one normally used in femicide discourse puts across a blurred or blunt message since the relation is object + subject.

Locke (2004: 49) posits that media accounts written in the passive form lack explicit agency, responsibility, and causality. Joanna (2016: 124) maintains that the use of the passive voice emphasises shared responsibility as it fails to ascribe the responsibility of violence to the perpetrator, thus swaying the audience's perception on the IPF as a social problem. For example, Ms 'Y' was shot and killed. In this instance, there is no agent (there is ellipsis – killer) hence it makes it awkward to hold someone accountable and thus makes it structural violence because there is no agent. Jóhannsdóttir and Einarsdóttir (2015) affirms that the portrayal of violence against women in the passive form is a serious setback because there is a lack of agency and perpetrator. However, those written in the active form (subject + object) is straightforward since the agent is explicit and can be held accountable. For example, Mr 'X' shot and killed Ms 'Y'. This is direct violence within the typology of violence by Galtung since Mr 'X' is the explicit agent and responsible figure for the murder.

The structural violence theory dictates that violence can be either intended or unintended. Perhaps it should be pointed out that within direct violence, there is an ongoing debate if violence can indisputably be unintended. Could violence be always a premeditated outcome of conflict? The researcher is of the view that violence is premeditated because he understands it to be a tool that an individual employs consciously to solve conflict. For instance, in the Sesotho cultural context, there are sayings such as '*Khang ea monna e khauloa ke letlaka*' (in the case of misunderstanding between men, fighting will settle the conflict). To the researcher as a man born and bred in the Sesotho culture, these cultural impressions incline me to argue that violence is a choice, a view that is shared by many peace scholars (Lederach 2003; Wilmot and Hocker 2007; Adebayo 2015; Muchemwa 2015).

When it comes to agenda-setting and framing, the agenda set may be (un)intended and framing as well. Media, perhaps at times, sets an unintended agenda and frames news unintentionally. However, often the media has a clear intention in setting the agenda and framing news in a manner that drives an anticipated motive. An example of a newspaper caption is given in Figure 2.3.

# Robert Mugabe: 'Bloodless coup' brings new period of hope, sense of freedom to Zimbabweans

By Africa producer Dingani Masuku

Updated 19 Nov 2017, 6:56am



**PHOTO:** Robert Mugabe ruled Zimbabwe with an iron fist (Reuters: Mike Hutchings)

**Figure 2.3: Reuters, 19 November 2017.**

The screenshot in Figure 2.3 with the headline 'bloodless coup' is a clear intentional agenda setting of selective democracy (tampering of democratic tenets) wherein it is suggested to the public that an elected leader can be toppled so long as the coup is bloodless. It goes further to claim that a new hope is dawning for Zimbabwe – a dangerous precedence where means are overlooked at the expense of ends. Unintended agenda set by this is that it states to the public that the ethos of democracy can be tampered with and as such that sets an agenda of lawlessness and disregard of democratic principles since it sanitises the coup.

The other area of similarity in these theories is that they have overt and covert behaviour. Violence, more precisely direct violence, falls within the manifest while the agenda setting and framing theories fall within the latent (Galtung 1969: 171). Conflict transformation itself is a deliberate (overt) attempt to transform relationships in the interest of peace and justice. Galtung

(1969) argues that “manifest violence, whether personal or structural is observable”. For instance, a genocide in Germany and Rwanda were structural but equally visible, structural because it was government policy – planned and executed by government institutions. Personal violence is easily interpreted – observing a person being assaulted is a clear-cut example. Personal violence is precisely defined as interpersonal or intrapersonal (Wilmot and Hocker 2007). On the other hand, structural violence needs a deeper analysis – a high infant mortality rate will need an individual to understand that state resources are not expended or channelled to where the need is. Structural violence therein becomes a computational outcome because infant mortality has more than one variable that contributes to it – such as a health system that does not provide contraceptive services leading to unplanned pregnancies, poor gender budgeting, and a poor health system that all sum up to infant mortality.

There is another strand of normalisation that glues the theories. Structural violence is often seen and considered normal, unlike direct violence. Galtung (1969: 292) contends that cultural violence legitimises violence or at least normalises it. Frames axiomatically commodify news and package it in normal and sellable frames. For instance, femicide in some societies is framed as ‘*honour killings*’ or ‘*crimes of honour*’ (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2003; Cetin 2015) and these frames sedate the society to conceive of femicide as a normal and accepted practice to purge society of defiant and impure individuals. Cultural violence turns to opaque reality with the use of frames that are complacent with the continued assault of women. This is where the symbiotic relation between media and public agenda is realised – media selectively use what the public already knows and as such, reinforce it (Easteal, Holland and Judd 2015). Violence is obscured in the process hence it becomes normalised through frames that exculpate perpetrators. Exoneration streams from the passive language (Martin and Grüb 2016), the misrepresentation and silencing of women in the news (Sweeney 2012), to trivialising them (Jóhannsdóttir and Einarsdóttir 2015).

Visual images are another component that tie the theories together. Images may either be static or dynamic in the sense that print images are static often accompanied by text while dynamic images are often accompanied by audio and/or text. Visuals (images) are key since the visual agenda setting is relatively a new stream of the agenda setting theory (Miller and Roberts 2010: 32). The agenda that was set by the repetitive and rebroadcasting of images, such as those of the 9/11 attack, have proved to be that of “courage, sacrifice and patriotism” (Miller and LaPoe 2016: 33). Visuals tie these three theories in this manner – when the structural violence theory is concerned, visuals such as 9/11 ones show direct violence and the choice of the

photojournalist (picture or camera angle) thus setting the agenda (agenda setting theory) and what ultimately is captured is a frame (framing theory). A journalist is a gatekeeper or a filter of news – he/she decides what the audience consumes, and how it should be consumed. A typical image that resonates well with apartheid in South Africa is that of Hector Pieterse who was shot by Sam Nzima during the 1976 student uprising. Fahmy *et al.* (2009: 8) rightly point out that some visuals are icons that invoke emotion and impact directly on the public opinion. The picture of Hector Pieterse is a clear indication of direct violence, structural violence, and a visual that sets the agenda of anger, and a call of defiance and resistance due to the frame that was taken. Miller and LaPoe (2016: 53) contend that pictures have a seductive quality and can mobilise the public to protest.

### **2.2.5 Section Summary**

The section has outlined and discussed the agenda setting theory, the framing theory, and the structural violence theory and their association and relation to the study. Conflict transformation is also discussed as it parallels and converges with Galtung's structural violence theory. The agenda setting theory is concerned with setting the public agenda and subsequently the framing theory shapes the discussion and understanding of the agenda is set forth. The discussion and the flow of the agenda is the manifestation of cultural and structural predispositions as evidenced by Galtung's structural violence triangle. The discussion has indicated how media is key in addressing femicide and the importance of language in conveying a message of peace, justice, and tolerance. Conflict transformation has set the light that dialogue is key in the transformation of attitudes which leads to peace and increased justice.

## **2.3 Overview of Women and Media**

### **2.3.1 Historical Position of Women**

In Lesotho, there has not been much scholarly work specifically on issues of gender violence; however, the status of women can be drawn as parallel to that of men. Therefore, the position and privileges of men are rationally a sound *yardstick* to measure women's status. This section will however attempt to map the status of women in Lesotho in general to draw a picture of women in Lesotho from the historical perspective to the current situation. In the formation of Lesotho as a nation state by King Moshoeshoe I (*circa* 1786-1870), women have never been considered as equal partners in the discourse of governance. It must be underscored that a strict patriarchal protocol is observed wherein women are expected to be in the kitchen and men in



the public domain. Some Sesotho phrases such as '*Mosali u ngalla motseo*' (a woman's hiding place is in the kitchen) clearly indicate that a woman's place is in the kitchen even if she is assaulted. Women were not by any means allowed to partake in issues of governance (public domain). These kinds of deep-seated practices are a manifestation and testimony that violence is seen as reasonable and inevitable by the perpetrator and the victim thus leaving little room for intervention. The amount of tolerance to violence against women which, in a way, normalises it turns to reproduce it which makes it harder for intervention because it appears to be a '*normal*' way of life.

Places like '*khotla*' (a place that in the context of this study can be seen as a newsroom – where the agenda is set by the use of certain frames) were designated places where issues of governance were discussed. This is a place exclusive to men and women could only be allowed if they were witnesses, accused, or bringing food and beer (Maloka 1997: 103). This purely lays bare how women have been excluded and stripped of their agency. Women's participation and representation has been and still is a challenge. Other exclusionary attitudes are seen in the first national elections that were held in 1960, where women were denied suffrage which underlines their inferior status in making rightful decisions and choices about their lives (Khaketla 1972: 55).

Women have always been perceived and legislated as minors which forever makes them live in the shadows of male figures be it their husbands, fathers, or in-laws (Maloka 1997; Matlho 2014). That which is most horrifying is that they even become minors to their own sons if their husbands have passed away. Perhaps it is safe to state that a female figure is born in captivity of a male figure because even if the husband dies, there is a practice called '*ho kenela*' (levirate custom) meaning that the brother of the deceased marries the widow. It must be underscored that this *remarriage* is not done in consultation with her which further testifies to her objectification. Maloka (1997: 107) underscores that these practices are merely to keep women under patriarchal control but however indicate that it was equally beneficial to women to retain assets from her dead husband. For the fact that women in their own capacity could not own property and land, having a male figure in the form of marriage was the only available avenue to property ownership. This customary practice annexed women as subordinates to males for their lifetime which seriously undermined and degenerated their status.

These attitudes strip women of independence, identity, agency, and dignity because they cannot live their lives as complete individuals. It is of utmost importance to understand attitudes

because they potentially predict behaviour and aid in the interpretation of others' world view (Springer and Harwood 2015: 227). From cradle to grave, females and males are seen through different unequal lenses. Maloka (1997: 103) posits that girls from as young as when they start crawling are dressed properly to cover their genitals while boys prowl up to as old as six years of age while girls are strictly conditioned for motherhood. Unequal treatment being brought up, where men are privileged and women are disenfranchised, manifests in all forms such as manspreading (subtle) and femicide (extreme).

This symbolic practice is simply construed to be an indication that girls as young as that become sexual prey. That is, in a sense they must live in hiding metaphorically while boys are brought up as predators. Browne (2017: 46) firmly claims that “gendered socialization leads to gendered violence”. It is apparent that boys and girls being indoctrinated to different gender roles sets them apart as foes instead of being complementarians. The equality lines are drawn as early as this through the process of socialisation where attitudes towards each other are developed. The home becomes a mould of power differences in gender although later there are other socialising variables such as media and education that shape individual attitudes (Browne 2017: 46). From a young age, girls and boys grow into the institution of marriage which by all means and costs is a site of male privilege. A sense and feeling of proprietorship now manifests itself in marriage. Marriage in the Sesotho culture can start with what is called '*chobeliso*' (elope – wherein both parties mature to make their own decision, or it can be termed abduction where there is no consent from the other party or the party is underage, often the female) where a girl can be just taken anywhere and be dragged to the boy's home as a bride even if they at first did not have any intimate relationship (Maloka 1997: 103). Practices like '*chobeliso*' directly feed into cultural violence as advanced by Galtung. These are cultural practices that violate the fundamental rights of girls but are condoned, normalised, and justified by culture.

Labour is another concept that is key in understanding the historical status of women in Lesotho. The researcher can briefly map out the labour discourse from the time that diamonds were discovered in South Africa because it was such a critical period in the relations of labour issues in Lesotho. In 1866, when diamonds were discovered in South Africa, it led to the massive migration of Basotho men to South Africa, thus leaving women as the heads of households which in a way accidentally altered the family setting by giving women a new role of head of household that was a territorial reserve for males.. This was somehow a breakthrough for women into the public domain because they had to make key decisions in the absence of their husbands and partake in the public sphere. However, key to this migration was that

relationships were seriously affected by oscillating patterns of migration (Gordon 1981: 61). The new order led to women becoming accustomed to leadership roles and exercising power. This was a collision course because despite the changing dynamics, men still perceived women as minors and that increased the chances of conflict between the two.

The division of labour saw women occupying the private sphere which was and is still considered subordinate, and the public sphere which was and still is considered superior. This issue of migration was a fraught gift in the sense that it presented women with financial autonomy and made them economic actors. However, on the other hand, it was an oasis of intimate conflict because men perceived women as transgressors when they would take part in the public sphere. Women's autonomy awakens an old attitude that has been inscribed by patriarchy and the status accorded to women in the formation of the Basotho nation, their culture and customs.

It must be underscored that King Moshoeshoe I, in an effort to consolidate his infant and fragile Chieftdom, would use women as *diplomatic tokens*. He would marry from potential rival tribes/clans to establish diplomatic relations such that his infant nation would not be attacked by them. Although this is often extolled as his prowess, from a human and women's rights as well as feminist view, the researcher submits that this was an absolute oppression, disregard of women's feelings, choice, and abuse of women who were used as tokens of peace where their agency and rights were trampled. They were mere objects that were used to prop up peace and forge alliances. They did not exist nor were they considered as beings with full rights.

Lesotho is now a signatory of multiple conventions and protocols aimed at improving the status of women: the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Domestic Violence Against Women (CEDAW), the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) held in Beijing, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), to mention a few selected examples that show the desire of Lesotho to improve the status of women. Among all these legal frameworks, there is a common denominator as shown as follows: MDG (3) – “Promote gender equality and empower women”; SDG (5) – “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”; and FWCW – “Women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace” (United Nations 1995: 3).

Central to all these is women empowerment in all spheres of life and protection of their rights as individuals. Besides these international legal frameworks, there are multiple legal frameworks that have been streamlined to improve the status of women and children. The Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2006, the Land Act 2010, and the Sexual Offence Act are some of the legislative texts aimed at improving the status of women in Lesotho. The Ministry of Gender, Youth, Sports and Recreation (MGYSR) is the government arm that is entrusted with gender issues and works in partnership with other ministries to achieve gender equality. It would be pessimistic not to acknowledge that significant strides have been made in creating a critical mass with positions such as Chief Justice, President of the Senate, and a quarter of cabinet for 2018 being women.

It would appear that the women in Lesotho should be enjoying all their liberties but the challenge is that their protection against violence exists in abstract terms. Matlho (2014: 13) asserts that the problem of IPV which leads to IPF continues unabated despite a plethora of legislative texts. Bureau of Statistics (2021) highlighted that in 2020 Lesotho recorded 898 murder cases. These are aggregate murder rates which makes it a bit difficult to map out femicide cases. However, this data is enough to emphasise that Lesotho is a violent country. In an environment where violence is the order of the day, the least powerful, and marginalised tend to become victims. Women in Lesotho are not spared from this violence because they are marginalised and command very limited power socially, culturally and economically. There is one reasonable conclusion in this case – there is a pocket of resistance that needs to be cleared. There must be programmes and policies that aim to dismantle patriarchy and tout men to make them key allies in the quest for gender equality.

Although Matlho (2014) concludes that IPV is a social problem, the researcher holds a similar view to her but the manner in which it is treated, particularly by the media, is very unfavourable. The researcher is of the view that the unfair status (IPV inclusive) is a social problem but the media coverage and framing of it demands serious attention. The media reports IPV/IPF as an individual pathology that happens within the domestic sphere and will as such be left to be treated within that fold (Meyers 1997; Jankey 2009; Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2011). It is apparent that intimate IPV/IPF, although it is seen and understood to be a social problem, the underlying cultural and structural predisposition dictates that it be reported as an individual problem which, in turn, perpetuates and preserves male hegemony. This current media behaviour makes the study relevant as it seeks to capacitate the media to understand and frame femicide as a social problem rather than an individual problem.

### **2.3.2 Empowerment versus Ideology**

There is no doubt that Lesotho and virtually all countries aim to improve the status of women. The desire and need to improve the status of women is well noted in any society but the ideology of male supremacy appears to be a stumbling block (Prieto-Carrón, Thomson and Macdonald 2007; Jankey 2009). There is an overt challenge to the assimilation of empowerment programmes and policies to the misogynous and patriarchal societies.

However, the empowerment of women can no longer be underestimated as their disempowerment also cannot be looked down upon since thus far, it has proved too costly. Women empowerment ensures, among other factors, food security and environmental preservation which are two major global challenges that the world is facing today (Jankey 2009). There is chronic food shortage which is exacerbated by climate change. Equally so, the continued disempowerment of women is a public health problem that disintegrates the cultural and social fabric of Lesotho and other nations. There are unbearable economic, socioeconomic, and health costs which nations bear because of violence against women which becomes a derailing factor to national development. According to McCormick (2015: 24), the real cost of IPV/IPF monetarily is challenging to consolidate since violence against women brings into the picture several institutions from the legal, police, health, and business sectors. There have been noble exercises to sum the cost of violence, notably in Lesotho, by the Commonwealth Secretariat and the report has concluded that in the 2017 fiscal year, the cost of violence was 5.5% of GDP (Bazlul 2019). In South Africa, there was also a similar study in 2014 that indicated that South Africa's violence cost is 1.3% of GDP annually (KPMG 2014). There is academic consensus that the cost of violence is very large spanning from intervention services to mortality, medical care, loss of participation and production, human and emotional costs, absenteeism, and policing.

The Irish Observatory on Violence Against Women (2013: 10) concurs that the implications of violence against women are multifaceted and complicated: they range from physical injuries to emotional distress, and loss of confidence, and it retards economic output. The Observatory claims that in 2008 in the UK, a study indicated that £16 billion was the total cost incurred, while in Ireland the cost was €2.2 billion per annum. In Australia, the cost of violence against women is also unbearable: the survivor in 2002-2003 incurred \$4 billion while there is a projection that the Australian government, in 2021-2022, will pay \$9.9 billion for domestic violence if appropriate mechanisms are not put in place to address this scourge (Our WATCH

2014: 8). Zeroing closer to South Africa, Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KPMG (2014: 39)) claims that gender-based violence has cost South Africa R28.4 billion in 2012 which is virtually 0.9% of GDP. There has not been a study undertaken in Lesotho to assess, in monetary terms, the cost of violence but an intelligent guess (inference) can be made from South Africa due to the proximity that perhaps Lesotho is still massively suffering. It is axiomatic that violence has an economic multiplier effect and as such, Lesotho and other nations should move beyond male supremacy to embrace equality to avert socioeconomic losses that are incurred in violence against women.

There is enough evidence that in Lesotho, programmes and policies are in place to address IPV/IPF taking cues from the constitution, legislative documents adopted, and protocols ratified. Perhaps the question would be whether turning these textual texts into practice would ensure the female liberties enshrined in these texts. Violence Against Women (VAW) is still exacerbated by a culture of silence and stigmatisation adds a layer of challenge to tackling the scourge. Empowerment collides with ideology because empowerment (programmes and policies) comes from outside the family territory and as such it is considered as an intrusion by precarious masculinity. The family and VAW are considered to fall within the private sphere and as such ought to be dealt with as a private matter (Jankey 2009; Mellado 2013; Matlho 2014). Chipatiso *et al.* (2014: 7), in a study done in Lesotho, affirm that VAW is not only seen as a private matter but it is also grossly underreported. All these challenges compound to deny VAW media coverage and perpetuate this vicious cycle of violence.

### **2.3.3 Lesotho Media Synopsis**

A challenge from mapping out a clear historical trajectory of media in Lesotho is inadequate scholarship on media and poor archival recording in cases where scientific studies were undertaken. Foko (2000) claims that the lack of a central place where literature can be accessed only complicates the challenge. The territorial politics of Lesotho are well documented where a significant portion of land was lost which is now the Free State (then the Orange Free State). Foko (2000: 8-9) posits that printing in Lesotho started in the 1800s but was halted when her territory was conquered to be what is now known as the Free State. There were three printing stations in Thaba Nts'o (now known as Thaba Nchu), Beersheba, and Platberg. The earliest printing station locally owned by the Basotho was set up in 1904 while missionaries had theirs (Moriya Printing Books) as early as 1861. It is on record that Roman Catholic missionaries in 1862 set up their own printing press in Mazenodi about 20 km south of the capital city of Maseru. Their newspaper was *Moeletsi oa Basotho* (literally translated as National Advisor)

published bilingually in English and Sesotho. In 1863, *Leselinyane la Lesotho* (literally translated as light of the nation) followed after the arrival of French missionaries in 1833 (Kunene 1977). The newspaper was established by the Paris Evangelical Missionaries Society (PEMS) and as such its content was predominantly religious, although later in the 1880s, the content shifted to accommodate more secular issues.

To fast track, systematic media in Lesotho came into effect from 1862 and 1863 by a newspaper called *Moeletsi oa Basotho* and *Leselinyane la Lesotho*, respectively. Broadcasting started in 1964 and it was a national radio (Radio Lesotho). The national radio was born at the height of the struggle for national independence from Britain and national elections that were held in 1965. The bulk of the content of Radio Lesotho was political and national independence rhetoric (power politics), and grassroots social issues were neglected. The Communications Act of 2012 is currently a legislative text that shapes and guides the media in Lesotho. For the better part, Lesotho has had one radio station squarely because of *Proclamation 5 of 1927* which not only restricted but prohibited the private operation of a radio station. An immediate question would be why was broadcasting a state monopoly? Dahal (2013) and Media Institute of Southern Africa (2015) maintain that monopoly over media is an attempt to control and censor what the public can know. The other theory could be that the government knew well enough that the media, as the fourth estate that demanded accountability and transparency, was not capacitated to account to the populace hence they wanted the monopoly of the media that would be severely censored and pro-government (Nyarko 2015). Therefore, reserving it would help the government to consolidate its power without being much answerable to the public. The station could only broadcast for five hours a day.

Television was a late-comer in Lesotho's mediascape in 1988 (Foko 2000). However, the proximity of Lesotho to South Africa did come with benefits because the Basotho could access the South African Broadcasting Corporation waves of both radio and television in Lesotho television which by then was broadcasting for an hour from 1800hrs to 1900hrs.

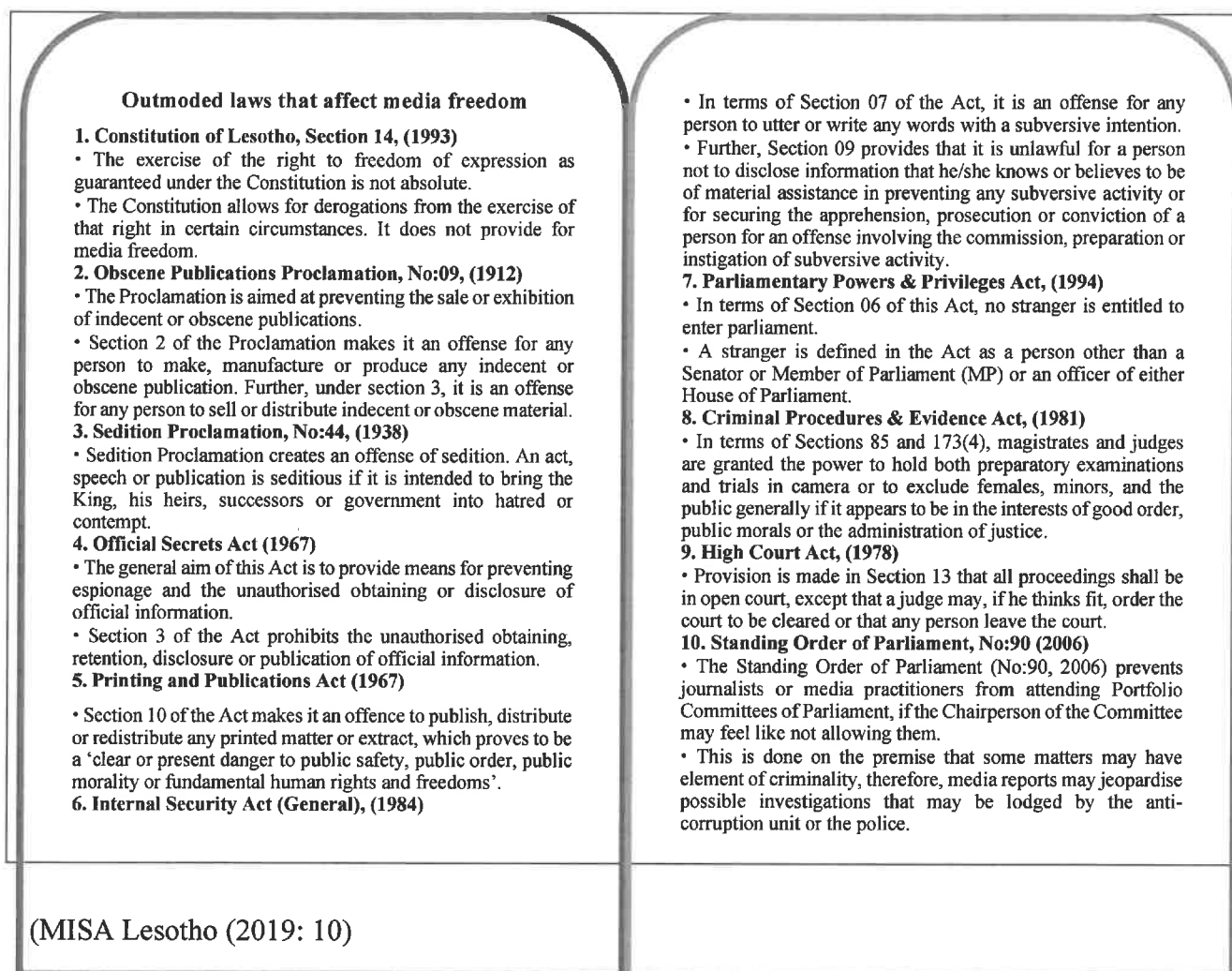
Has there been a shift in the ideology of the media in Lesotho, be it print or broadcast? The deficiency of literature on the status of the media in Lesotho makes it a challenge to respond emphatically and sufficiently to the question. It must be underscored that the government has allowed the plurality and diversity of print and broadcast media which, in a way, appeals to the fulfilment of the constitutional right of access to information. However, it appears that state media and private media are finding it difficult to wean off from the political rhetoric of the

1960s because the Media Institute of Southern Africa (2015: 31) articulates that state media need to be depoliticised and government censorship be eradicated. It is axiomatic that every government has exclusive interest in positive media and as such, this breeds a tendency of censorship, either directly or indirectly, which negates the freedom of speech. There is a disappointing status that “Lesotho’s state of media freedom seems to have backtracked nearly four decades, with increased polarisation of the broadcasting sector along political lines” (Media Institute of Southern Africa 2015: 31). The current media status leaves only one rational conclusion that the media in Lesotho is entrenched in political power debates while issues such as femicide are peripheral.

There is a litany of challenges that the media faces in Lesotho, ranging from restrictive legislation to the misuse of legislation such as criminal defamation laws and a lack of media policy and other relevant legislation to enhance and ensure fair media practice. The absence of a Media Policy and Access to Information Law (ATL) makes media practising difficult if not near impossible. In sum, a lack of appropriate legislation hampers media houses and journalists’ ability to engage real public issues with vigour and robustness and most importantly, to uphold oversight effectively. As though the lack of legislative framework is not enough of an unfavourable situation, there are no healthy checks and balances to monitor media practice. There are feeble structures such as the Lesotho Communications Authority (LCA) and the Broadcasting Dispute Resolution Panel (BDRP) that lack the resources and financial muscle as well as a clear mandate to operate (Media Institute of Southern Africa 2015).

MISA Lesotho (2019: 10) sums the Lesotho media operating legal framework, as given in Figure 2.4.





**Figure 2.4: The Lesotho media operating legal framework.**

The last area of concern in the status of the media is the capacity of media personnel in their entirety. Is the curriculum of media practitioners of sufficient quality to mould journalists to survive in the harsh news media environment? Are there some skills training to capacitate journalists? All these questions need to be answered along the way to a destination where VAW will be effectively framed as a public agenda and public health problem. Ndlovu and Nyamwenda (2015: 5) echo that the “media must equip itself to deal with these diverse realities, and to promote a rights-based culture”. The mediascape in Lesotho and coverage is satisfactory to date but capacity remains the issue to be addressed along the whole media fraternity.

### 2.3.4 The Role of Media in Lesotho

The media, since time immemorial, has been playing an outstanding role in shaping public opinion. Media on its own is a watchdog to protect and educate the public. The primary role of media in its raw sense is to entertain but over decades, there have been seismic shifts towards

information and the edification of the public which in turn shapes its opinion and ultimately reaches informed conclusions. Public tranquillity rests on that which the media produces and for which it agitates. For instance, the media in Rwanda fanned ethnic violence that led to the massacre of Tutsis (Adebayo 2015: 31).

On the other hand, the media can be used as a pivotal building block to attain peace. A case of South Africa during the apartheid era is a typical example. Media, in all its forms, was instrumental in making the plight of black South African oppression a global agenda. Therefore, there was a political change that ushered in a new democratic dispensation that was largely achieved by positive media (Adebayo 2015: 31). The same was true of a wave of change in the Middle East that was called ‘Arab Spring’ – the media played a significant role in making this movement a success and the demands of the populace were heard. There are challenges that the media do encounter in its quest to build and achieve sustainable peace through reporting that is fair, moral, and ethical.

Despite the general purpose of media being to educate the audience, there are bare economic, political, and cultural challenges to the media in discharging fair, inclusive, and conclusive news. A fair percentage of people point to economics as the major challenge. First and foremost, every media house, for its existence, must achieve positive returns which will ensure its competitiveness and sustainability in business. The challenge now is that the focus turns to increased listenership and readership which in turn tramples on the guiding journalistic principles and ethics. The concern now becomes profit margins and not the ethics. Govender (2015: 30) corroborates that the presentation of an agenda in the media has much to do with those controlling the media house and most of all profit. It is apparent that profit now becomes the media’s benchmark on how issues should be framed. Profit orientation spells danger to the media’s own role of being the ‘fourth estate’ or ‘defender of public interest’. In this stance, the victims of profit-oriented media become democracy itself and fair and accurate information. The issues of sustainability and profit in media has transformed a noble media institution into being a cooperative institution that thrives virtually on profits. This has dismantled the media’s role of being a ‘watchdog’ and needs to constantly guard against becoming a ‘lapdog’.

Specifically, in this study, the role of the media in Lesotho is key in the wake of a system that is wholly non-existent in mapping femicide. Media turns out to be the only available platform to gauge the phenomenon of femicide because it is notably the only available and accessible documentation. In Lesotho, the media is the first and last hope because there is no such matter

as gender-based violence because there is no gender-based violence act. There is no database for reference to excerpt police reports that are vague and not disaggregated. Gendered violence is still lumped and conflated as common assault. The media then provide an opportunity for femicide to be studied thematically as a crime and as individual cases (Nechama 2019: 98).

### **2.3.5 Nexus between Media, Power, and Culture**

There is a solid conclusion that media, culture, and power are intricately interlinked so much so that it becomes nearly impossible to discuss one in isolation. The media is the art of communication in which the communicator sets the agenda (agenda setting) and equally decides how it should be discussed (framed) by selecting and giving prominence to some parts of the story. The media is often associated with being overly-selective with stories and give prominence of one over another (Das 2012; Schildkraut and Donley 2012; Namusoga 2016). The communication/communicator is influenced by cultural background which informs the selection and salience of issues in a news story, and therein lies the power of who gets to decide what should be part of the story. Power, here, is not only about administrative power in media houses but also the inherent power that language has (Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2014: 28). Language has the power to re/construct the world view of the audience (Bullock and Cubert 2002; Gillespie *et al.* 2013). The media, when approaching issues of femicide, ought to use consciously selected language that empowers women as victims and survivors. Nonetheless, with the current misogynist culture, the media turns to perpetuate the inequality that women experience and reinforces existing proprietary ideology (Choquette 2012: 35). Ilika (2005: 77) confirms that culture makes “woman [feel] that reprimands, beatings and forced sex affecting their physical, mental and their reproductive wellbeing are normal in marriage”. This conviction confirms the power that culture has in normalising violence and this manifests in the media as to how women are framed.

The power, as has been highlighted, is multifaceted, and herein the researcher will discuss capital power. Every media house’s buoyancy depends on the increase of listenership and readership – profit orientation. How is this profit achieved? It is achieved through giving news stories that are listenable/readable. Homicide is deemed newsworthy hence receives much readership and listenership (Peelo *et al.* 2004). On the same token, Mellado (2013: 22) echoes that femicide cases are considered newsworthy for their unusualness and sensational level. The moral question is whether the media is concerned about profit making or feel morally obligated (indebted) to inform the public and to raise awareness. There is a view that the media supports profit more than a social obligation to raise awareness. Those mega stories of femicide are given

more priority, airtime, and wider coverage than others which validates the point that profit supersedes moral obligation, as depicted in Figures 2.5 and 2.6.



Picture: Courtesy of New York Post 2013, 15 February

**Figure 2.5: New York Post, 15 February 2013.**

# 'Blade Runner' held for shooting

**GIRLFRIEND KILLED:** Oscar Pistorius has been arrested after his girlfriend's death early today

**Shooting Victim**  
**STAY IN THE**

**O**LYMPIAN Oscar Pistorius was to appear in court today in connection with the fatal shooting of his girlfriend, 29-year-old Reeva Steenkamp, at his Pretoria home. The shooting took place in the double-paned glass home early today. Pistorius apparently told police today he had mistaken her for an intruder. Cape Town-born Steenkamp, 29, who was shot in the head and arm, was declared dead at the scene. The police's Captain Shadrach Molelele confirmed a woman had been shot in the head and arm around 4am, but did not name her. Shadrach Molele, of Steenkamp's PR agency, confirmed they had been told it was Steenkamp who had been shot, but did not want to say more. They



**WATERSHOED**  
 A mortuary van leaves Oscar Pistorius's townhouse in Pretoria, where his girlfriend was shot dead early this morning. (Picture: Chris Brinkley, Reuters)

would issue a statement later. Another police spokeswoman, Katlego Mokohe, said police had responded to reports of a shooting. Paramedics had arrived at the complex and "declared the woman dead on the scene", she said. A .38mm handgun was found on the scene. Pistorius had been arrested and a case of murder was being investigated, she said.



**HAPPY DAYS**  
 Oscar Pistorius and Reeva Steenkamp at the South African Sports Awards last year.



ShutterGuard is the only product that does the work of both shutters and burglar bars. Get rough, but reliable protection for your home or office with this robust, patented system. Call us for a free quotation.

**TAYLOR**

Picture: courtesy of Cape Argus 2013, 14 February

**Figure 2.6: Cape Argus, 14 February 2013.**

The premature life of Reeva Steenkamp taken by Oscar Pistorius reverberated from South African media to the United States, commanding the cover page of every newspaper. Ironically, at that material time in South Africa, there was also a similar case of femicide where Donald Sebolai stabbed his girlfriend, Rachel Tshabalala, to death. Interestingly enough, the story found it difficult to be part of any front newspaper headline or radio bulletin. Peelo (2006: 164) contends that newsworthiness is achieved by the outstanding horror and oddness of the story. It is apparent that Pistorius' incident ticked the two boxes of horror and oddness owing to his status of being an Olympic athlete and the manner in which he executed the murder. The public expectation is that with all his fame and wealth, he was a *saint*, but on the other hand with Sebolai, it appears that his incident was, in other terms, 'expected' thus it came with no shock. Race and class are intricately connected to gender (Meyers 1997; Monckton-Smith 2012; Nechama 2019) and as such, Sebolai and Tshabalala, being Black (presumed inferior) and of low class, could not fetch adequate media attention. Gillespie *et al.* (2013: 227) lament that these "recurring patterns of news tend to highlight only certain kinds of criminals and their victims, while ignoring or downplaying others, thereby transmitting messages about who matters most in society".

In these two incidents, the issue of economics (power) comes to the fore. Because Pistorius was a powerful public figure, media culture tends to give those in positions of privilege more airtime because they are not only sellable but listenable and readable as well. Meyers (1997: 12) outlines that race, class, and other relevant social signifiers of domination should be factored in relation to who receives media coverage. “Social prominence is directly related to access to news media ... violence against women who are poor and black is not likely to receive extensive coverage than violence against women who are white, middle class, and upper class” (Meyers 1997: 12; Nechama 2019; Spies 2020). Rachel Tshabala was a black woman with no social status while Reeva Steenkamp was a white upper-class woman whom the media deemed deserved more coverage. It is a sad state of affairs when the media determines which victim is un/worthy. Joanna (2016: 123) argues that media-selective media coverage of femicide is a ‘window’ through which one would see and understand “how privilege is mobilised, negotiated, and sustained” all in the name of economics. The case of South Africa is ideal because of the system of white supremacy ideology which is part of the vestiges of apartheid. It remains interesting to see how the media frames femicide in the case of Lesotho where there are no racial issues and tribal issues.

In sum, this underlines the fact that there is a strand that weaves media, culture, and power to femicide where agenda and framing are oriented to profit stimulation (increased circulation/listenership). Media sustainability cannot be negotiated outside of profit making but that which needs to be altered is that the media needs to operate within the culture of equality and empowerment.

### **2.3.6 Media Practice and Challenges**

Ndlovu and Nyamwenda (2015), in their study, found that there is a fairly similar media practice within SADC member states. The media still relies heavily on a single source which remains a grave concern. A single-source story is unfavourable in terms of objectivity and veracity whilst if it has multiple sources, it balances different opinions and leaves the audience with a fair chance to make a solid and informed opinion. An overreliance on a single source in news stories tramples news reliability, balanced and fair reporting, and news authenticity (Adebayo 2015: 40). The Media Institute of Southern Africa (2015: 122) echoes that “reporting of news should be gender-balanced and sensitive, treating men and women equally as news sources and subjects”. In the media, the maxim that *‘every story has two sides’* should be lived up to at all costs.

In Ndlovu and Nyamwenda's study, Tanzania appeared to be a country with news that employed a single source. However, the study covers news in general: the news is not disaggregated by genres where it would give a clear picture as to how femicide (VAW) news is covered: whose views and voices are newsworthy. Although the news genre is not disaggregated, there is evidence that women sources are very scarce and as such it simply means that even when they are assaulted by men, notably still ironically, "*the accused (men) preside over his case*". The media is still inclined to *see* women rather than to *hear* them. This attitude leaves out the views and voices of virtually 50% of the population on the crucial public health problem. Buthelezi (2006: 507) claims that the voice of women is utterly silenced and in rare cases where they are heard, their voice is projected through men's voice and attitudes (ventriloquism). There is only one outcome in such a case, an unjust and biased verdict. Dahal (2013: 45) gives the concept of 'voice' a full flavour as he defines *voice* as "representation in both formal and informal institutions to enhance participation. In the context of communication for empowerment, within the context of development communication, voice means access and representation in the media". Therefore, a relevant question would be: do women have a voice? The Media Institute of Southern Africa (2015) does respond emphatically that there is a serious need to ensure that women are not only sufficiently represented but also that their views are displayed adequately and properly.

The media is still largely concerned with politics and sports whilst social issues such as VAW are fillers. This inclination to politics reiterates male hegemony once more that serves to maintain male supremacy. Due to the fact that politics are predominately a field of men, the news media therefore precipitates towards giving them news coverage that is biased because the media does not cover VAW in an objective manner as they do with politics and sports.

### **2.3.7 A Weapon or a Shield: Exploring the Role of Media Frames in Femicide**

Having deliberated on the interplay of media, culture, and power, one would wonder if the media is a weapon for the destruction of women emancipation, the struggle for equality, and the realisation of their basic human right to life. On the other hand, can the media be the shield for women to fend off male hegemony and the trampling of their human rights by men? The researcher herein contends that the media is neither a weapon nor a shield on its own – it does not have an agency until an individual decides to use it to stimulate a particular agenda. Das (2012) maintains that "the media is often blamed of marginalizing, distorting, fabricating and

downplaying news when it comes to reporting VAW & Femicide”. The media is innocuous until such a time that it is exploited to achieve a desired objective. This brings the question of objectivity versus subjectivity of the media, can the media become neutral? The researcher is of the view that the media can be objective if all the sides of the story are addressed and ultimately, the news is framed in the name of peace and tolerance where there is no loser or winner. However, Isaacs (2016: 492) provides an alternative view of the media as a means of conveying information to shape individual perception on an issue or problem. This definition does reconcile with that of the researcher at the point of objectivity because when the issue is subjectively presented, the audience will then make a conclusion based on its schema.

The framing theory asserts that media frames affect the audience appropriately if used frames coincide with the audience schemas. In 1994, in Rwanda, a case where media was used as a weapon to perpetuate a toxic agenda of genocide is an ideal example. The conflict between the Hutus and Tutsis was escalated to a massacre of unprecedented scale by *Radio-Télévision Libre des Mille Collines* (RTLM). Li (2004: 9) articulates that RTLM “achieved an infamous, if not legendary, reputation for allegedly inciting Rwandan Hutus to participate in massacring the country’s Tutsi minority on a scale and scope without precedent in the country’s history”. The massacre was fuelled by the media which used tribal frames (historical myths, stereotypes of Tutsis, code referencing) in framing the death of President Juvenal Habyarimana where the blame for the airplane crash was put squarely on the Tutsi minority (Li 2004: 12). Because framing success depends on the audience schemas (that which the audience have in mind), the media (RTLM) knew very well of the tribal tension between the Hutus and the Tutsis thus it used tribal frames knowingly that they would resonate with tribal tensions (schemas). This unleashed 100 days of violence that left many people dead (Li 2004). The Rwandan genocide is one case where the media used hate frames to report an air crash news and this example vividly indicates how the media can be exploited to be a weapon.

There are instances where the media becomes a tool for peacebuilding and not only positively influences public opinion but also informs it. An ideal example would be the killing of Reeva Steenkamp by Oscar Pistorius. In this incident, there is a consensus that the media managed to make femicide not only visible but audible as well (Weil 2016). Che (2014: 1) succinctly states that the fascination with the killing of Reeva was construed as the fascination of South Africa with itself. A massive media attraction was achieved which put into light the pervasive femicide in South Africa where Che (2014: 1) posits that three women are killed every day albeit not being afforded the same media coverage as Reeva. On a more optimistic side, the gory femicide



of Reeva set the public agenda on the atrocities that women suffer at the hands of their purported lovers. Isaacs (2016: 498) corroborates that the media has the ability to put violence against women at the top of public agenda.

There are dissenting voices when it comes to intense media coverage of femicide. It would be suicidal to discount these invaluable voices. The general conclusion is that the media often precipitates towards *mega* cases that have features such as unusualness, celebrities involved as either victims or perpetrators, professional and successful individuals, and the unexpectedness of the killing (van Dijk 1988b; Taylor 2009; Mellado 2013; Isaacs 2016). The follow-up question herein would be why does the media only seem to have an interest in these mega cases of femicide. This collective view brings into question the concept of newsworthiness that is intricately tied to profit-making. The media seem to be too concerned first about increased listenership and readership (which sums to profit), and violence is second to profit. The media, operating from this angle, is not a shield but a weapon to destroy women equality and empowerment. It makes sense to tie the profit-seeking aspect of media to a patriarchal culture within which the media operates. In a patriarchal culture, it is power that is the virtue and as such femininity lacks agency and is still commoditised (Isaacs 2016: 492). It is therefore befitting that the media targets all social issues in a positive and objective approach to achieve transformative learning (Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2011: 149).

### **2.3.8 Section Summary**

The status of women in Lesotho and indeed all over the world is not satisfactory. It must be underlined that women are not a homogenous group in the sense that a woman in Kenya may be fighting for ownership of land while a woman in Saudi Arabia may be fighting for authority to drive a motor vehicle. The two varied needs have a common denominator which is misogyny and patriarchy joining forces to deny women their rights by further subordinating them. It has been seen that legislative frameworks and policies are merely textual guides that still face the challenge of being put into practice. Media practice still faces challenges but the little space offered to the media is not effective because news (especially VAW) is not given enough quality coverage.

The section has shown in brief that the formation of Lesotho as a nation state was in part achieved by '*trading*' women under the hoax of intermarriage. Women were used as tokens of appreciation which is a testimony of Basotho men's attitude towards women. These misogynous attitudes towards women manifest themselves in spaces such as media frames used

in the aftermath of violence against women. Although Lesotho has the desire to precipitate towards a fair and equitable society, the ideology of male supremacy seems to be countering this move to achieve an egalitarian society.

## **2.4 Femicide**

### **2.4.1 Introduction**

This section will discuss the '*gender violence matrix*' to set a context for femicide. An overview of prejudice as an oasis of femicide will be discussed. Secondly, the section will discuss the causes, extent, and implication of femicide in general. This section will further deliberate on the two forms of framing that act as conduits to where femicide is planted: individual or social circle. There will be an analysis on how the media presents femicide – as an individual pathology or a wider social problem.

### **2.4.2 'Gender Violence Matrix'**

Literature does suggest that femicide is the fatal end of the spectrum of violence. It is apparent that femicide is not an accidental outcome: it has a history. Butler (2006), in her book entitled *Gender Trouble*, raised the issue of the heterosexual matrix which she questions vehemently whether gender should be the resultant of sex. That is, should gender be derived from sex? The heterosexual matrix (sex-gender-sexuality) dictates that one is born with a certain biological sex, either female or male (dichotomisation), then it is required that one performs gender that corresponds with the assigned sex at birth: the male acts in masculine and the female in feminine ways. Finally, the desire/attraction should be from the opposite sex – males unto females. The heterosexual matrix model is considered given and absolute hence anything that does not comply with it is construed as deviant. The reason why there is intolerance to the LGBTI-Q (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer) community is because they do not conform to this matrix, which seems too simplistic to address issues of sexuality and identity. Nonetheless, Butler and others such as de Beauvoir and Wittig do question the veracity of the concepts such as sex and gender as the basis of human classification or categorisation. The researcher will not delve much into their arguments since the researcher wants to highlight the importance of this heterosexual matrix and how it feeds into his coined concept called the '*gender violence matrix*'.

Human beings are social beings by nature and as such live in clusters – a nucleus unit being the family. A family means that it is a group of individuals who have been exposed to the

heterosexual matrix – the researcher is conscious of the fact that some children are not brought up in the so-called orthodox families of a man and a woman but with regard to the number of such families, the researcher wants to submit that it is not very significant: which is why it is safe to claim that the majority of people are products of a heterosexual setting. In that familial setting, conflicts are inevitable and quite often escalate to violent confrontations that ultimately end up with injuries that could be psychological, physical, or both. The heterosexual matrix has a power hierarchy and so does the gender violence matrix, and if that is the case, it simply means that there are beneficiaries who happen to be males and victims who happen to be females. It should be noted that not all males are beneficiaries and not all females are victims: there are males who still do not fit the mould and therefore become victims. Within the gender violence matrix (violence, IPV, femicide), the issue of power is fundamental in understanding the interplay of violence with femicide (Driver 2015: 61). Women become the victims of violence because they are powerless and intimate partner violence takes place unabated since it is sanctioned by the two key aspects of culture and patriarchy. Violence thrives in the absence of two key counter-forces: firstly, social prohibitions such as effective and responsive mechanisms at the familial (practices, norms) to judicial (legal frameworks) levels to deter violence; and secondly, the lack of the psychological capacity to identify with the victim's pain and violations of her/his rights. Alternatively put, seeing violence as a private matter as opposed to a public matter, or individual pathology as opposed to a social matter, renders violence normal and perpetually reproduces it.

Ultimately, women succumb to gender-motivated deaths – femicide, which is the key area of this study. The violence that women suffer emanates from structural violence and cultural violence, as evidenced by the Galtung (1990) triangle of violence. The violence that women suffer, in the short version, can be blamed on men but a critical analysis will tell that it is a result of heteronormativity which objectifies women as males' commodities of pleasure. The researcher thus claims because the heterosexual matrix is an agenda set by culture and patriarchy and as such individuals must live in frames of either male or female to be considered normal and not deviant. Therefore, the three theories – agenda setting, framing, and structural violence theories – here become key in unpacking and understanding femicide.

In sum, violence that is normalised by culture and patriarchy finds its way into the intimate partner relationships and ends in the deaths of women. This concludes a gender violence matrix that relates to how femicide unfolds.

### 2.4.3 What is Femicide?

The lexeme 'femicide' gained social prominence in the 1976 tribunal of the crime against women which was held in Brussels. Diana Russel was testifying about the heinous crimes that were directed to women because of their gender (Nechama 2019: 48). She argued that the femaleness of the victim is not incidental but rather an outright intent. However, it appears that it was first used in 1801 in the satirical review of London Magazine at the dawn of the nineteenth century to point directly to the 'killing of women' (Tütüncüler *et al.* 2015: 199). Nonetheless, only as far back as 1989, the word *femicide* was accommodated in the Oxford English Dictionary. It took virtually two decades since it was used to be incorporated into the dictionary – a question would be: were women killings so peripheral in the scholarly and public agenda or were the murders targeting women deemed so insignificant such that there was no need felt to insert the appropriate term for these heinous sex hate crimes in the dictionary? Browne (2017: 46) affirms that only recently, violence against women has been recognised and seriously considered as a social and public health issue, taking cues from Betty Friedan (1974: 11) where she argues that the oppression that women have felt has been indescribable – “a problem that has no name”. The researcher would like to conclude that it was the same scenario with women killings as to how to distinguish them and name them differently from other general killings.

*Femicide* is the term deemed by feminists as the appropriate word to not only define but also to disaggregate gendered women killings from general killings. Feminism is defined as the misogynistic killing of women by men (Mamo *et al.* 2015; Weil 2016). These killings of women are purely gender-motivated which factors and highlights the issue of gender inequality, male domination, and proprietorship. This form of murder with the appropriate terminology (*femicide*) seems to bring to light the violence to which women fall victim, drive feminist agenda, and make violence visible and audible to the public. There are two forms of femicide: intimate partner femicide and non-intimate femicide. The study is based on the former which Mathews (2010) defines as the extreme form of intimate partner violence. Intimate Partner Femicide (henceforth IPF) is the product of unresolved conflicts at the interpersonal level.

The coexistence of human beings has always axled on the rule of men-patriarchy. Being that as it is, a simple conclusion is that women oppression too is as old as humanity which is odd if more than half of the entire human race has lived its life in shackles. It is paramount to distinguish and understand the concept of femicide from the general term of *murder*. A curious question would be why these gender-motivated killings of women are termed femicide. An

answer is that homicide is an umbrella term covering the unlawful and lawful killing of a human by another human – it is not always punishable as it depends on the justification. Morall (2006: 15) concludes that homicide is a social construct which at one point is applauded (like heroes and heroines of war), whilst on the other end of the spectrum, it is detested. On this note, homicide appears to be an inappropriate term to address women killings for their own gender. Therefore, an alternative term closer to homicide is murder. Tütüncüler *et al.* (2015: 199) succinctly defines murder as “terminating the life of another human being intentionally and unlawfully”. The definition, as appropriate as it appears, still lumps all deaths (men and women) into one bundle hence why femicide is a suitable term to highlight the deaths of women that are purely because of their gender.

#### **2.4.4 Prejudice: An Oasis of Violence**

Allport's (1956) *The Nature of Prejudice* is still undeniably the most influential book on prejudice. It is paramount to first overlook prejudice since it will give a clear context and background to femicide and its causes. It has been belaboured that femicide is the killing of females by their male counterparts merely because they are females, which firmly nestles in the ambit of prejudice. It is therefore incumbent to discuss prejudice as the oasis of femicide. Allport (1954: 9) states that “prejudice is an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalization. It may be felt or expressed. It may be directed towards a group as a whole, or toward an individual because he is a member of that group”. Fishbein (2002: 3) concurs with Allport's definition and adds that prejudice is a negative attitude (pre-judgement) towards others for belonging to a different group or having different characteristics. It is apparent that prejudice is the tail end of a negative attitude matrix (stereotype-discrimination-prejudice) (Fishbein 2002: 33).

Prejudice is an explicit or implicit attitude towards either gender and/or race to be treated with an inferior social status. Fishbein (2002: 27) attributes this gendered inferior status to the system of patriarchy and the process of socialisation. A typical example in terms of racial prejudice would be the one of Nazi Germany when they instigated the hatred of Jews (pogrom) that led to the massacre of approximately six million Jews. The hatred of Jews was unjustified, unfounded, and baseless, merely aiming to achieve and attain political power. Millions of Jews were massacred because of the stereotype that led to the prejudiced view that Jews are greedy and are the ones responsible for all miseries. Govender (2015: 27) contends that there is a link between media and stereotypes since the media often works to reinforce stereotypes and does little to challenge them. Rattan and Dweck (2010: 952) affirm that confronting prejudice

appears to be far-fetched. The possible platform/tool to challenge and confront prejudice is a gender-sensitive media. The stereotypes that all housewives lack ambition, blondes are dumb, musicians are drug addicts, and politicians are corrupt are all fanned by the media as they support and reinforce them. When it comes to gender, stereotypes such as women are submissive, less intelligent than men, and should look attractive are some stereotypes that the media upholds albeit they are toxic to women's freedom (Govender 2015: 27).

It is apparent that prejudicial attitudes are virtually along the lines of gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, and culture. Femicide, as a gendered killing, is prejudicial. The stereotypes that men have about women being their property lead to this prejudicial killing. In some cultural backgrounds, femicide as a prejudicial killing of women is concealed as a 'crime of honour' (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2003), 'revolt killings' (Cetin 2015), and 'crimes of passion' (Jankey 2009). This is acknowledged by Fishbein (2002: 144) that prejudice is used against subordinate groups to reproduce and maintain dominance. It becomes a question of interest of whether men are killing women to keep them in line and within their subordinate circle.

This prejudice leads to the psychological nature of conflict – Us vs Them: just world hypothesis. Is femicide the outcome of Us (males) vs Them (female)? The fact that femicide is the killing of females for being who they are nestles squarely in the realm of prejudice and discrimination. Femicide now becomes a prejudice and discrimination against the opposite sex (Fishbein 2002: 133).

#### **2.4.5 Causes (Motives) of Femicide**

Femicide in a true sense is the fatal outcome of protracted intimate abuse that women suffer at the hands of men. Femicide is not only a neologism but also an expression of extreme violence where women and girls are victims of men and boys. Therefore, in this case, it is prudent to look at the causes of intimate partner abuse for it to terminally end with femicide. There is a plethora of causes that are attributed to femicide, and it is important to explore these causes since the act of killing a woman is not instinctive but purely an outcome of misogyny. It is that form of killing where the gender of the victim is material, and it is a form of violence that is sustained culturally and sanctioned, and also normalised by hegemonic masculinity (Boyle *et al.* 2009; Choquette 2012; García-Moreno *et al.* 2015). If placed on a continuum, patriarchy is the initiator of femicide thereby followed by a toxic culture that seeks to maintain the existence of inequality at the expense of women's civil liberties and human rights (Choquette 2012: 117). Technically, patriarchy is the rule of man – it is a hierarchical relationship of men and women

where men are dominant and women are subordinate. Culture constitutes customs, norms, and behaviours of a society which are passed from generation to generation. In a way, it becomes apparent from the onset of the discussion that causes of femicide fall squarely in a triangle of violence by Galtung, within the planes of cultural violence and structural violence, hence femicide becomes the result of the two forms of violence. A view of patriarchy and culture as the two sides of the same coin appears intelligent since culture and patriarchy interlink heavily in the cause of intimate partner femicide.

Patriarchal culture (male hegemony) has transcended all spheres of life: politics, religion, and culture, to mention a few, hence it becomes an uphill task for women to attain their basic right to life because they are commodified (male proprietorship) (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2003: 583). The inferior status of women orchestrated by patriarchy and culture renders women's lives unliveable and ungrieveable (Butler 2010). Since conflict is inevitable, patriarchal culture affirms and sanctions males' violence which ends fatally in intimate partner femicide. Femicide is an outcome of continued episodes of abuse that women suffer because men have a sense of entitlement to women's bodies and rights (Anderson 2017; Geldenhuys 2018; Branch 2019).

Why then does this fatal violence against women continue unabated? It is because patriarchal culture (male hegemony) has framed the lives of women (which becomes the agenda) as unliveable and ungrieveable? If so, therefore, this status quo makes media intervention as relevant as ever to frame femicide appropriately and set relevant agenda. Bullock (2007: 39) argues that relevant agenda can have and do have a positive effect on shaping public opinion. It is upon this background that the media can be capacitated not to be an accomplice (spectator) but a change agent in this grotesque situation where women are maimed, and this is fundamentally important to this study.

It is axiomatic that male hegemony transcends every sphere of life. The researcher will argue herein to highlight how and why the judicial system continues to perpetuate femicide. It would sound scary on a cursory look but the researcher will lay out an analysis to substantiate the point. It has been noted that patriarchal culture privileges men and subordinates women, and the same picture cascades even into the judicial realm where justice has to be dispensed irrespective of gender or any attribute whatsoever (total impartiality). Many cultures and societies are still led by patriarchal jurisprudential traditions which automatically do not serve or advance the agenda of women equality and empowerment. Goldstein (2002: 28) and Rude (1999) assert that most, if not all, judicial systems still or at one stage were led by a "reasonable

man and provocative woman” defence doctrine in the context of femicide. This form of defence, when women have been fatally abused, gives men not only exculpation but impunity as well to kill women. It is a form of defence doctrine that purports that if women provoke men, men are at liberty to *kill* them with impunity. Monckton-Smith (2012: 3) states that “there is a logic which says that where a man has been provoked by infidelity, desertion or even failure to observe gendered roles, then there is potential danger that he will respond with fatal violence”. This is a toxic perception that pervades journalism and frames femicide agenda in such a manner that it appears *logical* albeit it is not. Put starkly, the legal systems do allow men to kill women if there is any suspicion of promiscuous behaviour.

The media frames femicide in a manner that the audience is urged/baited to sympathise with the perpetrator. This is achieved through the presentation that the perpetrator was provoked, jealous, stressed, and estranged and as such could not cope with life. The tone of femicide reportage suggests that men are not culpable, they are either psychotic or lose their senses (Monckton-Smith 2012: 3). In a way, the media confuses or misconstrues intimacy with hatred, as the researcher proposes. Only hatred can kill while love is kind, caring, and gentle. This is the media’s behaviour of re/producing male supremacy to protect male privileges.

On the contrary, to buttress the notion that the justice system appears to be biased to women, the same defence is not extended to women since they are not to lay a finger on their adulterous men (Goldstein 2002). Now it becomes apparent that sex/gender in court (is material) becomes the merit and a determining factor of guilt as opposed to the un/lawfulness of the matter. In that case, the ‘*bodily frames*’ that one lives in are precursors to conviction or not being convicted. How nature has naturally framed individuals as males or females becomes a determining factor in their treatment within a legal system which subscribes to “a reasonable man and a fallible woman”. The unfair treatment of intimate partner femicide survivors/victims by the legal system is one key factor that perpetuates femicide. Richards, Gillespie and Smith (2014: 179) affirm that the current legal system lacks fairness and impartiality because it is anchored within patriarchal attitudes that do not serve to ensure female liberties. Dawson (2016: 997) adds colonialism as another dimension that puts women at risk of being killed by men. The researcher finds this assertion a little incongruent because it is patriarchy and not colonisation to blame. The researcher would subscribe to this notion of colonisation if it was further discussed that women suffered dual oppression from colonialism because colonisers and patriarchy blended to increase their precarity. Media framing therein becomes fundamental in



framing femicide in such a way that it will provide a clear picture of cause and a firm process of checks and balances of the legal system's responsiveness.

In this instance, the framing theory becomes relevant because it tells one that in news stories, certain aspects of the story are given prominence to advance a desired agenda and stimulate the required public discussion (Entman 1993). The judicial system likewise is aware of the criminal conduct of men but un/wittingly decides to accept this defence at the expense of women who become soft targets or scapegoats. Therefore, this lays bare discriminatory legal practices for femicide since their universal declaration of human rights posits that all people are equal before the law. However, this appears to be only restricted to theory since in practice, George Orwell's dictum seems to prevail where "men are more equal than women" and Catherine Mackinnon's concern of "when will women become human" becomes ever more fretting and palpable. Considering that "the heat of passion" defence is solely reserved for men (Goldstein 2002), then it only leads to one reasonable conclusion that the judicial system in its prosecution is biased against women hence a skewed justice dispensation. The researcher sees the *'heat of passion'* as a patriarchal frame to perpetuate and preserve the commodification of women as sexual objects and *if ever human*, with ungrievable lives.

Why is the judicial system biased against women? Implicit social cognition (implicit bias) is an immediate variable to interrogate. Butler (2010) critique of the sex/gender attribute is quite a valid point from which to start. Butler argues that both sex and gender are social constructs existing on unequal levels where the male/masculine is superior and the female/feminine is subordinate. From its cradle, society hones individuals to see masculinity as ideal and femininity as deviant. It is this toxic hierarchical binary construct that penetrates the judicial system and as such it implicitly operates and frames men as impeccable and infallible while women are framed as deceitful subjects. Individuals who operate within the judicial system are not immune to this patriarchal socialisation hence why the judicial system appears to normalise masculine violence. For instance, in the UK, Judge Kushner blamed a raped girl for being drunk (Swerling 2017). On a similar note, Evans (2015) claims that Judge Greenberg stated that a 16-year-old girl (a student) was *'obsessed'* with the teacher and *'groomed'* him to sexually assault her. These are a few examples that confirm that courtrooms are not places where victims of patriarchal and cultural assault are assured of any fairness or justice. A reasonable man and provocative woman doctrine still exists even today irrespective of how the legal system may be deemed to be mature because the two cited examples are from the United Kingdom.

From patriarchy/culture comes religion which, in the researcher's opinion, is culture in part. Religious influence in the pandemic of femicide cannot be excluded since many societies anchor their lives within religious dogmas. For instance, the Roman and the Hammurabi codes overtly state that men have the sovereign right to kill adulterous women (Goldstein 2002: 29). Women's lives under this extreme religious fundamentalism have been '*disenfranchised*' to *them*' – they do not own their lives let alone the right to live their lives with liberty. Surprisingly, women are not given the same opportunity of excuses to kill men who are adulterous. This firmly sets out the issue of unequal and inimical gender relations that exist to subordinate women and privilege men. These unequal and biased gender relations dovetail with the theory of framing wherein an angle of reportage is assumed to persuade a particular agenda. In this case, one has a similar situation of adultery (from either a man or a woman) but misogynist culture consciously and selectively dictates that women have guilt and exculpates men. This selective reporting influences the audience to diffuse responsibility that should be shouldered by men as perpetrators and positions women as unworthy victims or being seen as deserving objects (Choquette 2012: 48).

It is apparent that the misogynist culture has set an agenda by framing (positioning) men as *righteous* and women as *immoral*. The society then is fed this religious dogma and lives in a binary environment of *righteous men* and *immoral women*. Therefore, when men kill women, the religious instincts remind one that women must have been deceitful for they are immoral and as such, this gives men a *wrongful right* to kill women. The Galtung triangle of violence indicates that cultural and structural violence acts lack a direct perpetrator to be held accountable. In this case, femicide carried out under a religious ambit somehow absolves men because they are not held accountable as perpetrators but the society withers and surrenders to the notion of religion.

Another context that perpetuates femicide is matrimonial practices such as dowry. The inability of families to pay dowry unleashes brutal violence onto women that ultimately ends in their premature deaths. Dowry is a gift from the bride which can be understood to be a token of appreciation (Hooks 1990: 43). Failure of the bride or her family to pay the dowry often leads to violence that escalates into femicide (Goldstein 2002; Choquette 2012; Weil 2016). Interesting to this cultural practice is that sex/gender is material in the sense that it targets females only. It is fair enough to conclude that it is a biased practice that targets women who find it difficult to manage economic breakthroughs due to a hostile economic environment to which they are exposed. In a patriarchal culture in which virtually all societies operate, women

are expected to occupy the private sphere (care economy) as opposed to the public sphere which remunerates (Stöckl *et al.* 2013; Cetin 2015). It therefore becomes difficult if not impossible for the bride to offer dowry. It must be pointed out that dowry is a practice that is not universal but prevalent in India and Middle Eastern countries.

Still on the topic of dowry, but in a different line of argument, it could be that not only women are expected to make an offer in matrimony since in the Basotho culture, the bridegroom is the one who is expected to make an offer. The practice in the Sesotho culture and in most Southern African countries is called *Bohali* or *Lobola* which comes in the form of cows but, to date, can also be in the form of cash (Matlho 2014). That which is interesting here is that the inability to pay *Bohali* does not trigger abuse and violence to the bridegroom as the inability to pay dowry does on the side of the bride. Matlho (2014: 14) argues that this practice promotes male supremacy and maintains women subordination as well as oppression. Men who have paid *bohali* develop a poor attitude and perceive women as commodities. If *bohali* bestows supremacy, one would expect dowry to equally bestow supremacy unto women but it does not. The researcher will focus on framing the two matrimonial practices and the commonalities that they share: when *bohali* is offered, women are commodified and abused and, in the case of dowry, if it is not paid, women are abused. That which becomes a common ground herein is that patriarchal culture places women within the frames of abuse and oppression and it is essential to analyse how the media frames their abuse and oppression that ends with deaths.

The researcher will conclude the cause of femicide with a discussion of Galtung's theory of structural violence to illustrate how the above causes should be understood as underlying causes (indirect) while these ones to be discussed should be construed as direct causes of femicide. There has been quite a number of different studies that have been undertaken to determine the causes of femicide. The results do suggest that guns, alcohol, drug abuse, and a poor mental state are some of the leading causes of femicide (Campbell *et al.* 2003; Jankey 2009; Mellado 2013). The researcher refrains from admitting that guns and alcohol abuse can be pointed out as causes of femicide. It would be appropriate to classify them as '*agents*' since they are purely instruments or items used to execute femicide. This claim will dovetail perfectly with Galtung's theory of structural violence because the researcher proposes that the underlying factors, being cultural and structural violence, are the real causes. For instance, women are not killed because there is alcohol or drugs – they are killed because patriarchal culture exudes impunity since the legal system is biased towards women abuse and oppression. Kelkar (1992: 118) echoes the sentiments as he argues that femicide "runs along the lines of power in sex/gender system". It

is apparent that women are not killed by the poor mental state of men, drug abuse, or alcohol, but purely because of their *inferior and unliveable lives* (Butler 2010). Alcohol and guns, therefore, are used to execute misogynist cultural and structural agenda in full knowledge that they have already been granted immunity by culture and patriarchy.

#### **2.4.6 Extent of Femicide**

In Lesotho, there is a dearth of scholarship on women issues and as such this is a maiden study on femicide and media which makes this study essential and more relevant. It is only logical and mandatory to mention that in Lesotho, there are many challenges when it comes to women and gender-based violence. First, there is no legislation on gender-based violence – that is, gender-based violence is classified under common assault, meaning that in Lesotho, in the literal legal reference, there is no such matter as GBV, which is very surprising for this day and age. Second, it is axiomatic that if acts of GBV are not covered explicitly by law, then a complicated GBV outcome such as femicide could be covered – it is not at all. Third, there is no established tracking and monitoring system for GBV and as such, it is a near impossible task to even have a clear picture of the dynamics when GBV is concerned.

However, the extent of femicide in other countries has reached a *crisis* state. Abrahams *et al.* (2012) state that in South Africa, every eight hours, a woman is killed. This, stated differently, means that in a day and night (24 hours), three women are killed and that is a worrying state of affairs with regard to the rights and lives of women. These are notably alarming statistics and without a doubt lead one to interrogate the legal system, programmes aimed at the prevention of gender-based violence, and national policies in place to ensure equality, the rights of women as human rights, and the empowerment of women. The predilection of humans to violence is a testimony that human beings are not handling their conflicts effectively. The question of an epic scale of global gendered violence being present is very evident as Bullock and Cubert (2002: 476) theorise that socially structured inequality and social attitudes are the tinderbox to intimate partner violence and femicide. There is a collective scholarly voice that femicide is not only a human rights issue but a public health problem as well that affects every society (Brown *et al.* 2006; Tütüncüler *et al.* 2015; Sutherland *et al.* 2016; Weil 2016). Perhaps a question would be – am I not being too general owing to the fact that precisely not every society is under patriarchy. In a matrilineal setting as in Meghalaya, India, women have status crimes against them which are on the rise (Ropmay 2014: 399). This picture therefore once again reiterates that in abuse and violence, that which is material is sex/gender and not the system, be it patriarchy or matriarchy, and women still become victims of male violence. There is no meta-

analysis study on femicide which can give one a solid conclusion on the extent of femicide globally. However, there are studies virtually over all continents pointing to one conclusion that femicide is a global scourge that needs a solid political will, activism, and media intervention to achieve genuine sustainable peace.

It is apparent that femicide is indeed endemic and affects women across all cultures irrespective of patriarchal or matrilineal culture. The researcher will move onto other social aspects to see if the extent of femicide is or can be mitigated by them. The first one would be age – is the extent of femicide influenced by the age group of intimate partners? Mamo *et al.* (2015: 854) contend that in Italy, violence manifests itself heavily in the 16-70 age cohort. On the same note, Tütüncüler *et al.* (2015) found that in Turkey, females between the ages of 21 and 35 years are the ones at risk of violence leading to femicide. Nonetheless, the researcher sees the difference in ages being solely due to the methodology because in Italy, it was a study based on the emergency department admission of females exposed to violence, whilst in Turkey, it was a forensic study of autopsies. Therefore, in Italy, it was a test on the extent of violence for those women who attended emergency departments, meaning that data is missing for those who were abused but did not seek medical checks. In Turkey, that which was studied were victims (autopsies) on the end of the violence spectrum thus the figures were likely to differ. There is a collective scholarly voice that demonstrates unquestionably that violence and ultimately femicide is a pervasive phenomenon that transcends all age groups (Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2014; Sutherland *et al.* 2016).

Moreover, the view that the upper social status or race cushions women from being subjected to violence proves not to hold true. Women seem to become victims across the entire social class and racial spectrum. A litany of recent rape accusations against Bill Cosby by female Hollywood actresses testifies that violence, in all its forms, is not only endemic but systemic as well and affects every woman irrespective of socio-economic status or race. Mamo *et al.* (2015: 854) argue that the victim's social status influences his/her attempt to seek assistance, be it medical or legal. The challenges that victims face emanate from being considered as 'ideal' victims or not. The variables such as race, class, and power are key in constructing the victimhood hierarchy (Spies 2020: 42). Prieto-Carrón, Thomson and Macdonald (2007: 32) argue that femicide can be addressed if intervention is continually sought. However, the point here is that the victim's decision to seek assistance does not immunise her from abuse but perhaps protects her from subsequent episodes.

#### 2.4.7 Media Frames and Femicide

A historical trajectory of the media indicates that prior to the systematic print media and broadcasting, the public relied on social gatherings that were convened by relevant authorities such as Chiefs or Kings through a town crier. Adebayo (2015: 20) states that the town crier was an information officer – what one could today equate to the media house. That is, the town crier's ultimate objective was information dissemination like the current media houses today. The public agenda that was set by town criers in previous years is today set by print and broadcast media houses. A feature that has been ever present in the news discourse is a concept of framing. Framing in media theory is considered an extension of agenda setting or the second level of agenda setting. Scheufele (1999: 103) underlines that “framing is in fact an extension of agenda setting”.

According to Entman (1993: 52), “to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation”. However, the question would be: what are the frames? Frames are those textual cues (semiotic structures) that are used in news stories un/consciously to give a story a desired meaning through selection and salience: some issues are given prominence while others are obscured. Simply put, Gillespie *et al.* (2013: 225) maintain that “media frames are pre-packaged social constructions that function as fully developed templates for understanding a given social phenomenon”.

Scheufele (1999: 105) succinctly state that frames give the story a ‘*spin*’. However, the *spin* does not mean that issues are presented in a manner aimed at deceiving the audience but to dovetail with their predispositions (schemas) (Scheufele and Tewksbury 2007: 12). Since language is *polysemic*, the media engages language that elevates or reduces the significance of femicide and as such the audience is influenced subliminally (Govender 2015: 18-19). This means that in an episode of femicide, the media opt to select and give salience to some issues to engender a particular understanding from the audience. Journalists frame issues in such a way that used frames will resonate with audience schemas. For instance, Mellado (2013: 13) asserts that the media frames women in a stereotypical manner that they are killed because they provoke innocent men. Watts and Zimmerman (2002: 1233) echo that women are frequently blamed for disobedience as they experience violence from men. The media uses such frames because they already have an idea of audience schemas (predispositions) when it comes to

women. It is these skewed frames aimed at preserving masculine impunity that sedate public analysis and understanding of masculine criminality and instead blame women for their own victimhood.

### Frames of Femicide

The importance of the media in this day and age is indisputable. It is seen and understood as the fourth arm of the state and its fundamental role is to forge accountability of the other three state arms being the executive, judiciary, and legislature (Nyarko 2015). MISA Lesotho (2019: 1) corroborates that the media's main role is to exercise oversight on the other three arms of the state and function as a vanguard for the minorities, voiceless, exploited, etc. The media has a significant power in shaping public discourse by setting the agenda on issues and dictating how such issues should be deliberated. Therefore, how media frames femicide has a fundamental bearing on the public response and ultimately how VAW comes to be understood. There has already been a review on what frames are, their characteristics, why they are used, and their net effect on the audience. In this chapter, the researcher will review the usual frames of femicide that the media adopts.

#### **(a) Blame and Responsibility**

Blame and responsibility is one of the common frames that the media engages in framing femicide. Within this frame, there are several underlying dynamics or approaches that journalists engage, either consciously or unconsciously. The fact that the media operates within a patriarchal hegemony renders news susceptible to perpetuating and defending the tenets of patriarchy. This is where exploitation and power lines are drawn and males are beneficiaries of this dominance, exploitation, and inequality. Patriarchy is a pervasive phenomenon that transcends every social aspect of life hence media is not immune since it operates within the framework of patriarchy. It is very evident that patriarchy serves to shore the interest of men and perpetuated women subordination. Therefore, in the conflict and ultimately violence that emanates from intimate partners that ends with the death of a woman, the blame is ironically put on the woman. The media maintains, as Hooks (1990: 33) argues, the rhetoric that black women always bear the blame, albeit in this case, blaming is extended even to white women. Nonetheless, it has already been raised that social factors such as race, age, and status mediate frames used in femicide through covert or overt gendered messages (Sutherland *et al.* 2016: 7).

Herewith are tactics that the media uses to blame the victim. The blaming is either direct or indirect. The first approach is the language that is used in the femicide article. Often, the

language is used to describe the victim in a demeaning manner or attack the character of the victim (Anderson 2017: 72). The language leads the audience to focus on the victim and not on the criminal act that was done to her. The second approach in blaming the victim is accusing the victim for not reporting the previous abuse episodes or laying formal complaints about the abuser on previous assaults. This pattern is that which Berns (2001: 262) calls “degendering the blame and engendering the blame”. The language and framing is the one that isolates and classifies the victim as ‘*bad girl*’ – deviant (Berns 2001; Taylor 2009). The ‘blaming the victim’ frame is an antithesis of early women’s movement efforts that were at all times seeking to identify and speak for the victim.

The third approach is focusing on the victim’s demeanour with other men, perhaps raising the point that the victim had an affair with other men (ibid). Besides these three direct approaches to blaming the victim, there are two other peripheral or indirect ways in which the media blames the victim. In the first instance, the media puts more emphasis on the situation that deflects attention and responsibility on the side of the perpetrator such as the mental state of the abuser/abused, his physical condition, stress, financial hardships, etc. (Taylor 2009; Anderson 2017).

The indirect victim blaming is often done through tactics where there are excuses made for the perpetrator (Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2011: 182). The perpetrator is often cushioned by excuses of a weak mental state due to separation, inebriation, or loss of control. The other tactic in indirect blame is called the equal-blame approach by Taylor (2009), where the responsibility of the assault is not apportioned to either party but framed in such a manner that both parties appear to be responsible. This approach leaves the audience hazy as to who is to be held accountable for the crime that has been committed.

#### **(b) Exonerating Perpetrator**

The blame frame is double-sided. At the material time, the media blames the victim and the responsibility on the side of the perpetrator is decimated, and due to the fact that femicide has resulted in one intimate partner being the victim, the audience is left with no choice but to blame the victim. Nettleton (2011) maintains that the media grossly do not hold men responsible thus blaming women for choosing the wrong partner. Richards, Gillespie and Smith (2011: 182) and Bullock and Cubert (2002: 478) aver that the dichotomy of blaming operates on two distinct levels: the first is indirect victim blaming where the media employs tactics of excuse (poor mental state of the perpetrator, alcohol abuse, rage, and estrangement), and the second one is



direct victim blaming where the media uses negative characterisation of the victims (the woman provoked the poor man). The pattern of positioning the perpetrator as morally deviant opens a dichotomy of the '*Us versus Them*' paradigm. The manner of animating the perpetrator excuses him from being held accountable for his actions and he is *framed* to be seen as not part of '*Us*' (society). In this instance, the only person left to focus on is the victim and as such the audience is made to blame the victim for her own victimhood. Gillespie *et al.* (2013: 227) add that of the five common media frames of femicide, focusing on the behaviour of the victim is one of the prevalent frames of media engagement.

It is apparent that the victim blaming frame is un/wittingly aimed at the exculpation of the perpetrator where Bullock and Cubert (2002) maintain that if the victim is blamed, the society is excused of any form of obligation. Jankey (2009: 90) corroborates that blaming the victim "moves the reader away from the gruesome crime committed by male intimate partner on a woman". It is worth noting that intimate partner femicide is a crime where men kill women in any case and anywhere, and the perpetrator is excused or exculpated, and therein the victim takes centre-stage ironically as the *perpetrator and the victim*. Nettleton (2011: 143) echoes that there is a considerable tolerance of male violence in the media by presenting men as unable to control their temper, providing excuses for violence, and using humorous language. The researcher attributes this media behavioural pattern to cultural and structural violence that aim to maintain male superiority and female subordination. More often, the media delves into making a light-hearted joke or humorous comment about the killings of women in the case where they have to put responsibility on the men. The linguistic strategies such as euphemism that the media engages not only blur but also misdirect, mislead, and minimise the violation and ordeal that women endure at the hands of men (Sutherland *et al.* 2016; Branch 2019).

### **(c) Voice of Authority and Opinion**

This femicide frame seems to be prevalent in the reviewed literature. It is a frame that relies on the orthodox approach of addressing the who-what-where-when-why and how. The media appears to rely heavily on the law enforcement agencies as the source of information in the wake of femicide (Meyers 1997; Bullock and Cubert 2002; Bullock 2007; Taylor 2009; Sutherland *et al.* 2016). The media fraternity relies on the police opinion to provide details of that which has transpired. Sutherland *et al.* (2016: 7) claim that the media rely on the "police to inject expertise about violence against women". The researcher finds this claim that the '*police can inject expertise*' quite peculiar because often the police do not have adequate expertise when it comes to gender issues and their input is in the criminal handling of the matter

only. Richards, Gillespie and Smith (2011: 183) maintain that sources are fundamental and as such should be the ones who accurately represent the victim. In Lesotho, the Lesotho Mounted Police Service (LMPS) has a Child and Gender Protection Unit (CGPU) which was set up to deal with issues of children and gender-based violence. However, the question rests on its capacity and quantity of resources to effectively address issues of gender-based violence. This unit is a step in the right direction albeit more needs to be done to make it operate fully and there is still a need for a legal system to establish a Gender Court for effective prosecution and conviction in Lesotho.

The researcher submits that police opinion is gathered for convenience and timing. A news story with police opinion makes the story appear balanced because the police opinion is considered fair and neutral (Bullock and Cubert 2002; Taylor 2009; Monckton-Smith 2012). The media understanding that the police opinion balances the story and makes it neutral is a flawed conclusion, as the researcher submits. Police are not immune from male hegemony, they are not gender experts, and as such their commentary on issues of femicide may perpetuate a vicious cycle of violence since it may be littered with myths and gendered stereotypes (Bullock and Cubert 2002; Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2011). Police opinion is also problematic because it places femicide in the context of law enforcement rather than the context of violence against women (Spies 2020: 45). The police opinion is simply sorted because it is readily available, as with some cases where the neighbours are asked for their opinion because of their proximity to the incident which in that case is good to a certain extent. However, neighbours and police are underqualified to tender their opinion as compared to families and friends of the victim since neighbours and police provide details of the crime only whilst friends and families have knowledge of the details leading to the crime (Gillespie *et al.* 2013: 226). It should be noted that femicide is not only a criminal issue but a social problem and as such the police opinion is partial – it only focuses on the crime side. In a way, families and friends' opinions situate femicide within the context of social problems since they are more qualified to narrate that the killing is a culmination of protracted episodes of abuse which will be subsequently reviewed. Journalists should refrain from falling prey to a symbiotic relationship between the media and police as a primary source of information, since it leads to that which Monckton-Smith (2012: 64) calls '*disinformation*'. Law enforcement's opinion shall not be presented on its own since it obscures the reality of femicide as a social problem.

Police opinion, albeit biased, is rarely questioned since it is considered legitimate because it comes from a legitimate body but the concern is that it is devoid of expertise. Police opinions

often focus on the criminal act and other parameters surrounding the incident are discounted. The researcher submits that police opinion is that which he terms '*photographic opinion*' – that which only provides the who, where, when, what, and how of the incident (Sutherland *et al.* 2016: 8). Parallel or precipitating factors are discounted by police which are crucial in consolidating a comprehensive and constructive opinion. The experiences of the victims, the history of the relationship, etc. which are fundamental in informing the commentary (opinion) are not included in the police opinion which compels one to approach the police opinion with serious doubt. The narratives of femicide, as the researcher contends, will never be conclusive if the voice of the victim is missing or muted. Femicide is intractable territory because one individual is dead and it is irrational to allow the accused to speak for and/or about his victim hence the voice of the victim is the only credible evidence, unfortunately missing but needed. Monckton-Smith (2012: 5) asserts that media frames and forensic narratives should and must locate the voice of the victim. The voice of the female victim centres femicide within the circumference of social problems and not individual pathology. The lack of background information is detrimental to the fight to stop femicide and women abuse because it frames it as an *out-of-the-blue* incident devoid of history.

#### **(d) Trespassing**

There are common frames that are used by the media in femicide. A concern will be given to how women's real-life experiences are framed. The victimisation of women in the media appears to be a common frame in media. It is a case where women are framed to be the ones at fault for being violently abused. Choquette (2012: 27) claims that the media un/wittingly blames women for violating patriarchal order (trespassing). Patriarchal order maintains a strict, distinct gender role where women are confined to the subordinate private sphere and men are privileged to partake in being remunerated from the public sphere that bestows upon its participants power. This, in very many ways, places women as worthy victims since it provides a justification for the violence and abuse that they have suffered. Che (2014) and Cetin (2015) corroborate that femicide is purely '*revolt killings*' where women are killed simply because men consider them to have encroached in their public sphere territory. Female participation in the public sphere has intimidated men who have then resorted to violence to outcompete women and prohibit as well as intimidate them of undertaking any further participation. Nooruddin (2007: 342) succinctly states that the "public sphere is the last bastion for patriarchy" hence women's participation is considered as interference and it is met with vicious violence.

Victimisation framing is mediated by factors such as race, class, and gender. It is imperative to underscore that black women and white women, both as victims of abuse, are treated differently by the media. There is a tendency to accord white women victims and perpetrators much media coverage with lenient victimisation as compared to black women victims and perpetrators who receive, if any, less media coverage with harsher commentary (Jankey 2009; Choquette 2012).

#### **(e) Erotisation and Sexualisation**

The erotisation of women is a prevalent frame that is mainly adopted by the media. The bodies of women are contextualised as '*objects of pleasure*' and their bodies are sexualised. Choquette (2012: 27) affirms that the erotisation and victimisation of women's bodies are interlinked. The manner in which femicide news stories are framed is such that a sexualised visual scenario is created for the audience to be sexually stimulated rather than a message being conveyed of the brutal killing of the woman. Buthelezi (2006: 499) asserts that the media fails to put violence at the centre but puts women's bodies to be seen and admired. In the news stories, there is an element that compels the audience (voyeur) to look at the cadaver and derive sexual pleasure through the male gaze. In Juarez, the bodies of victims are described as nude, what they were wearing, abandoned, and neglected, but nothing is usually stated about the episodes of violence that they have suffered prior to this fatal episode (Choquette 2012: 28). Figure 2.5 in Section 2.3.5 clearly illustrates that femicide victims are displayed as objects for visual pleasure (voyeurism) for the audience.

#### **(f) Isolating Femicide**

Framing femicide as an isolated incidence is another framing technique that the media quite often employs. This happens when the incidence is reported without context. Context is fundamental because it gives the audience the background to the event or incidence. Failure to contextualise femicide leads to miscomprehension by the audience and such an incidence is construed as an isolated incidence (Gillespie *et al.* 2013). Branch (2019) maintains that isolating femicide as an *out-of-the-blue* incidence sanitises it to be a thread to women's rights and their lives. This frame sedates women (potential victims of femicide) and those who are already being abused to see femicide as an outcome that is far-fetched for them. Femicide is framed not as an outcome of protracted episodes of violence and abuse but as a random outcome (Branch 2019: 31). This frame bars women to connect their lived experience to the victim because the historical background of violence leading to the death is omitted and as such it renders femicide devoid of precursors.

### **(g) Normalisation of Femicide**

Femicide is noted to be the brutal form of violence that women suffer at the hands of men. If it is so pervasive, the question is: is the response to femicide equally vicious as it? Certainly, one would say no as the researcher writes this thesis in the climax of Covid-19 where every government has set aside large sums and imposed a plethora of restrictions to fight this corona virus. However, one would be alarmed to see its fatality rate as compared to Intimate Partner Violence where every eight hours in South Africa, a man kills a partner (Abrahams *et al.* 2012). From 5 March 2020, when the first case of corona virus was reported, to 17 March 2020, is exactly three hundred and one hours (301 hours) meaning that thirty-seven women have been killed by men in South Africa, but of the sixty-seven recorded cases of corona virus, there was no fatality by 17 March 2020. This example simply clarifies that femicide has become too frequent and normalised. How does the media normalise femicide through framing? – femicide is lumped/homogenised with other homicides and that turns it into a routine outcome (Meyers 1997). There is a general consensus that women's sufferings are journalistically unappealing unless the victim is a female of the upper class and white. The other way in which femicide is normalised is by including its story among other forms of homicide or crime issues (Branch 2019: 31). Reporting them under one banner states that they all belong to the same cluster.

### **(h) Implications of Femicide**

Studying the dead has never been an interesting and appealing subject sociologically. Weil (2016: 1) succinctly states that there is a glaring scarcity of articles on femicide. It therefore means that femicide is an area that is still uncharted and the implications of it are still not part of the public and political agenda. The researcher shall herein review the implications of femicide to the survivors (those left behind) and to the entire society at large. A decline in food security is one of the implications of femicide. Women are known to best undertake production of food crops which are essential at the household level to ensure food security. Gunnarsson (2011: 117) articulates that the participation and contribution of women in agriculture to ensure food security at households cannot be overstated. van der Gaag (2014: 71) corroborates that women contribute immensely to household food security and other income-generating activities to ensure household survival. It is quite remarkable that women, despite not having land rights, still work it to the betterment of the whole family. If women are killed, it goes without saying that food security is seriously affected.

The implications have a degenerative chain reaction, with children being the worst affected. There is poor nutritional intake that leads to poor learning and stunting. Children therefore find themselves out of the school system and hence indulge in anti-social behaviours such as drug abuse and robbery that have serious social and economic backlash. In sum, if a woman dies, the quality of life deteriorates: health-wise, socially, and the *social fabric* is left in tatters.

The second implication of femicide is the perpetuation of an intergenerational culture of violence. It is accounted for that femicide is a fatal outcome of repetitive episodes of violence. This implies that femicide is not one encounter of violence and as such children become not only spectators but victims as well. Gage (2005: 349) posits that children's exposure to violence cannot be discounted in how they will solve conflicts in future. KPMG (2014: 1) posits that the "second-generation costs are the cost of children witnessing and living with violence, such as increased juvenile and adult crime". Exposure to violence is internalised by children and violence is normalised as an appropriate and alternative means to conflicts. This means that the male children learn that assaulting a female partner is normal and the female child also internalises and normalises that being assaulted by a male figure is normal and should be tolerated. Domination and exploitation are concepts that are hammered in children witnessing violence at home. It has been documented extensively that the home is the most lethal place for a woman and in her lifetime, she is more likely to be killed by her intimate partner than a stranger (Macdougall 2000; Bullock and Cubert 2002; Prieto-Carrón, Thomson and Macdonald 2007; Mathews *et al.* 2013; McCormick 2015). The home, a place to protect and nurture the future generation, appears to be a space caught in a vortex of violence and as such is not conducive to raising kids. Knowledge is a social construct acquired through imitation thus a vicious culture of violence continues to rattle homes and couples and leaves children with no choice but to internalise violence as an alternative to conflict (Bandura 2001).

The implications of femicide are not indirect to the economy but also direct. The researcher will look at how femicide affects Household (HH) savings. Lopez-Ekra *et al.* (2011: 69) claim that in comparison to men, women have a higher propensity to make HH savings. This leaves one conclusion that if women are killed, HH savings rupture and are halted and those accumulated are divested recklessly. Women are inclined more than men to live and engage in different unions from religious to credit schemes that target the health and well-being of the family. It is from these unions that they set up micro-finance schemes that increase HH savings which act as a shock-absorber/cushion to unforeseen financial challenges. Abdelkhalek *et al.* (2010: 7) concede that the marginal savings that women make over consumption go a long way

for the well-being of the family, especially in settings where there is no health insurance and education support funding. The children are the major beneficiaries if their mothers do not surrender to femicide but also the major losers if their mothers die too.

**(i) Femicide: Individual Pathology or Social Problem**

Intimate partner femicide in media fraternity literature indicates that it is virtually framed devoid of patriarchal hegemony. When a woman is murdered, there is a usual tendency from the media to portray that femicide as an isolated outcome that does not have a litany of assault history whilst in essence, femicide is the extreme end and consequence of episodes of violence (Abrahams *et al.* 2009; Mathews *et al.* 2013; Spies 2020). Framing femicide devoid of its historical background clearly situates femicide as an individual pathology and immunises femicide from being a bigger social and public health problem. Nancy Berns (2001: 277) famously sums this approach as “degendering the problem” and “engendering the blame”. She argues that if violence against women is framed as human violence, it resists being funnelled as part of the patriarchal framework. Responses are thus misguided to focus on the culpability of women whilst they ought to focus on the perpetrators’ responsibility. If variables such as race, gender, and class are overlooked in framing femicide, Anderson (2017: 75) argues that the audience is left with no other option to construct femicide but only to understand it as an individual problem (Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2014; Spies 2020). The problem with this framing is that violence and victimhood focus on the victim and further, the intervention and response are left to the victim because the problem is seen and understood to be that of the victim and does not have anything to do with the society.

The media, by virtue of constantly framing intimate partner violence as isolated events and failing to present it as a larger social problem, causes implications to social policy. Spies (2020: 76) and Bullock (2007: 40) affirm that the media has a bearing in shaping public policy and informing agenda and as such if femicide is framed as a larger social and public health issue, surely femicide will form part of the public policy agenda. Further, Taylor (2009) maintains that femicide can be framed as a social problem only if the media does not focus on women as victims of violence but instead puts more emphasis on structural causes (precursors, male supremacy, and hegemony) that predispose women to violence and ultimately being victims.

## **(j) Framing Models: Episodic and Thematic Approach**

In news discourse, the approach is paramount to the audience's comprehension of the news and in particular with femicide news, how to understand it and where to apportion blame and responsibility as well as prospective solutions. Adebayo (2015: 171), in his study looking at how media reportage influences political violence in Nigeria, concluded that focus on issues as opposed to personalities appears to promote non-violence. News that focuses primarily on personalities fuels resentment. When, how, and why the news focuses on issues and in other instances on personality is a key focus area in assisting journalists to stimulate non-violence in their reportage. There are two types of frames that define if news should be understood within the individual strand or collective social strand.

The first type of framing is episodic framing which looks at specific events and individual events in a news discourse (Springer and Harwood 2015: 227). The second one is thematic framing which looks at the issue in general and in context (London 1993; Springer and Harwood 2015). Frames that are episodic focus thinly on the '*episode*' and thus only leave background and context which add quality and enhance public comprehension of the news story. Springer and Harwood (2015: 228) posit that "episodic framing focuses on a particular individual's story, and hence frames the problem (and plausibly the solution) as an individual one". It is apparent if episodic framing is applied in femicide, the problem of femicide becomes an individual's challenge where the social responsibility is discounted and obscured. This approach is inimical since it relegates IPV/IPF as a domestic issue to be dealt with within the confinement of the private sphere. It further projects IPV-Femicide as a once-off event, the one that the audience can conclude was an out-of-the-blue incidence. There is an abundance of literature in concurrence that IPV that fatally ends as femicide has a history, it is not an impulsive incidence (Bullock and Cubert 2002; Bullock 2007; Johnson *et al.* 2019). Episodic framing obfuscates the history of battering and violence as precursors of intimate partner femicide.

An alternative to episodic framing is thematic framing which seeks to anchor news in broader trends or backgrounds. Thematic frames use in-depth backgrounds and statistics to make sense of the issue – to nestle intimate partner femicide in the appropriate contextual background. Therefore, if femicide is thematically framed, it is clear that the frame of news would be on the history of their intimate life with a clear focus on battering and violence encounters. This will draw a clear picture for the audience to understand that femicide is not an impulsive incidence but a terminal end of intimate partner violence. Most importantly, and a stark difference of the



two types of frames, is that thematic framing suggests broad-based social solutions while episodic framing proposes individual solutions. Individual solutions deflect responsibility and propagate the status quo (London 1993).

Episodic framing provides a distorted picture of recurring issues and puts it as a disjointed event and devoid of reality as well as devoid of responsibility from the perpetrator. The media's presentation of femicide as single and unrelated events neglect a stable pattern of violence against women (Monckton-Smith 2012: 64). The literature, without doubt, confirms that femicide is pervasive all over the world: in South Africa (Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015), Turkey (Cetin 2015), Mexico (Choquette 2012), and United Kingdom (Irish Observatory on Violence Against Women 2013). Femicide incidents and outcomes of male inimical power are related hence they should be thematically framed to expose these trends. The thematic representation of intimate partner femicide is responsive gender-sensitive reporting that calls for collective accountability and responsibility from everyone, from the personal level, community level, and national level.

Femicide, as the researcher submits, is a social problem that should be thematically framed for it to be properly diagnosed and be given an appropriate *prescription*.

#### Current Femicide Framing Paradigm

Femicide is a resultant of long and unattended episodes of violence against women. The researcher consciously shies away from the phrase *domestic violence* because there is solid evidence that the phrase is counterproductive. It relegates the issue of violence from public scrutiny to a personal matter to be dealt with by intimate partners whilst violence against women is a form of structural and cultural violence that merits public attention. A brief historical trajectory of violence against women ought to be recalled here. Thirty years ago, violence against women was considered a domestic affairs dispute to be dealt with within the family ranks where the legal system, the courts of law, and the society did not consider battering as a criminal act (Gillespie *et al.* 2013: 222). Monckton-Smith (2012: 10) echoes that the media, police, coroners, and the courts are not in sync in addressing issues of femicide and do not fully understand the dynamics of intimate partner violence. Perhaps this will shed light as to why the current feminist debate and literature are moving away from referring to violence against women as *domestic abuse* because this phrase situates women abuse within the paradigm of a private affair matter (episodic). Furthermore, *domestic violence* has been a phrase associated with *riots* and *terrorism*, and it has, to date, carried an ambiguous meaning and is laden with

unpalatable connotations to the course of feminism and justice for women (Gillespie *et al.* 2013: 223).

The researcher prefers the terms Violence Against Women (VAW) or Intimate Partner Femicide (IPF) as alternatives to domestic violence. However, in this study, VAW is also considered too open since it does not narrow down and tie the abuse to gender. It implies any form of violence that women suffer from anywhere whilst the aim is to explicitly refer to a form of violence that emanates from unequal gender relations. IPF appears to be a suitable concept although there are still crimes committed beyond intimate relations. Perhaps it is still an open space for academics and gender practitioners to coin a fitting term to refer to violence that specifically points to women abuse due to male superiority. In the absence of that, the study will prefer to use proposed alternatives but where need be, domestic violence will be used for convenience and ease of understanding.

The naming (diagnosis) of the problem as *domestic abuse* has led to the wrong prescription (solutions) (Gillespie *et al.* 2013: 223). Women abuse has for long been sanctioned as an acceptable way to discipline wives which is evidenced by the renowned dictum '*rule of thumb*'. For a length of time, women abuse has been neglected and relegated to the private sphere because it was deemed not worthy of public attention. The injustices to which women were subjected at home from the time women abuse "was a problem with no name" (Friedan 1974: 11) to the late 1970s when it was named 'domestic violence' have permeated the media which frames women abuse within the lens of a domestic problem as opposed to a social problem. How the media frames femicide has ramifications for the problem, its causes, and tenable solutions because the power of the media could be a solution or a problem (Gillespie *et al.* 2013: 240). In this section, the researcher will review how media frames femicide: is it framed in the context of an individual pathology or a social problem context?

Several studies on news media indicate that femicide is framed as an individual pathology albeit some of the studies have recently pointed out that news media is starting to frame femicide within the broader context of social problems. It is paramount to outline two elements that shape media frames, as articulated by Gillespie *et al.* (2013: 225):

- Sources – who are contacted for opinion e.g. police, friends, family, advocates, or experts

- Language/choice of words – sexualised diction, myths, or words that promote gender stereotypes
- Context – prior history of violence

A quantitative content analysis and frame analysis of 230 articles where 44 cases were femicide-related was done by Bullock and Cubert (2002) in Washington State in 1998. The results indicated that the coverage of femicide generally presented it as an isolated incident (individual pathology) while a fraction of the coverage notably situated femicide within the context of social problems. How does the media frame femicide as an individual pathology? There are key characteristics that news stories embody for it to be considered that it conveys a message of individual pathology or femicide being an isolated episode. The pattern of abuse in a relationship or the perpetrator's violent or abusive upbringing is glaringly omitted (Bullock and Cubert 2002; Taylor 2009; Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2011; Gillespie *et al.* 2013). Most news narratives focus on and frame victims (female) as responsible for her tragedy and rarely discuss the perpetrator, and if they do, the frame is usually the one that provides a lame excuse (Berns 2001; Bullock and Cubert 2002; Joanna 2016). In a news story where the history of violence and abuse are omitted, the audience is urged to reach one reasonable conclusion, ironically which it is not, that the killing was *out-of-the-blue*. The media denies the audience a chance to connect the dots that femicide is the fatal closure/climax of long, unattended episodes of violence.

Moreover, the media, in framing femicide as an isolated event, usually uses frames that imply shock. The media often seeks police or neighbours' opinions who are not qualified for proper commentary because they give what the researcher calls a '*photographic opinion*' – only what they have seen or heard at the material time of death, a rigid and static opinion that literally discounts prior incidents of violence. They are inclined to give an opinion of the perpetrator's normalcy and exhibit their shock that he has done that. When the media frames femicide as shocking, in a way, it removes public responsibility on the matter and frames it as if it was just accidental. Bullock and Cubert (2002: 492) posit that often the perpetrator's status and some positive characteristics are foregrounded to display shock: *he was such a philanthropist, this is definitely a tragedy, and he was a successful Doctor*. Ultimately this evokes public clemency for the perpetrator because it is contextualised as a once-off event worthy of public forgiveness and not as a social problem. On the same breadth, Monckton-Smith (2012: 64) concurs that the media presents cases of femicide as not being a phenomenon of violence and also as isolated cases detached from each other. Domínguez-Ruvalcaba and Corona (2010: 158) accede that in

Ciudad Juárez, men killing women is considered as acts of random violence wherein a pattern of misogyny (structural and cultural oppression) is obscured by media frames.

It is paramount that the media does consult qualified individuals such as family members, friends, and advocates who will give a background of the incident of femicide and as such this will lay bare that femicide is not incidental but a premeditated outcome of the continued violence and abuse of women that have a veneer of male dominance. In this way, the public will construe femicide as a social problem that merits a collective social response.

In addition, foregrounding of status and positive characteristics perpetuate the ideological agenda that the perpetrator is an individual of importance within the society hence should be accorded a soft retribution. In the literature reviewed, perpetrators are singled out by their titles whilst victims are rarely mentioned by their titles. The researcher understands this media attitude in two ways. First, the perpetrator is mentioned with his title and positive characteristics that, in itself, is a hegemonic maneuverer to put femicide in a social context such that the perpetrator will be exonerated because he has a role to play in the society. It is not that the media wants to put femicide as a broader social problem open for public action. Equally, when the media use titles to refer to victims, it does so in a contrary manner as for the perpetrators. Victims' titles are a clear media masculine demonstration that women (victims) have trespassed in the public sphere (their title are used in a condescending manner). In other words, the titles are a form of admonishing them and a warning to those who dare to challenge their subordinate status.

The other characteristic that the media employs to frame femicide as an isolated incident is the diction that journalists decide to use. Paulo Freire's claim that language is never neutral becomes key here. Knowledge is claimed to be not *value-free* whilst it is also considered as *value-driven* because it is, by nature, inherently the product of social structure and interaction (Fairclough 2003; Anderson 2017). The choice of words that journalists decide to engage in relating to femicide stories clearly indicates if the media frames femicide as an isolated event or a bigger social problem, and the choice of words have a fundamental ideological agenda. Easteal, Holland and Judd (2015: 106) contend that words such as "fiend, beast and monster and ripper" are a few words that usually command headlines of femicide. The researcher fathoms them to be words that predispose the public to understand the referred (perpetrators) as deviant. This, in a way, creates an undesired dichotomy of '*Us versus Them*' wherein the perpetrator is referred to as a '*beast*' then he, in the minds of the public, is not part of '*Us*'. The

perpetrator *assumes* animalistic behaviour hence he is exonerated from being part of the society hence his awful behaviour is dismissed as well. In sum, the choice of language is very critical in shaping the public understanding and reaction to the problem as to whether the problem warrants their attention or not.

The reviewed literature outlines that the media, to date, still largely frames femicide as an isolated problem and on an insignificant scale, there is notably evidence that it is framed as a wider social problem. This pattern of framing femicide as an individual problem makes this study more important because it aims at capacitating journalists to situate femicide within the realm of a collective social problem. Although femicide is framed in the context of an isolated problem, there is a common pattern in literature that femicide is not labelled as *domestic violence* (Bullock and Cubert 2002; Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2011; Gillespie *et al.* 2013). The researcher has noted a concern that *domestic violence* is a laden concept that, to his personal view, relegates this abuse as a private matter affair and somehow obscures the atrocities that women endure at home, a place lethal to women but considered as safe to the ignorant.

#### **2.4.8 Section Summary**

This section gave a lucid introduction to the concept of femicide. A historical overview of the relationship of women and the media is also reviewed which indicated that women's participation and representation has been and is still lacking. The gender violence matrix is discussed in order to contextualise femicide and dispel the notion that femicide occurs *out-of-the-blue*. Battering and other forms of violence are vivid precursors to femicide (Johnson *et al.* 2019: 3); therefore femicide has a history. The gender violence matrix aids in the comprehension of femicide as an outcome of conflict that escalates to violence. Of importance is to highlight that women abuse is systemic as evidenced by the causes (motives) of femicide that are structural and cultural. The framing of intimate partner femicide appears to be the one that does not challenge systemic violence but instead sustains it. Literature on intimate partner femicide suggests that femicide is a global public health challenge that is still framed as an individual aberration instead of a social problem. The causes (motives) are articulated and the implications of femicide are far-reaching beyond the primary victims who are mostly the children and the immediate family. Food security and health are some of the areas that are seriously affected by intimate partner femicide, since women's contribution to food security and adequate nutritional intake are evident (Jankey 2009; van der Gaag 2014).

## 2.5 Assessment of Journalists' Training Outcome

### 2.5.1 Introduction

This final section includes a review of the outcome of two journalists' training programmes. The case studies will basically be reviewed to unpack which positive aspects a media training programme added to the knowledge reservoir of journalists.

### 2.5.2 Samoan Journalist Training: Case Study

In 1999, Samoa was submerged in a criminal case dubbed the '*trial of the millennium*' where the Minister of Works, Luagalau Levaula Kamu, was shot and killed. A journalist training workshop for seven days was arranged to enable journalists to cover court proceedings with accuracy and fairness (Pearson 2000). This attests to the fact that the ever-changing mediascape demands training journalists on media ethics and values. This principle of accuracy and fairness is key in femicide reportage because it brings about an appropriate diagnosis of and appropriate prescription to the challenge. Nyarko (2015: 77) confirms that fairness and accuracy are fundamental pillars because they facilitate media accountability.

Pearson (2000: 4) outlines that the aim of the Samoan journalist training was to equip journalists with the ability to '*reflect in action*', an approach coined by Schön (1987). This approach emphasises enabling the journalist to reflect on and tap into the knowledge of media law (or any form of knowledge) in covering the case or any event. As the researcher thinks of Schön's '*reflect in action*' approach, the researcher is of the view that if journalists are trained to be gender-sensitive in their reportage, their curriculum is set in this approach and is likely not to yield positive results. It would be challenging for journalists to '*reflect in action*' amid femicide because male hegemony is pervasive and male supremacy (privilege) will obscure their reflection of the action that is male-centred. It would be a dilemmatic case of one being a referee and a player simultaneously.

Nonetheless, the core aim of reviewing the case study is to examine the effect of a training programme in totality since specific approaches can be context-based, and in this case, '*reflect in action*' was suitable. Justice Wilson summed the impact of the training:

As the trial progressed I became firmly of the view that the media discharged their role very responsibly. By the end of the trial I thought they were serving the public well... I came away from this trial with a very favourable impression of the media's conduct ... without [media training] anything might have happened (Pearson 2000:

13)

Justice Wilson's sentiments are longed for in femicide discourse because it is still grossly reported in a degrading, sexualised, and biased manner. There is a reasonable platform to move for media training for journalists to frame femicide appropriately and engage media as a peacebuilding tool. The sentiments of Justice Wilson are shared by one of the participants:

Reporter Keni Ramese Lesa from the *Samoa Observer*, who attended the workshop, said the "trial of the millennium" was the first court case he had ever covered. He said the workshop gave him confidence in his reporting and felt he may have encountered trouble in his reporting if he had not learned about reporting restrictions in the training program (Pearson 2000: 13).

This is a complete testimony that training workshops for journalists are key in capacitating them to address issues of public concern such as femicide in an accurate and fair manner. It is therefore imperative that the media, as a *watchdog*, should also be constantly recalibrated such that it gives the public a true reflection of the issues.

### **2.5.3 Nigerian Journalist Training: Case Study**

Nigeria is one of the western African countries with about 175 million inhabitants who are polarised heavily along ethnic and religious lines where their political inclinations and subscriptions hinge on the ethnic and religious backgrounds of political contenders. Nigeria's robust media is equally likely to be divided along religious and ethnic lines in the coverage of elections which often sparks political violence due to insensitive reportage (Adebayo 2015: ii). In response to this potential problem, Adebayo, through participatory action research in his thesis, developed and conducted a training workshop using a peace journalism model by Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick. This peace journalism model encourages journalists to report issues in a manner that will stimulate the audience to seek and appreciate non-violent alternatives to conflict. The aim of the training was to capacitate the media to report elections in a conflict-sensitive manner thus promoting social cohesion and peace.

The peace journalism training workshop appears to be in line with that which the researcher wants to do in training journalists to report femicide in a more gender-sensitive manner to aid the audience to consider non-violence as an alternative. Adebayo (2015: 180), in evaluating the outcome (post-training) of the training using content analysis, concludes that journalists generally appeared to use one or more of the 17-points plan of peace journalism model by Lynch and McGoldrick. The news content of the post-training embraced alternatives to non-violence frames other than deliberating on insightful comments (Adebayo 2015). The news

stories after training appeared to consult for opinions from different and varied bodies or individuals. These outcomes coincided with deficiencies with which femicide news stories are framed. The victims are sexualised and there is much sensationalism of femicide and as such, if the election news was reported in a positive peacebuilding manner after training, it is reasonable to conclude that a gender-sensitive training workshop would yield positive results as well.

#### **2.5.4 Section Summary**

The two reviewed journalist training workshops case studies reflect and underscore the need for journalists to be capacitated on accurate and fair coverage and reporting. Journalists' training is key in maintaining public trust and effecting positive discussion by accurate framing and setting a positive agenda that is inclusive. Perhaps journalists' training follows the logic maxim that *only fools cannot learn*. There is always room to learn more especially when one merges theory and practice, and there is always a need to learn new skills. This is evidenced by the post-training evaluation that indeed, the journalists' news output has improved tremendously.



## **CHAPTER 3:**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to highlight the research design that this study has adopted. It will also explain the data collection methods, population, sample, action research process, and its steps.

In its basic form, the research design is a basic procedure of inquiry. It is a clearly set out plan or blueprint that aims to give the study a desired direction. This study adopted an Action Research (AR) design because it aims to solve practical social problems, and because it is an approach that involves participants to lead in the identification of the problem, gathering of data, and the designing of action and implementation as well as evaluation (Townsend 2013; Coghlan and Brannick 2014). It is an emancipatory approach that allows solutions attained to be owned by participants because they are *by them for them* not *for them from others*. Succinctly stated:

- action: taking action to improve practice, and
- research: finding solutions and coming to new understandings, that is, creating new knowledge. In action research, the knowledge is about how and why improvement has happened (Mcniff and Whitehead 2012: 10).

In this study, journalists will identify how their stories have re/produced discourses that perpetuate violence or challenge the oppressive status quo. In a sense, AR can be understood to be a way in which members seek to understand and propose solutions to the challenges with the view of improving practice.

The study's aim was to train journalists to adopt gender-sensitive framing in their reportage of news with a precise focus on intimate partner femicide. The objectives were basically to:

1. Examine the motives, extent, and implications of intimate partner femicide.
2. Examine media frames in intimate partner femicide and their influence in the Lesotho context.

3. Analyse how the media reports intimate partner femicide: Individual pathology or Social Problem.
4. Develop and test a training manual for journalists.
5. Undertake preliminary evaluation of the training manual.

Taking into consideration that the study adopted the action research approach, a training manual for journalists was developed and the training was done. Why the development of the training manual? Hypothetically, if practice is to be improved, there is a need to diagnose the problem and propose improvements on the current practice. In this case, the researcher has the knowledge on the ground of the lack of capacity in the media space. In personal conversations with the lecturer at the Institute of Extra Mural Studies (IEMS), he confided that in their three-year diploma for journalism content, only one semester module in the first year exposes students to gender and media. This calls for intensive capacity building and other factors such as the increase of gender-based violence and femicide as well as the cost of it where the latest figures indicate that 5.5% of GDP is lost to GBV (Bazlul 2019). Furthermore, a cursory analysis of the state of the mediascape in Lesotho uses frames that perpetuate and sustain violence. The reviewed literature was the body that verified the need for training hence the training for journalists was resolved. It is important to state that the training development was done after engaging the journalists with interviews and the analysis of newspaper archives to avoid a training that was not responsive to their needs.

### **3.2 Research Design**

Scholars in research have held different definitions when research terminology is concerned and as such, defining research design is no exception. In some instances, research design and research methodology have been conflated and used interchangeably whilst in some instances, they are held differently. This thesis adopts the same approach as Muchemwa (2015) where the research design is construed to be interlinked with the research methodology but conceptually different. Mouton (2001: 55) defines research design as a fore-thought (plan) or blueprint of how a researcher intends to execute the enquiry. Research design is further defined as “a set of guidelines and instructions to be followed in addressing a research problem” (Mouton 1996: 107). It is a blueprint that precedes the actual design of the project. Literally, like an architecture being influenced by the terrain, when it comes to designing a structure, the research design is also influenced by the nature of the problem/challenge. Mouton (1996: 107) provides an analogy that the research design is similar to an itinerary where the traveller, having the

knowledge of his destination, sits and maps not only the best route but the most cost-effective one as well. Summarily, there are two basic functions of a research design: to guide and maintain parameters of the research and ensure maximum success of the project because feasibility as well as objectivity are first detected and established.

The research design adopted for this study is action research because the study aims to contribute to the improvement of practice and add new knowledge.

### **3.3 Action Research**

Kurt Lewin, a social psychologist, is credited with the coinage of action research in the 1930s. He understood action research to be a cyclical, dynamic, and collaborative process where social issues pertinent to people's lives are addressed. AR is an approach that not only seeks to understand social contexts but further undertakes to change them (Townsend 2013: 11). Action research is a research design that is iterative, deliberate, solution-oriented, and hinges on the idea of acting on data and reflecting on the results with the aim of improving practice. It is a process that starts with the idea, follows the idea through, and checks if that which is proposed works and if it does not, the cycle starts again. Abrams (2014: 478) defines action research as a process that engages research principles to improve day-to-day practice. Jacobs (2014: 196) defines AR as a "systematic process in which a problem is studied scientifically, and where the results are used to take a particular action to help solve the problem". Action research is "a collaborative mode of inquiry that seeks to find solutions to existing problems and challenges" (Ebersohn, Eloff and Ferreira 2016: 134). A common thread in the definition of AR is that it is a systematic inquiry aimed at solving real life challenges by improving efficiency thus transforming practice. The study adopted AR because it aims at transforming femicide reportage. AR approaches factors in the idea that "people's practices are not fixed but can be changed to produce more ethical, socially just and sustainable outcomes" (Crouch and Pearce 2014: 143). This is an additional reason why AR was used, because in this study, it is going to assist journalists report on femicide in a manner that is empowering to potential victims, is respectful to the dead, and is just to the secondary victims.

A fundamental characteristic of AR is that its research questions are closely aligned to practice. AR does not precisely focus on what is wrong but its main focus is on continually improving practice. This is the reason why this study has adopted AR, because hypothetically, the researcher construed that the framing of intimate partner femicide was inappropriate and the

literature review validated that. The training manual is not necessarily that the media is totally wrong but it serves as a framework to guide the improvement of practice. AR engages observation, planning, and cooperative reflection in an attempt to continually improve practice (Ebersohn, Eloff and Ferreira 2016: 134). The solution adopted is carefully followed and if it does not adequately address the problem, the intervention is adjusted because the main aim of action research is about what the researcher is doing, what can be changed to improve practice, and how can that be improved (Jacobs 2014: 196). The study prepared a Gender Sensitive Journalism Manual (GSJM) to capacitate journalists on how to effectively report femicide. Basically, the intended outcome of AR is to produce a specific solution for a targeted social problem. This dovetails with this thesis because it is about capacitating the media to be gender-sensitive in reporting femicide (it is the improvement of practice that is targeted).

Action research is not restricted to any particular methodology although often a qualitative approach is suitable. AR is effective with a qualitative approach because they both hinge on local knowledge of the researcher and participants. The qualitative approach is more suited because AR is not concerned more about figures (statistics), but it is more inclined to the production of practical knowledge through a collaborative and participatory manner where participants are not objects of the study but active agents in the design and production of a solution to a practical challenge (Abrams 2014: 479). Ebersohn, Eloff and Ferreira (2016: 134) echo that in conducting AR, the participants literally become co-researchers. The journalists in this case and listeners/readers have been fundamental in producing data that was used in the development of GSJM. This characteristic of AR is emancipatory in nature and as such, suits studies that deal with vulnerable participants such as women and children.

### **3.4 Characteristics of Action Research**

Jacobs (2014: 197) and Ebersohn, Eloff and Ferreira (2016: 134) sum up the characteristics of AR as:

- taking action based on research and researches the action that has been taken
- a cyclical process
- it takes cognisance of context (does not subscribe to a one-size-fits-all approach)
- a problem and solution-oriented approach
- it is participatory (researcher and participants are equal) and it is cyclical in nature

Table 3.1 compares the characteristics of action research and traditional research.

**Table 3.1:** Characteristics of Action Research versus Traditional Research.

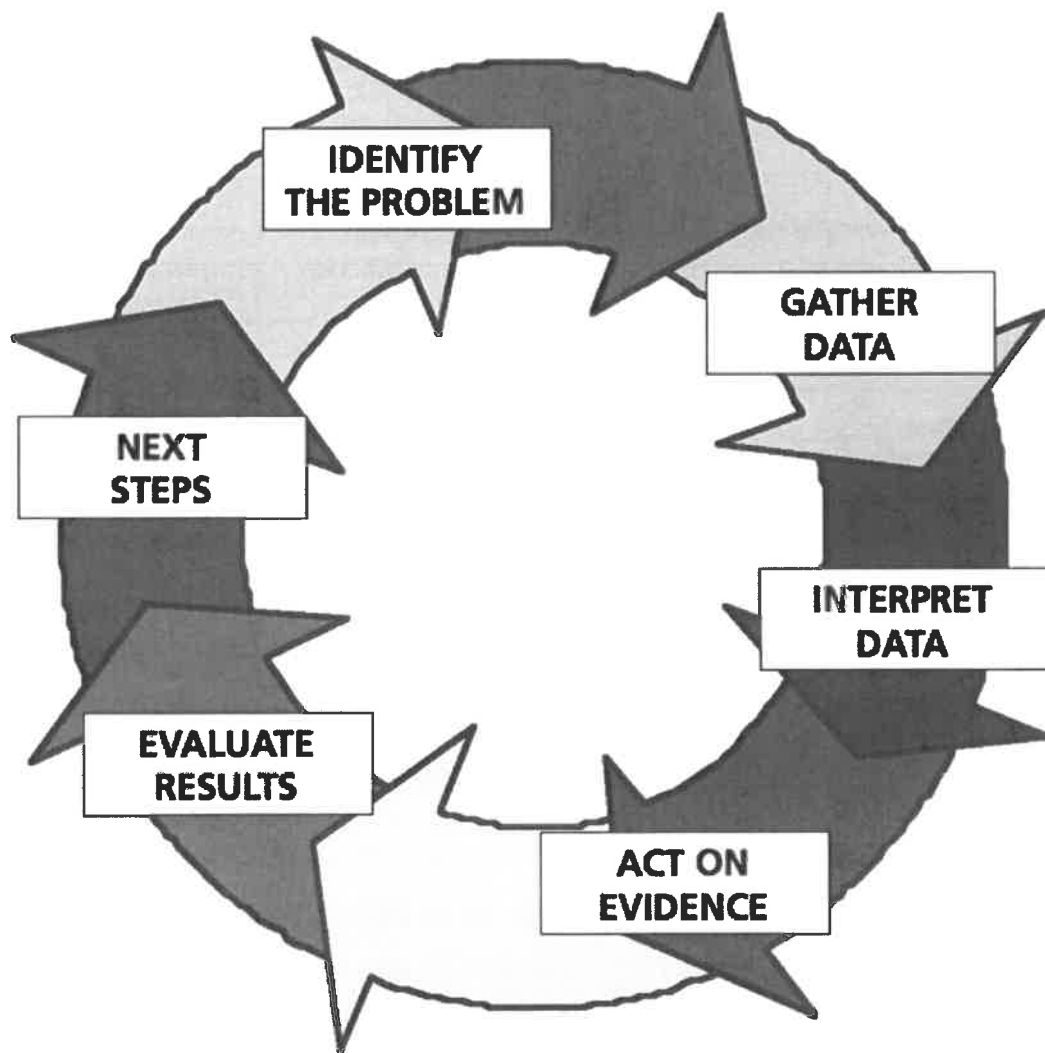
Characteristics	Action Research	Traditional Research
Who identifies the research question(s) and conducts the research	Practitioners: teachers, principals, counsellors, administrators	Trained researchers, university professors, scholars, graduate students
Where the research is conducted	Schools, universities, day-care centres, and other institutions where practice is implemented	Setting in which appropriate control can be implemented, from laboratories to field settings
Goal	Knowledge that is relevant to local setting	Knowledge that can be generalised in the field
Literature	Brief, with a focus on secondary sources	Extensive, with emphasis on primary sources
Instrumentation	Use of instruments that are convenient and easy to administer and score	Measures are selected based on technical adequacy
Sampling	Convenient sampling of students or employees in a targeted setting	Tends to be random or representative
Data analysis	Descriptive	Descriptive and inferential
Dissemination	To the specific individual, classroom, or organisation	To other professionals in different settings

Source: Gall, Gall and Borg (2007).

Having outlined the characteristics of AR versus Traditional Research (TR), it is apparent that AR is an approach that specifically responds with appropriate answers and solutions to practical life questions and problems. The aim is to capacitate journalists in Lesotho to be aware of frames that perpetuate femicide and how to frame femicide in an empowering manner not only to potential victims but secondary victims as well and respecting the victims.

### 3.5 The Process of Action Research

AR is a continuous cyclical approach as opposed to a linear pattern of approach of other traditional research designs. Two fundamental thrusts in AR is action and theory, meaning that of paramount importance in action research is solving practical problems pertinent to the community in question. McNiff and Whitehead (2012: 55) maintain that the importance of action research is twofold: to add to new practices (being the action part of action research) and to add to new knowledge (being the research part of action research). Figure 3.1 is a diagrammatic presentation of the five phases of an AR cycle: problem identification, data gathering, interpretation of data, action, and evaluation of results and moving to a new reflection.



(Source: (Ferrance 2000: 9)

**Figure 3.1: Action Research Cycle.**

### **3.5.1 Problem Identification**

AR is concerned with practical solutions to real life situations and as such it starts with identification of real social issues which, in this study, is the framing of femicide. These characteristics of AR dovetail with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) which is a tool that will be used in this study as it is more concerned with social perception at the beginning (Carvalho 2008: 15). Anderson (2017: 93) further maintains that CDA is a tool that not only identifies the problem but also suggests how best it can be solved. There are ways in which a research study ought to establish the veracity of the problem such as asking key questions as ‘what is the problem?’ and ‘what can be done about the problem?’ (Jacobs 2014: 200). In this study, the problem is and will be determined through analysis of the femicide corpus from newspapers,

and individual and group interviews. Reading and assessing the situation is another way of identifying the problem. Reading a breadth of literature offers insights into the current state of affairs and this helps the researcher to establish where there are unmet needs and gaps. The assessment can be done through brokering a dialogue with potential participants to establish the depth and breadth of the problem at hand which was undertaken by interviews with readers/listeners and interviews with the journalists. Lastly, observation can also be an approach applied to identify the problem. Efron and Ravid (2013: 86) assert that observation is key and is about looking at the phenomenon with purpose. Because observation is a non-intrusive method, it helps give the researcher an objective picture of a problem which partly solves the problem in a way.

Due to the fact that AR's main aim is to improve practice, it is apparent that problem identification is fundamental because diagnosis is vital for the prescription to be correct. If the problem is effectively diagnosed, the research question(s) formulated dovetails with the problem. The research question(s) forms a parameter wherein a research study ought to be conducted (Jacobs 2014: 200). The research question(s) becomes a framework that guides the research. In AR, because it is solution-oriented and participatory, having identified the problem, the participants have to be purposively selected to ensure that individuals who are affected directly by the problem have an input into the solutions to come.

### **3.5.2 Data Gathering**

After identification of the problem, the next phase was data gathering (the population and sample are reflected in Sections 3.7.5 and 3.7.6 respectively). Appropriate data has to be gathered, meaning that a three-tier approach was adopted in data gathering. In qualitative research, it is imperative to gather data widely as that ensures rich data which also as a fact triangulates each other (Moser and Korstjens 2018: 11). Appropriate data attainment means that data gathering tools as well as techniques have to be specific for the task at hand. There are three common data collection techniques widely used in research discourse, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2003: 41) and Moser and Korstjens (2018: 1). Albeit Fraenkel and Wallen's focus was on pedagogical settings, their suggestions dovetail with AR.

The first one is observation where the participants of the study are observed in a manner that is not intrusive over an extended period of time (Moser and Korstjens 2018: 12). This aids the researcher to observe, or rather to gather, pure information that is not acted out or masked. The observation is equally recorded (either voice or visual) or if not possible, then comprehensive

notes must be taken. In the case of this study, the observation was not used but rather document review of newspaper achieves was used as a method that parallels observation. The information from the documents is not acted out nor gathered in a manner that is intrusive.

The second one is the use of interviews as an alternative tool to observation. Interviews are double pronged. Moser and Korstjens (2018: 12) note that interviews are conversations where a participant responds to set questions from the researcher and those questions are in line with the research aim and objectives. The first format of interviews can be in a physical contact context where the researcher arranges a set of questions in line with their study objectives and engages in oral conversation (or any format of conversation in the case that speaking is a challenge) with participant(s) at a chosen convenient and comfortable place for both. This format was the one that the study employed in the collection of the first set of data. Basically, a personal interview was preferred because it created mutual respect and built rapport. Interviews can also overcome any barriers such as language, since gestures are used to compliment conversation. The second format of interviews is the questionnaire. This approach differs slightly with the first in the sense that this time, the researcher delivers the questionnaires to the respondents/participants and they just respond to the question on their own at the time suitable for them. Both these formats have their pros and cons and their suitability depends on the study or issue at hand. However, questionnaires were not considered for this study.

In the case where time is of practical importance as in this study, questionnaires were not ideal because responses often take time to reach the researcher, they are costly (printing, delivery, and collection), and the responses may not be accurate because in the case that the participants do not understand the question, there is no further explanation available as in the cases of interviews (Creswell 2014). Furthermore, the responses from the questionnaires may be inadequate because there is no probing as in the one-on-one interviews.

The study opted for one-on-one interviews because they are time conscious – responses are immediate, accurate because further explanations can be made, and the responses are complete because probes can be done where the responses are vague (Creswell and Creswell 2018).

The third approach in data collection is analysis of secondary data. This approach also has its own merits. One of its outstanding merits is that it saves time because often the records are kept in a systematic manner that does not demand more energy and time to deal with them. The onus lies with the researcher to identify and locate precisely that which they want or is relevant to



the study objectives. Examples of records can be minutes, radio archives, and newspaper archives. Newspaper archives – to be precise, those that have femicide news stories – are one form of data that was used in this study. After the review of literature, newspaper femicide archives were analysed to establish the frames used.

Data gathering is the apex of the study. Data collection tools must be appropriate ones to assist in the attainment of objectives of the study. They ought to be piloted first in order to cleanse them of any defects. Secondly, relevant participants have to be identified. They have to be participants that will contribute crucial and quality information that will be valuable and assist in achieving the objectives of the study. Thirdly, sufficient data has to be obtained – a saturation point has to be achieved to ensure that all that ought to be part of the data to be analysed is captured and sufficiently so. Data gathered will therefore be analysed and as such, the analysis will guide towards appropriate interventions to be designed hence why the tools for data gathering have to be appropriate. Jacobs (2014: 201) points out that the collection of data may be done through tools such as interviews or focus group discussions which will provide feedback that will aid in the design of the intervention. Ebersohn, Eloff and Ferreira (2016: 139) maintain that this gives an overview of the research question which is vital in the design of an intervention. In this research, data was gathered from newspaper archives, and there were focus group discussions and interviews of media practitioners and the audience (defined in Sections 3.8.2 and 3.8.1, respectively).

### **3.5.3 Data Interpretation**

When data has been collected and saturation is reached, such data is due for analysis. Data from newspaper archives, interviews, and FGDs was analysed separately but for all, in turn, for the purpose of designing a gender-sensitive journalism training manual. Data from all sources was analysed using critical discourse analysis as an analytical tool. The essence of all these exercises will be to develop a responsive training manual.

### **3.5.4 Act on Evidence**

Action research is a scientific approach that is aimed at executing prescribed action on theory. Coghlan and Brannick (2014: 6) underscores that “action research focuses on research in action, rather than research about action”. The prescription of action emanates from a social challenge/problem where data have been gathered and analysed to come up with a suitable action, that is, practical solutions for practical problems is that which action research is about.

Acting on evidence is a critical step since there has to be a cohesion of action (intervention) with objectives/research questions (or rather the aim) of the study. Actions undertaken should be in line with the research objectives. Townsend (2013: 19) maintains that in the implementation phase, there are two key observations to be undertaken: “observing the progress of implementation and the immediate effect of actions”. In this phase of AR, there has to be constant recording of the intervention to inform adjustment for the next cycle since AR is cyclical. Coghlan and Brannick (2014: 14) state that in the implementation phase, performance is key.

### **3.5.5 Evaluation of Outcomes (Reflection)**

Evaluation is undertaken to measure the impact of the intervention and overall to measure the action exercise to see if it has had any positive impact. Townsend (2013: 19) argues that evaluation is the stage where the researcher pauses and reflects – key matters upon which to ponder are what changes has this action brought about, and are the initial perceptions, practices, etc. altered? It gives the researcher an opportunity to see if the action introduced needs adjustments to fully address the practical problem. It is a moment when the researcher ceases to reflect if the objectives have been achieved and the change envisaged is attained. Coghlan and Brannick (2014: 23) sum that evaluation is an assessment of outcomes, intended and unintended, with the aim of detecting:

- if the original diagnosis was correct;
- if the action taken was correct;
- if the action was taken in an appropriate manner; and
- what feeds into the next cycle of diagnosis, planning, and action.

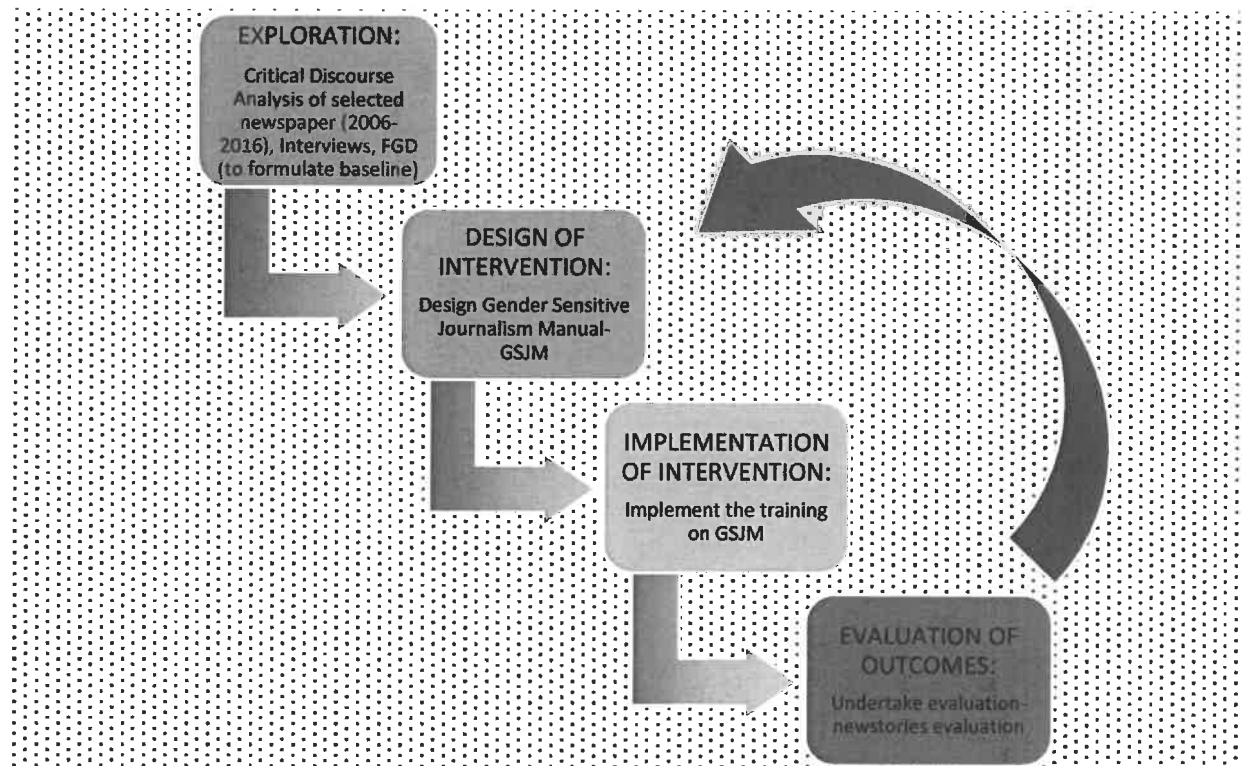
### **3.6 Action Research Design Components**

The study adopted AR and as such, followed the tenets of it. Action research in brevity is a spiral approach that basically aims at improving practice by engaging participants and the researcher to come with a solution oriented to improve day-to-day practice. AR is a cyclic approach that seeks to understand social contexts and further engages in improving them (Townsend 2013: 11). AR basically has four steps being:

1. Planning – This stage is the planning phase where ideas are generated (problem identification).
2. Acting – This stage is where a planned action is undertaken after problem diagnosis.

3. Observing – This stage is the intervention that is inductive in nature (participatory outcome).
4. Reflecting – This stage is an impact assessment of the intervention, if it has worked or not – if not, the cycle starts from the acting stage to design another intervention.

It should be noted that the study has four components that mirror the four stages of AR, as displayed graphically in Figure 3.2.



**Figure 3.2: Research Design Components.**

### 3.6.1 Exploration

The first phase is the exploration phase where all the efforts were geared towards the levelling ground to prepare for the design of a more responsive GSJM that would effectively capacitate the journalists. The exploration phase basically had two components: the collection of newspaper archives and interviews (personal interviews and group interviews – focus group discussions). This tripartite exercise was, in a way, a thought to triangulate data that would come out of the three phases. First, with regards to the newspaper stories, one would state that they are a solid outcome to analyse the journalistic framing of femicide and perhaps benchmark the extent of it as per the objective of the study. The interview data set also responded to the objective of examining the cause, extent, and implication of femicide. The experiences and anecdotes shared gave a general outlook of femicide. Furthermore, the exploration entails

accessing femicide news stories archives for the objective of frame analysis. This assisted in the analysis of femicide frames that media employs in femicide reportage.

### **3.6.2 Design of Intervention**

One of the hallmarks of action research is that it is an approach that is participatory in nature and assumes an inductive solution-based intervention. After a careful analysis of frames that the media engages in newspapers, the subsequent stage was the development of a Gender Sensitive Journalism Manual (GSJM). Design of interventions is the second stage in the components of AR. As in the second stage of AR, this is where data collection and analysis take place. Subsequent to exploration (planning), sufficient data had to be collected precisely to determine the reality, depth, and breadth of the challenge (femicide and its framing) with the aim of instituting an appropriate prescription (GSJM). The design of a training manual is a response to the outcomes of analysis of the newspaper corpus on femicide using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), personal interviews, and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). The aim of the study is to assist journalists to adopt a gender-sensitive framing in their reportage and as such, the interviews with participants and analysis of the femicide corpus was undertaken to establish the capacity need. From the interviews, it became apparent that there is a need for capacity (unlock media potential to be effectively used as a tool to inform public agenda and hold public officials and the citizenry at large accountable). The intervention (Gender Sensitive Journalism Manual) was designed cautiously to bring attention awareness to the journalists on the need for appreciating gender in their reportage, how best to frame femicide to assist in building peace, and framing their reporting in a manner that does not incite violence but maintains respect and calls for justice.

### **3.6.3 Implementation of Intervention**

This component corresponds with the third stage of AR which is observing. It should be noted that these four stages of action research are referred to by many names but the bottom line is that the principles remain the same. Some scholars refer to this stage as the *action part* because this is the phase where the action takes place. In the case of this study, the training manual, having been informed by interviews and femicide articles' analysis, was developed and administered. This tenet of AR is the climax of that which constitutes AR or sets it apart from other research approaches. This action part has to have or indicate a direct relationship with the aim of the study or the objectives of the study (Townsend 2013). The aim of the study, being to assist journalists to adopt a gender-sensitive framing in their reportage, was achieved through

training them (25 journalists trained). The training manual content was informed by data analysis. Ebersohn, Eloff and Ferreira (2016: 134) indicate that *action* in AR is a collaborative outcome of participants and the researcher. This is exactly that which transpired in this study as the training manual is the resultant of the interviews and analysis of the femicide corpus. The training of journalists to be gender-sensitive is a culmination of achieving the aim of the study and the training manual is a testimony that the study has adopted the AR approach.

#### **3.6.4 Evaluation of Intervention**

Action in action research is fundamental and the action also has to tie or axle on the research aim and objectives. The big question is what follows when the action has taken place? Why action? How would it be assessed if the action taken responded to the challenge or not? Evaluation of such action/intervention is very important as the last or leading step to the next cycle. How is it the last – in the case where evaluation indicates that the challenge has been addressed, the cycle is complete, but in the case where the challenge appears to be partially addressed or not completely, then the cycle resumes (Coghlan and Brannick 2014: 23). Action research is iterative in nature, thus in this study, Figure 3.1 precisely indicates that after evaluation, if the outcome is not satisfactory, then the exercise goes back to component two where an alternative intervention shall be designed. In this study, the journalists have been given a gender-sensitive training, and the evaluation is made on their articles on femicide if they are gender-sensitive or not. However, the tragedy of femicide concerns if it does not happen for a prolonged time. Taking into consideration that the researcher has to submit his thesis, the researcher has tailored an alternative plan. The crux of the training for journalists is to be gender-sensitive in their reportage and not restricted to femicide, and on that notion the researcher subjected their varied articles, not specifically those that were on femicide, to CDA but assessed their articles in any event to see if they were gender-responsive.

Analysing journalists' articles that are not on femicide was still very much within the purview of the study because the analysis framework has a component of the object where Carvalho (2008: 167) indicates that object/s are not overt themes in discourse. Therein, this exercise adds value to the objective of the study that looks at how intimate partner femicide is framed – an episodic approach strategy that looks narrowly at the events surrounding the incidence or thematically, that is, at the broader picture of the incidence. Therefore, any news content can be analysed on the basis of establishing if the journalist assumed an episodic stance or thematic stance, and it does not necessarily have to be intimate partner femicide content.

## **3.7 Research Methodology**

### **3.7.1 Introduction**

The following section lays out a methodological approach that the study has essentially followed to achieve the set study objectives. This study has taken a qualitative approach research method as opposed to a qualitative or mixed methods approach. Maree and Pietersen (2016: 53) echo that the qualitative method is appropriate since it “relies on linguistics (words) rather than numerical data, and employs meaning-based rather than statistical forms of data-analysis”. The qualitative approach is a methodological approach where the research attains the results exclusive of statistical means or quantification (Kuada 2012: 93). Since this study is on the analysis of media frames in femicide, the bulk of it hinges on data that is not numerical but meaning-based.

### **3.7.2 Qualitative versus Quantitative Approach**

One fundamental reason why this study adopted a qualitative method is that the qualitative method focuses mainly on the phenomenon of soliciting information from the participants. That is, the participants from qualitative methods are not study objects but architects in improving practice. Stephen, Quartaroli and Riemer (2011) state that there is a fundamental difference between qualitative and quantitative data more than being a superficial difference of counting and not counting. They claim that qualitative and quantitative differences are more epistemological. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000: 38) state that the quantitative method is about measurement and using various scales to compare numbers. The advantage of the qualitative method is that numbers’ meaning and interpretation is universal – five (5) means and is interpreted in the same way from the north to south pole. In addition, numbers have the advantage of being accurate and exact. For instance, if the data indicates that five (5) students left, surely everyone fully understands the number of students who left, unlike in the situation of stating that many students left.

### **3.7.3 Qualitative Data**

Qualitative data is that type of data where its centrepiece is not numbers but words. It is a form of data that is stated to be non-numerical and categorical in nature (Silverman 2015). It is referred to as such because it can be arranged in categories instead of being represented in numbers. Qualitative data collection methods are not limited to interviews, observations/surveys, records keeping, and case studies. The interpretation of this data basically

focuses on verbal interpretation rather than statical interpretation. There are several advantages of qualitative data: it is that form of data that helps with in-depth analysis. It is pertinent in this study as the objective is not to register the number of Intimate Partner Femicide (IPF) cases but understand why they happen and how the media frames them. The data is rich and as such assists in the analysis of the phenomenon under study.

However, qualitative data has some disadvantages as well. It is not too easy to generalise from the qualitative data. Quite often, the sample is not that large but extrapolation can be made if the sample is representative of the population. It therefore means that it needs a skilled researcher to undertake it. It is also time-consuming because it is not about numbers but about emotions, behaviours, and actions, to mention a few. This study, because of its aim and objectives, was suited to qualitative data. With femicide being an emotional issue, there was a need to collect data that would assist in the design of a gender-sensitive manual.

#### **3.7.4 Quantitative Data**

Quantitative data is that form of data that involves the use of numbers – mathematical derivations (Silverman 2015). Any quantifiable information falls under quantitative data. Quantitative data responds to questions such as how much, how many, and how often (frequency). This form of data did not suit the study because the aim and the objectives of the study are not quantitative in nature.

#### **3.7.5 Population: Who is In and Out**

The population of the study refers to a group of people or objects that are the focus of the study where the data is going to be sourced. The population for this study was all state, community, and private media houses (print and broadcast), media consumers (listeners/readers), and media administrators. The ambition for the study was to cover the country as widely as possible. Lesotho has ten districts, four of them being classified as urban and the remaining six as semi-rural and rural. The mediascape in Lesotho is as follows: there are twenty-two radio stations that are fairly concentrated in Maseru. The good part though is that seven out of ten districts have at least one local radio station. Only three districts do not have local radio stations which are Maseru's Hoek, Qutha's Nek, and Maseru. However, they still access coverage from other radio stations. The total of local newspapers in circulation is eleven. All of them are produced in Maseru but circulated around the country, albeit the circulation efficiency and volume is not the same for all of them. The selected two newspapers being *Lentsoe La Basotho*

and Lesotho Times seem to have a wide circulation – it can be noted that unlike in the neighbouring country of South Africa, where there are bodies such as the Broadcast Research Council (BRC), South Africa Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF), and the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) that precisely measure circulation and listenership, in Lesotho, it is still a challenge albeit Lesotho Times is a member of ABC. Thereupon, the researcher’s judgement and experience were used. With regards to the media concentration per capita in Lesotho, one would consider it to be satisfactory.

### 3.7.6 Sample

A sample is a unit drawn from the population. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000: 86) state that albeit the sample is a subset of the population, if undertaken properly must be a true reflection of the whole population to validate extrapolations. How the sample was constituted is also key – the purposive sampling technique was employed in this study. Purposive/judgemental sampling is based on the ability of the researcher to choose within the population the desired characters/units where data will be collected (Bless and Higson-Smith 2000: 92). For this study, on the choice of newspapers, the researcher chose Lesotho times (privately owned) and Lentsoe la Basotho (state-owned). The rationale was to pick widely circulated newspapers and one being a private entity whilst the other being state-owned. The two newspapers ticked those boxes and another key element was to balance private and state media because literature suggests that profit in media is foregrounded and ethics follow. Thus, the choice was to have a chance to analyse femicide frames from private-owned entities that thrive on profits as opposed to state-run media that does not focus on profit to a large extent but pursue an ideological outcome.

The second data set was from the journalists. The journalists who were interviewed were selected from the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) Lesotho Chapter data base which is constituted by journalists who have subscribed and updated their membership. The background to this was that those who are still subscribing and align with a professional media body are committed to journalism and its ethics. Twenty-five journalists were purposively selected for the interview (n=25). Tables 3.2 and 3.3 present the journalists’ biodata in terms of age and sex, respectively.

**Table 3.2: Journalists’ Biodata – age range.**

Age Range	Number of Journalists	Percentage %
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18-30	5	20
31-40	15	65
41-50	3	10
51- ∞	2	5
Total	25	100

**Table 3.3:** Journalists' Biodata – sex.

Sex	Number of Journalists	Percentage %
Female	16	70
Male	9	30
LGBTIQ+	0	0
Total	25	100

Basically, the journalists' data was key because they are agents through whom the incidence of femicide is worded. In the literature section, it is evident that journalists are the product of a patriarchal mould and as such, consciousness through training is key for them to produce gender-sensitive femicide discourse (Maloka 1997; Browne 2017). Therefore, data from there was an intelligent benchmark to assess the type of capacity that they need.

The third data set is from listeners/readers (n=20). In this phase, the researcher created clusters as follows: security, faith-based, politics, civil service, old age, youth, constructions, academia, judiciary, and 'ordinary pool'. The interviewees were selected from those clusters. Tables 3.4 and 3.5 present the listeners and readers' biodata in terms of age and sex, respectively.

**Table 3.4:** Listeners and Readers' Biodata – age range.

Age Range	Number of Participants	Percentage %
20-30	4	20
31-40	6	30
41-50	5	25
51- ∞	5	25
Total	20	100

**Table 3.5:** Listeners and Readers' Biodata – sex.

Sex	Number of Participants	Percentage %
Female	10	50
Male	7	35
LGBTIQ+	3	15
Total	20	100

The fourth and final data set was from the media house administrators (n=10). This cluster constitutes station managers, editors, and directors because literature suggests that a collision course is inevitable between journalists and media administrators when it comes to the framing of femicide. This is not a malicious one but a conceptual one, in the sense that if the journalists' appreciation of gender discourse is ahead of that of the individuals with a final say on matters to be published or aired will create an imbalance because they might reject or overwrite framing news stories that are properly framed due to a lack of knowledge. It was logical therefore to have them on board such that all parties in the making and publishing of the news story are on board. Personal interviews were administered to administrators. Tables 3.6 and 3.7 present the media administrators' biodata in terms of age range and sex, respectively.

**Table 3.6:** Media Administrators' Biodata – age range.

Age Range	Number of Participants	Percentage %
20-30	0	0
31-40	1	10
41-50	6	60
51- ∞	3	30
Total	10	100

**Table 3.7:** Media Administrators' Biodata – sex.

Sex	Number of Participants	Percentage %
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Female	3	30
Male	7	70
LGBTIQ+	0	0
Total	10	100

### 3.8 Data Collection Methods

Data collection methods are strategies that are used in research to collect desired data. In qualitative research, there are three most used methods in data collection – observation, interviews (one-on-one), and focus group discussions (Moser and Korstjens 2018). The study used interviews (one-on-one) as well as focus group discussions and document review.

Every scientific study involves the collection and analysis of data to achieve the set objectives. Data varies from study to study and the objectives of the study also dictate which data is suitable to achieve such objectives. There are a number of data collection methods and tools where a researcher chooses an appropriate one to achieve the set objectives. The methods and tools have different strengths and the applicability differs. For instance, in a study that basically looks at the experiences of infants, the interview method is not applicable if one wants to obtain the experiences of infants but observation is the most suitable and applicable method. There are two types of data: primary and secondary. Primary data is the form of data that is considered original – that which the researcher is the first to collect – whilst secondary data is the one that has already been put together by someone but is being re-used for different intentions (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight 2006: 153).

In this study, both primary data and secondary data were employed. McNeill and Chapman (2005: 131) maintain that primary data is that form of the data that is collected first hand by using different data collection methods such as interviews, surveys, etc. Primary data is specifically collected by the researcher as data that uniquely attempts to respond to the objectives of the research (Nyarko 2015: 87). As the definition indicates, primary data is mainly for a stated particular purpose. In this study, data from journalists' interviews, readers/listeners' interviews, FGDs, and administrators' interviews constituted the primary data. The advantages of primary data include:

- In terms of accuracy, it is the best because the research tailors the collection tool as per the research objective and/or question.
- Collected data are current.
- Secrecy is maintained, which adds to anonymity and confidentiality.
- Sources are known, which in a way add to legitimacy.

It is equally important to highlight some disadvantages of primary data:

- It can be costly to collect.
- It can be time-consuming because the researcher ought to get it by himself/herself.
- The amount of data collected may be limited or cannot reach saturation.

On the contrary, secondary data are those data that have been collected for a particular purpose by someone other than the current researcher. It is apparent that these data have been collected by a researcher, institution, or someone for another purpose other than the one for which it is potentially going to be used. These data may exist as unpublished and published records (Nyarko 2015: 88). Secondary data has its own pros as:

- Inexpensive – since it is already prepared
- Easily accessible
- Immediately available
- Compliments/enhances primary data
- Assists in achieving research objectives

There are cons for secondary data as well:

- Data collected may be outdated.
- Data may not entirely dovetail with current research objectives since it was collected for its own particular purpose.
- Validity and reliability of such data may be dubious.
- Such data may not be available.

The secondary data for this study was two local newspapers: one is government-owned (Lentsoe La Basotho) whilst the other is privately owned (Lesotho Times). Intimate Partner Femicide (IPF) articles were collected from 2006-2016 to constitute secondary data which was complementing primary data from the interviews.

### **3.8.1 Interviews**

The interview method involves an interaction between the researcher (interviewer) and the participant (interviewee). The setting for the interview varies: it can be a face-to-face or a group interview (focus group discussion). The interviewer prepares an interview schedule depending on the format of the interview that is planned. The interview may be a structured or unstructured interview. However, a semi-structured interview is between the two. The interview structure is determined by the topic under study since some may be best dealt with in a structured or unstructured format. Structured interviews follow a strict set of carefully arranged questions from the interviewer, while unstructured interviews are an open-ended form of conversation.

In this study, a semi-structured interview was employed and the researcher saw it being effective since the conversation was flowing in a desired direction. At this point, it is imperative to mention that a pilot interview to test the tool was administered on 7-10 January 2019. There were changes that were introduced although they were not structural in nature but merely cosmetic (rephrasing some of the questions). Subsequently, the tool was rolled out. From personal interviews to group interviews (FGDs), the mood was jovial albeit it was noted that in the personal interviews in some instances, there were some emotions shown at times perhaps because the participants related personally to the subject at hand since intimate partner abuse is epidemic. There was the anticipation that some of the participants could be emotionally affected and as such there was an arrangement made to refer them for counselling. The counselling session were not paid as the counsellor indicated that he would voluntarily offer time to aid the study.

#### **(a) Source Coding Procedure**

One of the key aspects of the research is to maintain anonymity and confidentiality in order to ensure the validity of the study. The respondents tend to be hesitant to provide or disclose information if they are not fully assured of anonymity and confidentiality and that jeopardises the validity of the study (Mouton 1996: 157). The codes were allocated to all sources to protect the participants' identity.

The study engaged semi-structured interviews for face-to-face interviews. Adebayo (2015: 119) maintains that semi-structured interviews are appropriate in dealing with complex subjects because they provide latitude for the researcher or interviewee to deal in detail with points of interest that may arise out of the conversation. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were

preferred to address objective one of the study – examining the motives, extent, and implications of intimate partner femicide in Lesotho. The interviews were arranged in three categories: cluster one being listeners/readers, cluster two being editors/administrators, and the last cluster being journalists. The fact that the study's central axle is the media shows why these three aspects are very important – the producers (journalists), the moderators (editors), and the consumers (audience).

The interviews were conducted at the place and time convenient to the interviewees but the researcher had a personal schedule to compress them within two weeks although he was open to suggestions. Twenty-five interviewees from the cluster of journalists, twenty participants from the listeners and readers, and finally ten from the editors and administrators were interviewed and they were recorded for later transcription. The code source for each cluster was established for further analysis.

Cluster 1 source code: first two letters for the cluster, followed by the sex of the interviewee and the number indicating when he or she was interviewed. **LRF1**: means the first female listener/reader, while **LRM1** means the first male listener/reader to be interviewed. Thereafter, that which changes is the numeric sequencing: **LRM2**, **LRM3**, **LRF2**, **LRF3**, etc.

Cluster 2 source code: this followed the cluster one source code outline, that is, the first two letters of the cluster followed by the sex of the interviewee and the numeric designation. **EAM1** means the first male editor/administrator interviewee, while **EAF1** would mean the first female editor/administrator interviewee.

Cluster 3 source code: this followed the cluster one and two source code outline, that is, the first letter of the cluster followed by the sex of the interviewee and the numeric designation. **JM1** means the first male journalist interviewee, while **JF1** would mean the first female journalist interviewee.

Cluster 4 source code: cluster 4 does not exactly follow the previous clusters' coding. The coding assumed the previous codes and was followed by letters of the cluster. That is, for the male journalist who was source coded **JM1**, for this cluster he was coded as **JM1FGD**, meaning the first male journalist in the face-to-face interview now being source coded under FGD.

## **(b) Personal Interviews (Face-to-Face)**

The first set of data were the personal interviews which had clusters: of listeners/readers, journalists, and media administrators. The overall intention of this exercise was to address objectives one and two of the study. The first objective of the study is to examine the extent, causes, and implications of intimate partner femicide. The aim was to gather anecdotes and evidence of femicide and its framing from the listeners/readers, journalists, and administrators. Their experiences were vital to address this objective. Furthermore, to address the objective of how the media reports femicide, their inputs were fundamental to see if they themselves, before or after femicide framing, construed it to be a sociological or pathological outcome. This encounter gave the researcher a departure point to see how the audience views femicide and how the media sees it: a sociological or pathological outcome, and either conception warrants a unique tailor-made address. The interviews with the cluster of journalists also addressed the objective of examining media frames used in intimate partner femicide and their influence on the audience. The conversation with the journalists revealed their capacity level in terms of the un/conscious framing of issues.

### Procedure

The three clusters each had their own schedule that was pertinent to the clusters. For instance, in the cluster of listeners/readers, much emphasis was on the causes, extent, and implications strategically addressing objective one. The piloting phase of the tools (interview schedules) was undertaken from 7-10 January 2019. Pilot testing in research is crucial since it flags potential deficiencies and problems before embarking on a major exercise (Bless and Higson-Smith 2000; Blaxter, Highes and Tight 2006). On a more personal level, the researcher must admit that running the pilot in a way gave him familiarity and confidence which were vital for the study. Three of the interview schedules after pilot testing were adjusted accordingly. The changes in question structure and simplifying the questions were the major changes that had to be undertaken.

The interviews followed thereafter. The planned interview timing was three weeks but due to participants' commitments, the research team had to go for a month and one week. In conducting the interviews, the consent was read to the participants and signed. The interview was recorded and the participant was made aware beforehand that the conversation recording would be done for the purposes of transcription and analysis. The phone and laptop were used to record the conversation which were later downloaded for transcription.

### 3.8.2 Focus Group Discussions

After the interviews were done, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were convened as an extension of the one-on-one interviews.

A FGD is normally engaged in a qualitative approach to assist the researcher to gain valuable insights into the social matter in question. Adebayo (2015: 123) opines that FGDs are financially economical and savvy on time since the researcher obtains responses from a large group at one time.

FGDs have a mutual benefit since they are a basic way of listening to participants and learning from them as well as participants learning from each other (Morgan and Krueger 1998: 9). The focus group discussion provides a platform for participants to reflect on the personal convictions on the matter in relation to the group thinking about a particular subject matter. FGDs are characteristically about *focus* on a set issue, with predetermined participants (Monique and Patricia 2014: 1). Moser and Korstjens (2018) contend that multiple data sources ensure that saturation is reached and this also helps the researcher in the analysis to easily identify themes that have been emerging constantly. In a way, one would consider this study's choice to use FGDs as prudent since FGDs were, in a way, triangulating data from personal interviews and truly validating textual production of femicide news stories from newspaper archives. Mouton (1996: 156) corroborates that multiple methods of data collection ensure the reliability of data alternatively referred to as multiple operationism.

The focus group data was aimed at achieving objectives one, two, and three. Firstly, the questions were structured to solicit responses on the motives, extent, and implications of intimate partner femicide as per objective one. Secondly, the structure also sought responses on the second objective which involved media frames in intimate partner femicide. Lastly, the third objective is about the analysis of media reportage on intimate partner femicide as an individual pathology or a social problem, and the conversation around this was weaved in the semi-structured FGD interview schedule.

The FGDs were undertaken in the boardroom of the Ministry of Gender and twelve journalists were in attendance where one apology was made. The consent to partake and be recorded was sorted from individual journalists during their arrival when they were registering. One of the hallmarks of the FGDs is that they generate much data thus recording is compellingly advisable



and as such, it was done. The group was not subdivided for the conversation took place at once. There were two assistant moderators where the first one was taking notes, and the second one was the time-keeper and assisting with logistics. The discussion was very lively and informative. Upon completion of the discussion, the summary of the discussion was read by for adoption and validation by journalists. One important feature of the FGD is that it has the ability to provide clarification, extensions, and qualifications of data collected through various other methods and there is provision of feedback (McCormick 2015; Muchemwa 2015). There was no objection to the notes and as such, they were taken to be the correct and valid representation of the discussion. Due to the large amount of data generated, the transcription was selectively done to complement the notes that were taken during the discussion. With regards to FGDs, as claimed by Muchemwa (2015) and Adebayo (2015), their data can be used to cross check other data from different sources, and becomes key data in supplementing personal interviews' data.

### Procedure

The focus group discussion was an extension of the personal interviews with the aim to further solidify and, perhaps more importantly, triangulate the personal interviews. The transcription of the focus group discussion was undertaken for later analysis. Basically, the interviews were responding largely to the first study objective that seeks to analyse the extent, causes, and implications of femicide in Lesotho. The interviews were also, in part, an enquiry to gauge journalists' awareness of the concept of framing which has to do with the second study objective that seeks to examine media frames in femicide and their influence. The interviews further interrogated the participants on whether they are aware of the manner in which femicide stories are reported: whether they are reported as a social problem or an individual pathology (episodic versus thematic framing).

The focus group transcription was read several times in order to identify themes. The key words and phrases are fundamental cardinals in CDA and as such, attention was paid to them to identify the themes. Repetitive reading of these transcripts was also to identify the language (perhaps the pattern) that is used to construct the themes and the similarities in using language to construct different themes.

The responses from the interviews were recorded for later transcription and analysis. To code source the responses – since the researcher had already had face-to-face interviews with these journalists – the same coding was used. However, there was a challenge with one face-to-face journalist who could not make it to the FGDs thus the researcher opted to give this new one the

same code but with the asterisk to note that the journalist did not take part in the one-on-one interviews.

### **3.9 Document Review**

The document review is a method of data collection where the researcher reviews the existing documents such as records, either in hardcopy or softcopy. For this study, the documents reviewed are the newspapers Lesotho Times and Lentsoe la Basotho from 2006-2010. The reviewed documents were articles of intimate partner femicide. The advantages of document review are:

- It is relatively inexpensive.
- It is unobtrusive.
- It triangulates other forms of data.

#### Femicide Corpora: Newspaper Articles

##### Procedure

The second data set undertaken was a collection of selected newspapers: Lesotho Times and Lentsoe la Basotho. The collection timeframe was from 2006 to 2016. It is important to briefly share why this period was chosen. Precisely, the Sexual Offence Act 2003 and other legislative blueprints followed from 2006, notably the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2006, and the Land Act 2010, to mention a few. Basically, these legislative outcomes were a policy response from the government to avail blueprints that would expedite women empowerment and a conscious plan to decimate structural oppression that women had been suffering. A general assumption/hypothesis that one would make is that from 2006 to date, the status of women has changed holistically owing to a host of legislative adaptations that have followed. The reflection of gender-based violence, which disproportionately affects women, was an appropriate analysis to assess the conception of the status of women. The question is whether women's news stories are re/produced within frames of empowerment, bearing in mind that their minority status was removed by the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2010, to mention a few legal structures that have been enacted to ensure equality.

The ultimate goal was to exhaust these documentary corpora and subject them to Critical Discourse Analysis (henceforth CDA) to develop frames that the media uses in framing Intimate Partner Femicide (IPF). Herein, the researcher would outline the procedure followed with respect to Lesotho Times newspaper. The researcher visited their website to retrieve

intimate partner femicide stories. It is known that the researcher visited their head office to see their archives but he was told that they do not keep hard copies which was strange, but nonetheless the researcher had to move on. Fortunately, they do have a very interactive website where the researcher retrieved femicide articles. In their website in the search slot, the researcher entered several 'words' such as killed/kill/killing, murder, concubine, wife, dead/died, girlfriend, manslaughter, etc. The database gave the researcher quite a good number of news stories and he sifted out those that fit the category of intimate partner femicide. IPF, broadly defined, is killing a female intimate partner because of her gender. Therefore, every news story that the researcher considered to fit the category had to have the victim (female – who has obviously died) and the perpetrator (male) where there has to be a heterosexual intimate affair prior to the killing or at the time of such. The number of articles that ticked all the boxes to be intimate partner femicide were fourteen (14). However, the total number of cases in those fourteen femicide articles was sixteen. In some articles, there is *multi-tapping* where there is one headline but more than one story underneath, mostly another form of crime story. Therefore, sixteen intimate partner femicide articles formed part of the data for CDA. The researcher must point out that some news stories were not included because they did not match the point since they will report that the victim was last seen alive with a man but did not reveal if the two were having intimate relations or were known to have it before or some sort of intimacy.

With regards to Lentsoe la Basotho, which is a government-owned newspaper, there was no website as it is only available in hard copy. The researcher approached the Ministry of Communications as it is the ministry that is entrusted with its printing. The researcher failed to get the archives because they claimed misplacement since they had just relocated their offices. The researcher then approached the State Library and failed to get the archives where they claimed that the volumes had been sent for binding. When the researcher asked for the binding section in Morija, they claimed no knowledge of such. After a passage of time, the researcher then approached them but could not be assisted as this time, there was no valid excuse made. On 11 September 2018, the researcher visited Morija Museum where he accessed the archives but it should be noted that those were the museum archives and not the ones that the State Library claimed to have sent for binding. In total, there were twenty-one articles retrieved that matched the set definitional category of IPF. The attainment of this corpus was a lead to the objective of analysing femicide frames and further to see the extent of femicide in Lesotho. It is noted that from the news stories alone, the researcher thought that determining the extent of

femicide is not enough and as such, the researcher sought femicide reports from 2006-2016 from the police.

The request was not responded to successfully and a number of excuses were made. Some of the excuses made were that data on murders in Lesotho is not disaggregated and it is done manually thus it is a tedious exercise. Despite that, four districts' data out of ten districts was available, which, in the researcher's view, has assisted to serve the purpose. The aim of sorting for this data was, in a way, to triangulate the news stories to see the extent of femicide, which femicide cases made it to the media, and the media coverage. Nonetheless, data from these four districts will be extrapolated. To summarise, police reports were used to assist the researcher to safely conclude how newsworthiness is established in the media: which lives are more grievable and deemed liveable (Butler 2010).

### **3.10 Data Analysis: Critical Discourse Analysis**

Taking into consideration the centrality of language in journalism, it is prudent to employ a tool that specifically looks into how language re/production is used in the construction of media discourse and social order. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is an analysis tool that is basically used to analyse power as an inherent element in language and how the very same power is re/produced through language. CDA is an approach that mainly looks at the intersection of discourse, language, and power (Aziz and Ghulam 2018: 35). Xu (2020: 177) corroborates that CDA is key in language analysis because it focuses on "how power is exercised, enacted and naturalised in discourse". It is an approach that is credited to the likes of Norman Fairclough, Teun Vann Dijk, and Ruth Wodak. In this study, the aim is to analyse femicide articles to see femicide frames that the media engages in the discourse of femicide and as such, CDA is an appropriate tool because it assists in challenging the social, cultural, and political construction.

It is a tool that assists in understanding how journalists re/construct the discourse of femicide sub/consciously and therein re/producing dominant/accepted ideologies through media frames (Anderson 2017: x). The frames in femicide are social constructions made of language. Since the social constructions have never been and will never be neutral, as posited by Machin and Andrea (2012: 77), so do femicide frames hence why it is prudent to analyse them to uncover c/overt messages. Vargo, Guo and Amazeen (2017) echo that the agenda in the media is both explicit and implicit and as such, CDA is a tool appropriate to decode and cluster all messages.

Carvalho (2008: 166) corroborates that CDA seeks to ask questions on why some of the matters are stated while others are muted, how matters are framed and what are the possible implications, and what is missing (data, voices, views, etc.) from the text.

It should be noted that CDA is not universally applauded for some of its critiques claiming that it is ideologically committed and it is more susceptible to interpretation than analysis (Stubbs in Carvalho 2008). Nonetheless, its plurality is hereby considered as a strength in the sense that it is a tool that is malleable to be used in a plethora of settings.

In this study, Anabella Carvalho's (2008) adapted framework of CDA will be employed for the analysis of femicide media frames.

### **3.10.1 Framework for Analysis of Media Discourse**

#### **(a) Textual Analysis**

Herein are the parameters of the test that matter in the construction of meaning and that ought to be the subject of analysis, as described in the following sub-sections. Textual analysis can be set out as follows:

##### **Textual Analysis**

- I. Layout and Structural Organisation
- II. Objects
- III. Actors
- IV. Language, Grammar, and Rhetoric

#### **(b) Layout and Structural Organisation**

These are 'surface' elements of the news story and text itself (Carvalho 2008: 167). Albeit termed 'surface' elements, they are integral components in creating a particular framing. Encapsulated in this section are elements such as the page number of the newspaper in which the news story appears, the size of the article, and the visual elements contained. Structural organisation is fundamental in media discourse in terms of highlighting the importance of an issue. The news headlines, the lead and first paragraph, are key to determine the importance given to the issue and as such need close analysis. Freyenberger (2013) summarily admits that the tone, story placement (story headline, lead, paired with graphic, body), and page placement (inside, section front, and front page) are key in discourse analysis. Meyers (1997: 13) maintains that layout and organisational structure entails a semantic macrostructure of text "defining,

summarising, and evaluating the most important elements of the story”. The ‘surface elements’ are key since they set the tone for the article. In media discourse analysis, attention has to be put on the placement of the news story since the audience is influenced by whether the story is the lead story, on the front page, or on the inside as well as the size of the headline.

#### **(c) Objects**

Carvalho (2008: 167) contends that the subsequent question after structural organisation is to enquire which objects are constructed by the text, with the objects being topics or themes. In this study, the objects will be the frames that the text constructs. She indicates that objects of discourse are not evident and the crux is on identifying them in order to understand the discourse beyond the text. The example of a case of climate change is that broader objects constructed may be economics, government, or nature, while more specific ones may be changing weather patterns that affect agriculture (Carvalho 2008: 167). This concept of Carvalho situates at the heart of this study because superficial objects that are created in femicide are often jealousy, drug abuse, and many more, and as such as a researcher, there is an obligation to decode text to come up with objects created by discourse (in this case, media frames on femicide). Frames in femicide discourse are important because they suggest how the tragedy should be thought about and understood. In the literature, it has been outlined that framing is about selecting un/consciously some aspects of the story and foregrounding them to project and stimulate a particular reaction from the audience (Entman 1993; Freyenberger 2013; Namusoga 2016).

#### **(d) Actors**

Carvalho (2008: 168) indicates that actors concern who is mentioned in the news story and how they are represented. Actors are either subjects or objects that are talked about or referred to in an article. Actors, in this sense, include institutions as well, that is, attention should be paid to institutions that receive recognition as to why and how. It is apparent from the literature that the media relies on the police who only give the criminal side of the story (Meyers 1997; Bullock and Cubert 2002; Bullock 2007; Taylor 2009; Sutherland *et al.* 2016). In this thesis, actors will entail victims (also secondary victims), perpetrators, all gender stakeholders, and law enforcement institutions. The construction of actors through text will feed into the framing of femicide.

### **(e) Language, Grammar, and Rhetoric**

Language is central to journalism and as such the make-up/structure that it assumes in discourse is subject to analysis to understand c/overt ideological messages that are imparted. Xu (2020: 177) maintains that language does not simply constitute a message but inherent in it is power and ideology that create a particular social construction. Language, through the use of linguistic devices, re/produce power, and ideologies are created and legitimised through its use. This section's framework is that which van Dijk (1988a: 20) calls the microlevel of news discourse where "style, meaning, and rhetoric can be examined to ascertain underlying meaning and ideologies". In this study, CDA will be used to reveal linguistic devices such as lexical choices, style, nominalisation, active/passive text construction, metaphors, and persuasive devices.

#### **3.10.2 Application of Critical Discourse Analysis on Data**

Data was transcribed and readied for critical discourse analysis. It took the researcher quite an unforeseen time because he had to translate Lentsoe La Basotho femicide articles because it is a weekly newspaper that is written in Sesotho. Data from FGDs was also transcribed. The researcher conducted CDA using the Anabella Carvalho framework. Essentially, in CDA, coding data is a crucial step in an effort to come up with themes/frames. When coding, attention to detail is necessary such that emerging patterns and frames are recognised (Joanna 2016: 128). The researcher used different colours to code similar patterns that were building towards a similar frame. The analysis was, in a nutshell, a four-tier approach where layout and structural organisation, objects, actors, and language, grammar and rhetoric were looked at.

In the first tier, surface elements such as the length, headline, page number, and size of the article were analysed. In media discourse, structural organisation is important because it determines the importance of the issue at hand (Freyenberger 2013). The layout and structural organisation of the articles talk directly to the third objective of the study that aims to examine how media reports intimate partner femicide (is femicide reported within a sociological or pathological frame?). In the second tier, the objects were to see if femicide reportage is episodic or thematic. In episodic reportage, the article is restricted to the events that unfold in that tragic encounter (mirror reporting). In thematic reporting, there is an outward and beyond approach to the femicide. Circumstantial consideration is made, for example, one asks if the woman has ever reported abuse such that if the answer is yes or no, the justice and criminal system comes into light as to what their part is in intimate partner femicide.

The third tier is about actors. Actors regard who is mentioned in the article. This tier, in a way, adds to whether femicide is reported in an episodic or thematic manner because if the article mentions the victim and perpetrator as well as the police, it is episodic, while if it mentions other actors such as social workers, family members, and local authorities (those actors that will give the incident context – relationship background), the reporting will be thematic.

The fourth tier is language, grammar, and rhetoric. The choice of words that journalists use are fundamental in framing intimate partner femicide. Word selection from the title/headline and throughout the article have the potential to sway public understanding in a particular direction (Gillespie *et al.* 2013: 226). It is noted that these components are not to be analysed independently since they overlap and each embodies the other. Basically, in media framing, language and context are fundamental components on which CDA focuses (Choquette 2012; Gillespie *et al.* 2013; Joanna 2016; Branch 2019).

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that deals with moral behaviour in the context of research. Ethics provide a background where the researcher can consider what is wrong and right. Ethics provide a framework to avoid misconduct in undertaking the research. The ethics committee of the university have their internal procedure in issuing ethical clearance in studies that are deemed to strictly need such. This study was not deemed to be the one that needed ethical clearance but the case was that ethical considerations were still to be undertaken owing to the fact that the participants are humans (adults). Thus, the researcher's conduct is expected to be just, considerate, and morally upright in dealing with the participants. The researcher is under the obligation to respect and treat the participants with decorum.

### **3.12 Informed Consent**

Informed consent is about participants giving their voluntary accord to partake in the study. The onus is on the researcher to state to the participants, in a clear and understood manner, the objectives of the research, why and how they are selected, and why their participation is necessary. In a relaxed atmosphere, the participants were given the opportunity to choose if they wanted to participate and were reassured that upon deciding to participate at any point in time, they were free to decline responding to some questions/activities or completely withdraw. The participants ought to be in a state of appreciating wrong from right when giving consent. In this study, before the interviews (personal and FGDs), the respondents were read the aim of



the study, why they were chosen, and the importance of their participation. They were then asked if they consented to partake in conversations that would be recorded for later transcription and analysis confidentially. The researcher was very fortunate that all the respondents gave consent and as such signed.

### **3.13 Validity and Reliability**

Validity is about the integrity, application of appropriate methods, and the correlation between the findings to the data collected. The data collected should respond to the study objectives. The tools used for the collection of data are key in determining the validity of the research (construct validity). For this study, newspaper archives with femicide articles were collected and interviews were undertaken to assist the researcher with the analysis of femicide framing in Lesotho media. It is also about tools and if they measure that which they are supposed to measure. Validity helps in determining the relevance and precision of the results as well as whether the results can be extrapolated.

Reliability has to do with the consistency and repeatability of the exercise to produce the same results. The data collected should be accurate to ensure reliability. Essentially, reliability is about the replicability of the results in a different setting (Adebayo 2015).

### **3.14 Respect and Anonymity**

Confidentiality and anonymity are key aspects in collecting data from people because it is in the nature of human beings to keep their life and general conduct private. Confidentiality has to do with the information collected from the participants being kept in confidence (not to be disclosed). Confidentiality further extends to the fact that information that the participant has shared may request that part of it not be used (Wiles 2013: 7).

#### Anonymity

A fundamental way in which a researcher strives to protect confidentiality is by ensuring that the information given by participants is used in anonymity. This process is ensured through anonymisation where the researcher uses pseudonyms for participants, institutions, and locations to avoid revealing the identity (Wiles 2013: 7). In coding the text, anonymity was ensured by using alpha-numeric source code for articles to protect the journalist who wrote the story, the newspaper from which the story was extracted, and the victims thereof. There was a practice to which the researcher referred as multi-tapping where under one headline, there

would be more than one story – in some cases, a relevant one of intimate partner femicide, while in other cases, just a criminal story not necessarily of femicide. In the case where there were two stories, the first would be numeric and alphabetic and the second story would have a numeric and subsequent alphabet designation (e.g. 1(a) and 1(b)).

### **3.15 Chapter Summary**

The chapter basically discussed the methodology of the study, how the data was collected, and what data was collected to ensure that the objectives of the study were achieved. Qualitative data was collected – that which does not lean towards numbers and figures but that leans towards narratives to help understand the social representation of intimate partner femicide in Lesotho media. Data was collected from newspapers with intimate partner femicide articles and from interviews (personal and group interviews). The framework for analysis of data is also outlined – that is, critical discourse analysis is discussed as the tool that was used to analyse data to come up with frames that are used in Lesotho media for intimate partner femicide.

### **3.16 Self-Reflection**

This chapter is important to genuinely admit and raise concerns that, in the researcher's considered opinion, may have been distortions or preconceptions which may have inadvertently appeared in the researcher's research methodology. Firstly, gender is an emotional subject and conversing it in light of intimate partner femicide makes it emotionally worse. The researcher must admit that in his unguarded moments, he was biased towards male participants. The fact that some male participants were raising views that guarded and normalised gender inequality perhaps caused the researcher to probe and interrupt them more than those who were gender-sensitive in their views. The researcher put fourth that to counter the bias female participants were also probed to balance their views and opinions against those of males. The researcher was also not adequately emotionally prepared for some participants who shared their real lived experiences of the loss of someone through femicide. There was anticipation that some participants may share their raw personal grief and the researcher engaged counselling although it was not on the venue. Nonetheless, the data collection was smooth and the researcher was notably happy with it.

## **CHAPTER 4: RESULTS**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This section of the study basically focuses on the presentation of the results from the work that was undertaken in interviews and femicide corpora. The interview data was obtained through personal interviews and group interviews, normally referred to as focus group discussions. The frames were analysed from the news articles on femicide from 2006-2016 in selected newspapers. The results of the training manual will be reported separately in another chapter because after the training, there had to be an evaluation of journalists' articles to see how far they had incorporated all the skills in making their femicide articles gender-sensitive, or rather being gender-aware in their reportage because as the researcher, the researcher cannot wait for femicide to occur for him to evaluate them. On that note, the sampled journalists will be evaluated on the framing of their articles in relation to gender sensitivity, but if there is a case of femicide before evaluation, this would be welcomed although with a heavy heart.

The data analysis has been undertaken to address the objectives of the study. Therefore, this section focuses on sharing the analysis of data in relation to the set study objectives. The objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the motives, extent, and implications of femicide.
2. Examine media frames in femicide and their influence in the Lesotho context.
3. Analyse how the media reports intimate partner femicide: Individual Pathology or Social Problem.
4. Develop and test a training manual for journalists.
5. Undertake preliminary evaluation of the training manual.

Ideally, one would state that the study was two-fold in the sense that research objectives 1-3 were primary objectives and 4-5 were secondary objectives that were premised on objectives 1-3. Therefore, the results will then follow that pattern.

## **4.2 Addressing Research Objective 1: Examination of Causes (motives), Extent, and Implications of Femicide in Lesotho.**

### **4.2.1 Causes (motives)**

In this section, it is necessary to conceptualise the use of the word *causes* lest it stir confusion. There is a need to have a clear distinction between *cause* and *motive* to rightfully apply these words to Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF). Grammatically speaking, the *causes* are those factors that force something to happen, while *motives* mean to do something on the basis of others' indication. It is fundamental to therefore clarify that the cause(s) of femicide is nothing but misogyny and patriarchy (Meyers 1997; Anderson 2017; Ndlovu *et al.* 2020). Femicide is not caused by a man losing his temper or any other excuses that are normally advanced such as the failure of the criminal justice system or drug and substance abuse – it is a fatal end of protracted episodes of gender-based violence (Mathews *et al.* 2013; Spies 2020). That which is clustered as causes rightfully and gender-sensitively are motives.

This research objective was addressed via the extensive and varied interviews that were conducted: personal and focus group discussions. The above preface is a form of disclaimer to anchor how and what these '*causes*' should be construed as. That which is going to be reported as the causes are that which are certainly perpetuations or, colloquially put, '*fig leaves*' that perpetrators and accomplices often put forward as causes.

The interviews had two dimensions: the first one being personal interviews, and the second dimension being focus group discussions. The personal interviews further had three clusters: journalist, listener/reader, and administrators. The interviews were all transcribed verbatim with the help of an assistant. The results of the interviews will be reported as one without singling out the results from each dimension and cluster, the reason being that the interviews primarily, albeit not exclusively, were undertaken to address objective one the main core of which is to examine the causes (motives), extent, and implications of femicide. Basically, they were meant to establish a departure point and avoid the parachuting of interventions. The interviews were also valuable data along with the newspaper archives with articles of intimate partner femicide. The interviews were transcribed and data was coded to develop emerging themes, as presented in the sub-sections that follow.

**(a) Patriarchy**

The system of patriarchy was mentioned as the leading cause of femicide. Patriarchy is a socially engineered system that favours men. There is an admission that men within the Basotho cultural system are *heads of households*. The remnants of the Laws of Lerotholi that propped marital power, albeit being overtaken by the Equality of Married Persons Act 2006, appeared to be audible in the responses. It is upon this view that men feel that they have the divine duty and obligation to discipline women who are, within this cultural context, seen and construed to be perpetual minors. There were several points from different clusters framed differently that the researcher conflated to one theme of patriarchy. There was a point of cultural norms and practices that were highlighted where women are seen and understood to be minors in a household and it was stated that it is the one that lumps women with children as minors and thus positioning men as '*moral compasses*'. In addition to cultural norms and practices, the view that '*monna ke nku ha lle*' (loosely translated as a man is a sheep, he never cries) are the norms that were pointed out to be the ones that constitute and perpetrate violence against women. The other concern that the researcher can state was a '*golden thread*' is the occupation of sites of power by men: religion, finance, and education, to mention a few. These sites of power are claimed to be the ones that produce and reproduce the oppression, exploitation, and subordination of women because they are patriarchal and uphold and perpetuate women subordination (Nechama 2019). Within the culture where women are indoctrinated to see themselves as subordinate to men and as sexual objects (objectification and commodification of women) are some of the points that were highlighted as causes of men being the lead perpetrators of violence against women. One interviewee claimed:

As females from our tender age our socialisation is on how we would be best wives for our husbands to be: it is never about us as human beings with feelings, aspirations, agency ... it is ridiculous and sad, our society needs to nip this nonsense in the butt! (LRF5).

The other complementing view of the above view is that some of the interviewees pointed out that the boy child is indoctrinated and socialised with an entitlement mentality. They are brought up with the outlook that they own females and female bodies (proprietaryship). One interviewee remarked:

We are a very [patriarchal] society, we have a boy child that is given the understanding that they have the responsibility to lead the family ... they are given this entitlement mentality from a very tender age, such that when they grow up they fail to distinguish when they exercise their responsibility and being responsive adults as far as women issues and rights are concerned (EAF1).

The views were echoed by one interviewee in pointing to the torn social moral fibre:

You see I am not condoning violence ... but the boy child is neglected, am also of the view that even the girl child too – but let me hone to the boy child because he is the one who poses lots of problems. Where is mentoring because *\*lebollo\** [initiation] is no more, where are programmes of responsible and non-violent fatherhood ... we have 'self-made-kids' who knows nothing about themselves and their partners – sad we need social and moral regeneration (JM9)

On the issue of male proprietorship, one interviewee succinctly stated that:

Adultery is the major cause of violence on women and dysfunctional families – men have an erroneous sense that manhood measures is about how many women he can intimately relate to albeit in a monogamous relationship and women are now empowered economically and socially to resist that (JM7FGD).

The other view on the issue of male proprietorship was pinned to the norms and cultural practices. In Sesotho cultural norms, male adultery is not as strongly admonished as female adultery which affirms the argument that females' bodies belong to men. There are several Sesotho adages and maxims that affirm this. The interviewee claimed that:

We have to purge our toxic cultural norms such as *\*monna ke mokopu oa nama: mosali ke cabbage oa ipopa\** [a man is a pumpkin – can spread far and wide as possible while a woman is a cabbage]. These norms are not helping but fanning violence because women are now becoming assertive and intolerant to all these nonsense (LRF17).

## **(b) Legislative Framework**

The second theme that emerged that is attributed to the cause of intimate partner femicide from the interviews is an ineffective and inadequate legislative framework which will also be further discussed in the next chapter of discussion. There were a number of interviewees who pointed to the legal framework that is archaic, unresponsive, or unavailable to adequately address the current challenges that women face, thus creating c/overt impunity to the perpetrators. The issue of the legal framework is multifaceted in nature. There was a concern that the laws are archaic, and some laws perpetuate inequality (they are aligned to male supremacy), exclusion, and subordination of women. The respondents pointed to the Lesotho Constitution Section 18 (4) (c) that still denies women to inherit chieftainship. On the other hand, where there are legal frameworks in place, there is a gross incapacity to implement them and quite often, they inadequately address gender issues. For instance, they pointed to the absence of an anti-domestic violence act which makes it difficult for the prosecution of GBV. This confusion of legal frameworks, their absence, and the incapacity to enforce them is a breeding ground for

impunity of male violence against women. There is a gross institutional inaction on violence against women that is ever increasing. One interviewee claimed:

We have legislation that is not coherent ... that talks very minimal to the needs of women, but it sorts of supports or engages very favourably to the needs of men more often than not, so those are some of the things that creates an environment that propagates violence against women (EAM10).

The view was complemented:

In Lesotho, domestic violence is on the increase because ... the laws are wanting in certain areas or they don't exist at all (JF16FGD).

The lamentation on the legal framework's inability to sufficiently address violence against women was pointed to be a pandemic across age cohorts. The interviewee claimed:

We feel orphaned at childbearing age – being faced with the burden of productive, reproductive and community services challenges. At this space we need to establish our careers, have families and kids and also partake in community governance but here is brutality of men killings us and the law and lawmakers as well as enforcers are gracefully spectators of this female genocide (LRF3).

### **(c) 'The Fall of Breadwinner Crown'**

From time immemorial, men have been living and enjoying the monopoly of being breadwinners (Choquette 2012; Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015; Anderson 2017). That is, participation in the public sphere was exclusively for men while women were confined to the non-remunerating private sphere. The participation in the private sphere gives men an opportunity to partake in sites of power such as religion, education, trade, and finances and making laws that suit their position and extend the subordination and oppression of women. In the current scenario of the economic outlook, women are gradually becoming significant players in the public sphere as patriarchy and the patriarchal mentality as well as male hegemony are beginning to crack. The territory of the breadwinner role that was exclusively reserved for males, in return giving them unfair and unjust powers over women, has been trespassed in the name of justice and in the realisation that women's rights are human rights as well. The seismic gendered socio-economic changes that the world is embracing is a challenge that men are grappling to understand and tolerate (Choquette 2012). The net effect of these changes has brought about virtually an equal playing field where women can be Heads of Governments such as Sahle-Work Zewde (Ethiopia), Ameenah Gurib-Fakim (Mauritius), Tsai Ing-wen (Taiwan), Sanna Marin (Finland), Jacinda Ardern (New Zealand), to mention a few. These are changes that make men feel threatened and they erroneously construe this as an

encroachment of their territory of being the breadwinner that they have guarded for centuries and as such, they revert to violence as a form of intimidation and reprimand. Cetin (2015) refers to this phenomenon as 'revolt killings' which are aimed at intimidating women who might want to challenge male supremacy and partake in the public sphere.

The other strand within the decimation of the breadwinner role is the policy and legal frameworks that men claim favour women. There was mention of the legal instruments that were seen to be favouring women or giving women a head start. One of the participants stated:

Men resort to violence because they are out of employment because the current unwritten policy seems to favour women, thus leaving men frustrated and angry that they can no longer undertake their role in the family of being the breadwinner (JF2FGD).

By the same token, one of the participants stated:

That women are now financially independent is a threat and men are becoming fragile and feel less respected ... since they are physically strong, violence is the only response to intimidate women and perhaps force them out of employment (JF1).

Another threat that was clear in this theme was that women, because they are now financially independent, are beginning to be assertive and are reclaiming their agency. They now not only see themselves as equals with men but also as leaders from the family level to the echelons of the state. Another participant sums it up as:

Women are no longer obedient to their husbands ... claims most men, they even wear what they want even if men see that as offensive and not appropriate, so men detour into violence to discipline them (JF1FGD).

#### **(d) Alcohol and Substance Abuse**

Substance abuse is another theme that came out from the analysis of the interview discourse. The problematic use of alcohol and illicit drug abuse is another theme that emerged. It is noted that these themes are mutually related and permeable. There is no exclusive theme that can be claimed to be absolutely substantive. Substance abuse was mentioned as the motive of intimate partner femicide. Interestingly, the participants mentioned it with reservation as they stated that substance abuse is normally used as a concealment of misogyny. Others mentioned substance abuse as a coping mechanism that men use to cushion their frustrations and to resist the changes that are ushered in by the new global gender order of equality. One of the participants theatrically detailed:



I speak this out of my head, post Beijing Conference, male alcohol intake has increased because this thing of 50/50 came as a dream that turned or is now turning into reality – men are under siege. There is a need for more gender awareness campaigns to educate men that patriarchy as a system that favours men is the one under attack not men (JM3FGD).

This remark emerged again as the interviewee put the claim in a different format:

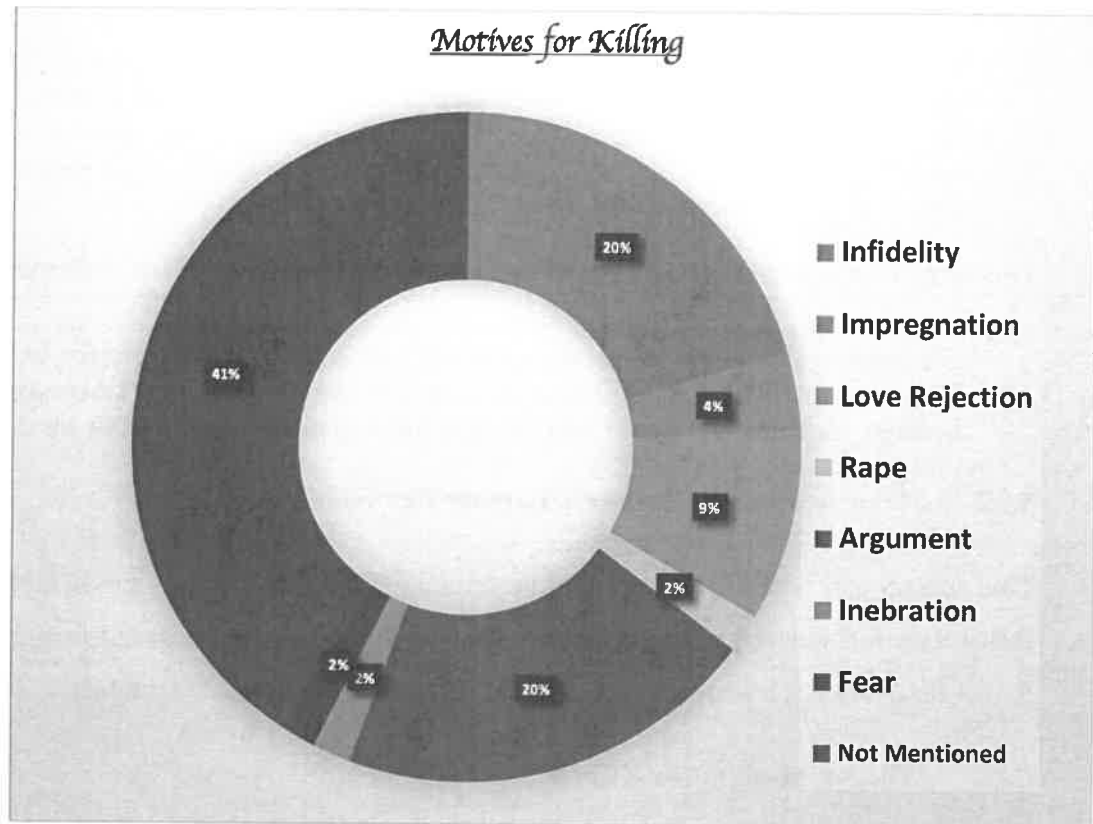
Violence against women, substance abuse and law – the society must be vigilant. There ought to be a clear interaction of the three – men don't become violent because they are inebriated and the law must guard against that as an excuse ... violence is a choice (LRM5).

#### **4.2.2 Descriptive Data: Intimate Partner Femicide**

This sub-section will unpack descriptive femicide data: biodata of victims and the motive to connect the fact that it is not an impulsive act, and to prepare for the discussion chapter, Chapter 5, that femicide has a background – that is, there are precursors of femicide.

##### **(a) Alleged Motives for Killing**

The motives of the killing of women is what would appear in the news articles as the event/s that lead to actual incidences of femicide. That is, prior to femicide, the media would normally call that which has transpired *the cause/s* of femicide. Of the fifty-four incidences of intimate partner femicide, the causes of sixteen incidences were not mentioned, while domestic violence accounted for nine incidences, infidelity/adultery accounted for seven, and the last theme was estrangement that tallied for five. These four themes (domestic dispute, infidelity/adultery, estrangement, and not mentioned) were developed by the researcher. The make-up of these themes was basically guided by the crux of the article and choice of words that the journalists used in cases where the cause was not laid bare. For instance, in the domestic dispute theme, some articles pointed that there was 'fierce argument' while others stated that there was a 'domestic dispute'. The stories were very scanty as to what the dispute was about: finance, responsibilities, or duties, etc. Figure 4.1 presents a pie-chart of the motives for killing.

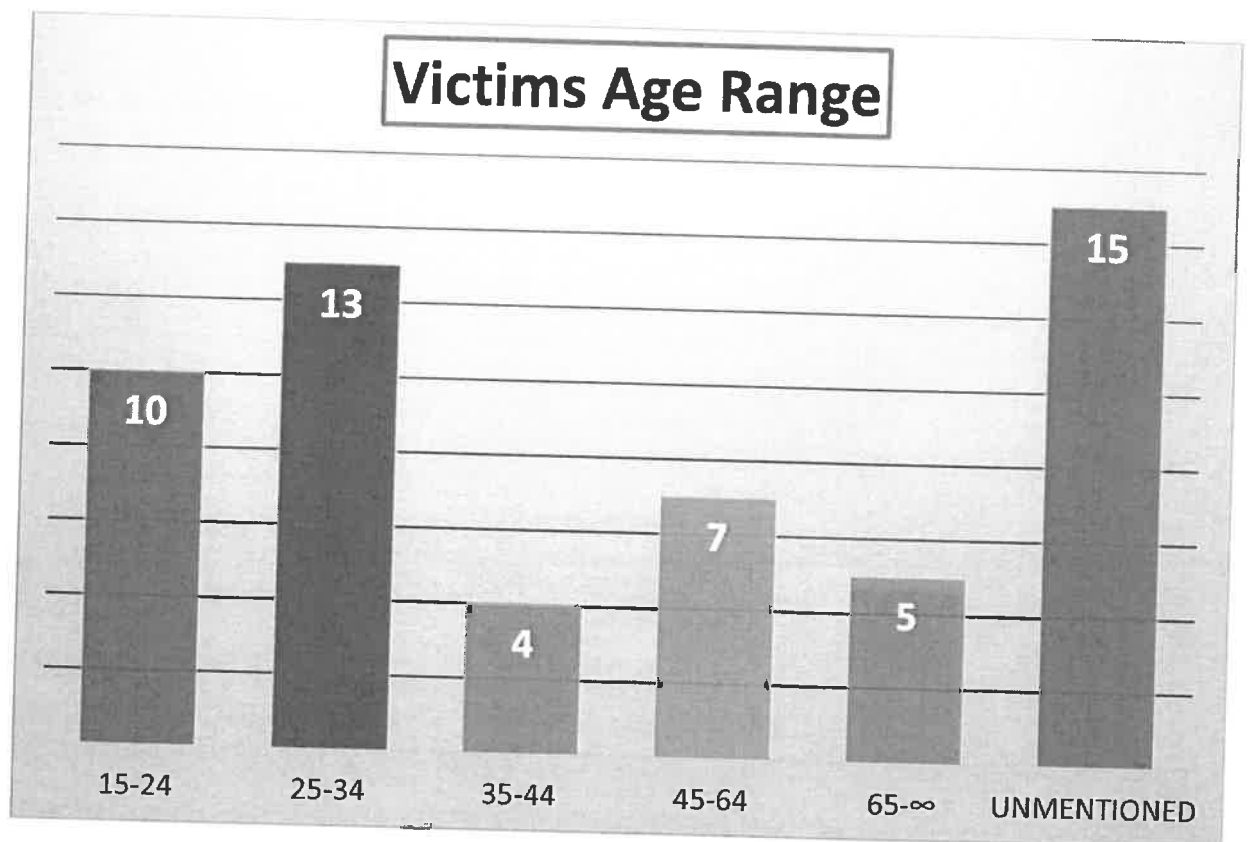


**Figure 4.1:** Motives of killing (Source: Researcher's own data from newspaper archives on IPF).

#### (b) Victims' Biodata

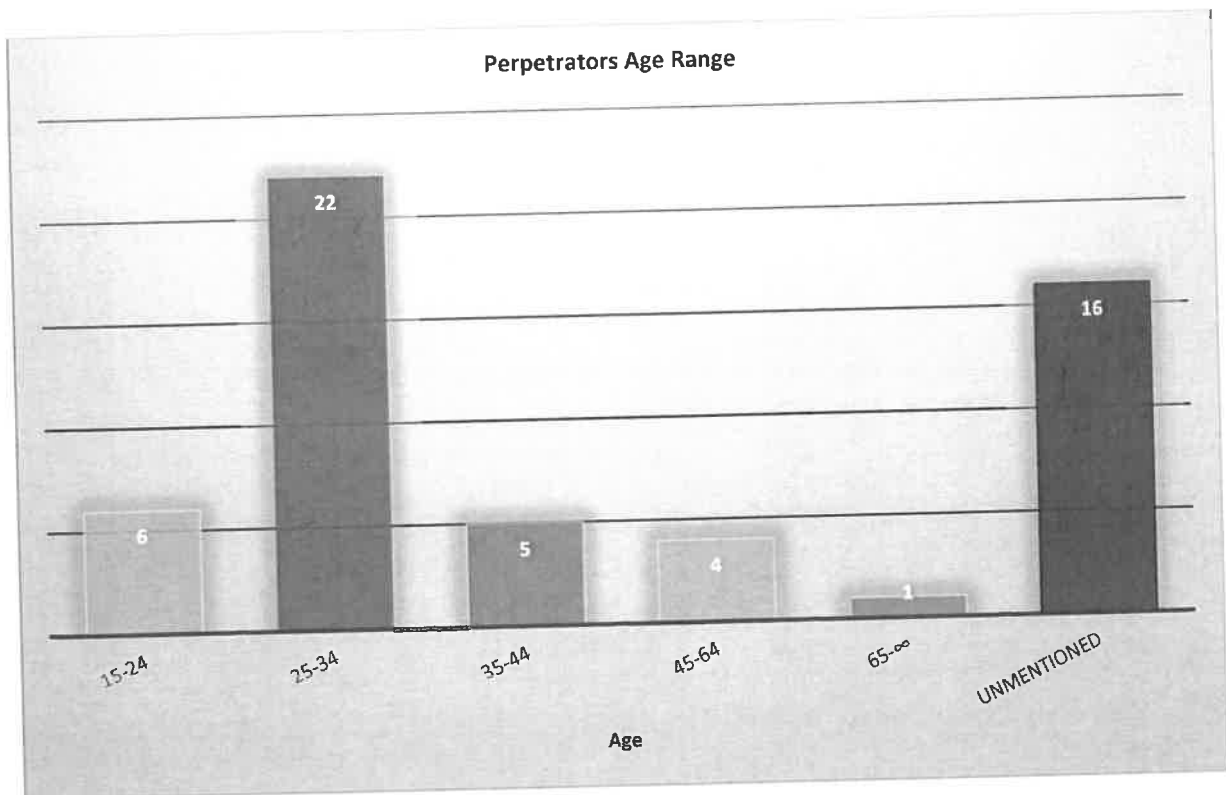
The data for the victims is crucial and cardinal to the study to assist in understanding which age cohort is most vulnerable to intimate partner femicide. It is important to note that every life is worth living, but since women are not a homogenous group, this disaggregated presentation will help in that regard.

Figure 4.2 is a disaggregation of victims' ages to provide an understanding of the spread of intimate partner femicide. Notwithstanding that a significant number of victims' ages are not mentioned, it is still important to note that across the age spectrum, women are potential victims. There is no age bracket where men do not kill women.

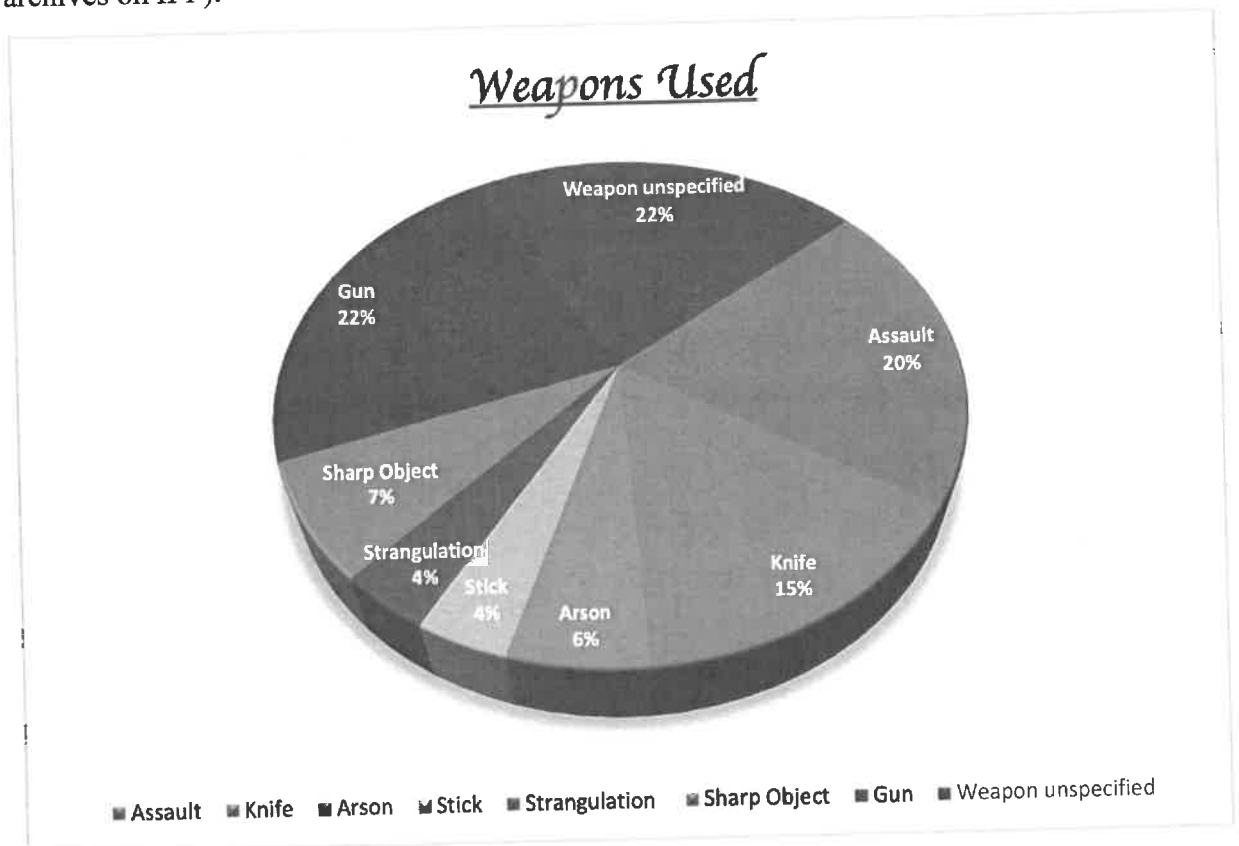


**Figure 4.2:** Victims' Age Distribution (Source: Researcher's own data from newspaper archives on IPF).

Figure 4.3 is an illustration of the perpetrators' age range. The age range spans from fifteen to beyond sixty-five which is an indication that men kill their partners across their entire life. At no particular age are women safe from their intimate partners. The chart reflects a very large number of perpetrators where their age was not mentioned, but of equal importance is that men are perpetrators across all age cohorts; at the teen, early adulthood, adulthood, and old age stages. Figure 4.4 presents the types of weapons used by perpetrators.



**Figure 4.3:** Perpetrators' Age Distribution (Source: Researcher's own data from newspaper archives on IPF).



**Figure 4.4:** Weapons Used (Source: Researcher's own data from newspaper archives on IPF).

### 4.2.3 Extent

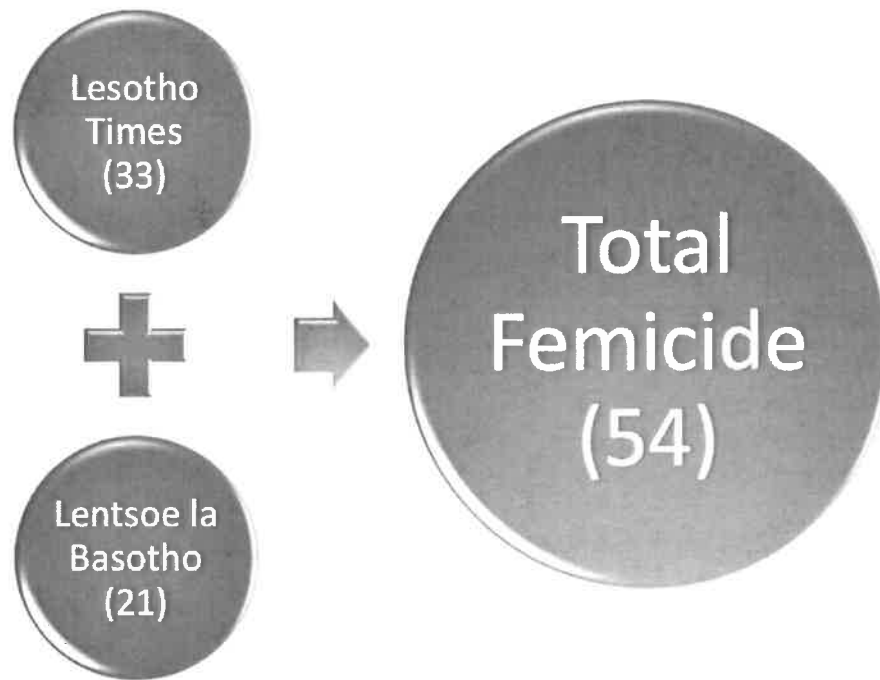
In this section, there was not much concrete or empirical evidence that the participants highlighted. However, the shared anecdotes reveal that the extent is not that much based on their experience but intimate femicide is a phenomenon that is happening. They stated that it is a popular cause of premature death especially for women who are at the child-bearing age. One of the participants stated:

There is an emerging pattern of men killing women especially those that are intimate partners ... although one cannot discount that old ladies are victims of these barbaric heinous acts.

Another participant echoed similar sentiments but in a different tone:

I don't have a solid evidence on this assertion, but I believe men have been killing women and that was normalised and tolerated, the only difference now is that media is reporting this hate crimes and women are beginning to 'reclaim' their rights as human rights and Nations are adjusting their state apparatus to understand and appreciate equality and empowerment agenda.

With the corpora that were collected, the researcher has to report from that position albeit the researcher must confess that this is a pioneering project and as such, the unavailability of data will be felt in some areas. The discussion section as well as the recommendation section (chapter 5) will touch on the need for disaggregated data and the need for femicide observatory. The data collected from newspaper archives was from 2006-2016. The two newspapers that were selected were Lesotho Times (private ownership) and Lentsoe la Basotho (state ownership). The retrieved intimate partner femicide articles are summarised in Figure 4.5.



**Figure 4.5:** Intimate Partner Femicide Retrieved Newspaper Archives (Source: Researcher's own data from newspaper archives on IPF).

There was foresight that media coverage is selective, resource-based, and takes newsworthiness into consideration, which are some of the determinants for femicide stories to make it to the mainstream media. Upon that, the police department was seen as a source of information on intimate partner femicide to further shed light on the extent of these heinous crimes against women. The police headquarters was approached and the Commissioner of Police never hesitated to assist. The Criminal Investigation Service (CIS) was the department that was to facilitate and coordinate the collection of data at the other nine districts, but only four districts (Maseru, Berea, Thaba-Tseka, and Mokhotlong) tendered their data, as shown in Figure 4.6.



(Source: Lesotho Mounted Police Service Criminal Investigation Section data)

**Figure 4.6: Police Intimate Partner Femicide Cases per Districts.**

The total number of cases from the four districts is thirty – in Chapter 5, the narrative will be available as to how the researcher compensated for the six missing districts' data.

#### **4.2.4 Implications**

The implications of intimate partner femicide were sourced from the data collected from the interviews. Femicide, being a terminal outcome of protracted episodes of domestic violence, has considerable implications that emerged out of the data. The first implication that came out was that the children are primary victims. The participants mentioned that the children are the ones who are left hurt eternally and in many ways. One participant observed:

It is hurting because these men when they kill their wives, children are left and their lives are never the same from nutrition, education and general discipline, you name them all, but they are worse hit.

There was also a similar thread of view:

The killing of women causes immeasurable grief in the loss of their lives, poor health to the dependents, and loss of livelihoods ... am not in any way an expert of economics but let me impersonate to be one – in every space and corner there are women in informal and formal business and that is a huge statement to the gross domestic product of our country, I can go on and on about their immense contributions.

Further implications that were pointed out were the breakdown of a family as a social unit. Besides the family of the perpetrator and victim being broken down, there is a domino effect of trauma to the entire community. Femicide as not a tragic but a premeditated killing of women and girls emerged as a theme to also be deliberated. The effects of intimate partner femicide do not only cause havoc at the family and relational levels – they go further to the national heart because femicide is a public health problem. The participants indicated that when femicide has taken place, the quest for justice and attempt to restore livelihoods creates a massive hole in the national coffers. An interviewee tensely narrated:

The lives of women have been taken prematurely; the perpetrator sadly becomes a state burden because when incarcerated he entirely milks state money in prison while the primary victims also que for welfare programs – so basically is a double whammy on state resources.

These are affirmations that intimate partner femicide does not only affect the nuclear family but has a wider ramification that ought to be well understood. The researcher must point out that while undertaking this study, the Commonwealth Secretariat assisted the Ministry of Gender in Lesotho with the consultant to undertake measuring the cost of violence in Lesotho. In the discussion, the researcher will review the findings of the Commonwealth study because they are pertinent to the implications of violence and more especially on the national GDP in total. One of the participants recounted along the lines of the Commonwealth study:

I want to believe that the implications are varied and wider ... in my considered view, before the killing there are episodes of assaults that significantly interrupts the productive output of the victim prior to death.

This is a fundamental observation that enhances the purview of the implications and will be deliberated in the discussion about how important it is.

#### **4.3 Addressing Research Objective 2: Examine Media Frames in Femicide and their influence in the Lesotho Context**

The media frames in femicide were analysed from the femicide news articles that were collected. The news articles were from 2006-2016 and the critical discourse analysis adapted framework of Anabela Carvalho was used to analyse femicide frames. The data was coded and thereafter the themes emerged which were analysed and consolidated into frames.



#### **4.3.1 Victim-Blaming and Responsibility**

The media appears to be operating within the age-old framework of *5Ws and H*. The rigidity of journalists to move or work within this framework in a more adaptive manner is still a challenge and as such, quite often the intimate partner femicide victims are blamed. In the analysis of news articles, the victims are blamed either directly or indirectly. On both accounts, there are strategies that the media employs covertly or overtly to blame the victim.

#### **4.3.2 Direct Victim Blaming**

Direct blaming is achieved through the use of negative language in portraying the victim and often labelling her as a '*bad girl*' – deviant (Berns 2001; Taylor 2009). From the femicide corpora that were analysed, there are a number of incidences where the articles blamed the victims directly. Excerpts that attest to blaming the victim include one headline reading: "Women remain silent until it's too late" (Lesotho Times, 15 August 2014). Some selected narratives stated:

- "The victim was not legally married to the man" (Lentsoe La Basotho, 31 August 2006).
- "The woman was too inebriated" (Lentsoe La Basotho, 1-7 February 2007).
- "Scorned suitor stabs woman" (Lesotho Times, 7 January 2010).

#### **4.3.3 Indirect Victim-Blaming**

Indirect victim-blaming is a tactic that the media engages in shifting the responsibility from the perpetrator or making excuses on behalf of the perpetrator. There is a hair-line difference from blaming the victim because in this instance, more emphasis is put on the perpetrator's mental health (Taylor 2009; Branch 2019). Shifting the blame and masking the responsibility is done at times by pathologising the perpetrator and claiming his inability to control himself. Selected narratives of indirect victim-blaming, advancing the perpetrator's *loss of control* include:

- "It is alleged that the now-deceased and the suspect had a fierce argument, which led to the shooting of a woman" (Lesotho Times, 31 December 2014).
- "The man was irate and he stabbed the wife to death" (Lentsoe La Basotho, 31 August 2007).
- "Leribe cop shoots wife during disputes" (Lesotho Times, 27 May 2010).
- "They normally have disputes" (Lentsoe La Basotho, 29 January – 3 February 2010).

- “The police constable shot her twice during an argument” (Lesotho Times, 25 August 2011).

#### **4.3.4 Pathologising the Perpetrator (aberration)**

This type of framing is normally achieved through presenting a victim as an aberration. Normally the perpetrator is animated or referred to as mythical savage characters that, in a way, position the individual beyond sanity and human deeds. The perpetrator is displayed in text as being unable to control his acts. Selected narratives that displayed aberration include:

- “Let’s tame the beast” (Lesotho Times, 26 September 2013).
- “before the bright future was ... cut by the monster of patriarchal arrogance” (Lesotho Times, 26 September 2013).
- “...Phitsane had suffered temporary insanity when he killed his girlfriend” (Lesotho Times, 24 November 2011).

#### **4.3.5 Exonerating the Perpetrator**

The femicide media frames are permeable in the sense that they are, in most cases, multi-sided. That is, when one frame is used, it leads to another frame. Frames are permeable. For instance, when the victim is blamed, as in the above frames, subsequently the perpetrator is absolved. The perpetrator is exonerated by fronting his inability to control himself often in the midst of the argument or by being portrayed as a pathologically defiant person. Narratives that depict exculpation of the perpetrator are as such:

- “Let’s tame the beast” (Lesotho Times, 26 September 2013).
- “...they were both drunk” (Lesotho Times, 19 September 2013).

Another way in which the media exonerates the perpetrator is by using humour in the quest to make the audience fix their attention on the humorous presentation and euphemism. In this instance, femicide does not become a centre of attention and accountability. Selected excerpts where humour is used include:

- “Man shoot wife dead at Good Times” (Lesotho Times, 23 April 2009).
- “Hubby kills wife with a spear” (Lesotho Times, 26 May 2011).
- “Jealous hubby kill wife” (Lesotho Times, 26 May 2011).
- “Man buries wife in the garden then sew vegetables on top” (Lentsoe La Basotho, 31 August – 6 September 2006).

#### 4.3.6 Voice of Authority and Opinion

The tendency of journalists to settle for immediate and oftentimes a not so relevant commentary is exposed by femicide that needs further exploration and intersectional opinion. There is a need to engage wide voices because intimate partner femicide is an outcome of episodes of abuse. How is the voice of authority displayed in the analysed corpora? Selected evidence includes:

- “Inspector Mphana said...” (Lentsoe la Basotho, 31 August 2006).
- “Senior Inspector Ramarikhoane...” (Lentsoe La Basotho, 11 December 2013).
- “According to senior Inspector Lerato Motseki...” (Lesotho Times, 16 September 2016).

#### 4.3.7 Trespassing

This framing basically entails the archaic conceptualisation of women as private sphere participants who endure the drudgery of unpaid care work. The underlying or rather implicit bias is that men are the ones who ought to partake in the public sphere that bestows status and power. How then is this framing of trespassing displayed in text? There was an analysis of news stories to ascertain the victim and perpetrator status being mentioned. These were closely looked at to determine if the victim has been described beyond the domestic sphere or perhaps framed by their profession:

- “A former soldier with Lesotho Defence Force (LDF), Motloang Molapo, allegedly shot and killed his wife at Good Times Café last Saturday in what police suspect was a love triangle” (Lesotho Times, 23 April 2009).
- “Leribe Cop shoots wife during dispute” (Lesotho Times, 27 May 2010).
- “Soldier kills wife” (Lentsoe La Basotho, 29 January 2010).

#### 4.3.8 Isolation

Isolation framing is when the incidences of intimate partner femicide are not connected in a manner that the audience can link that femicide is ongoing and escalating. The news isolates femicide from gender-based violence and other forms of abuse and assault. Femicide is presented as a once-off event (out-of-the-blue outcome). In the corpora that were analysed, there was an observation of a peculiar behaviour wherein two femicide stories were written under one headline. The headline will be covering one incidence of femicide while the other story does not correspond with the headline. Selected excerpts on isolation framing include:

- “Man kills wife: stabs her trying to stab another man” (Lentsoe la Basotho, 5-11 January 2012).

Under this headline, there are two femicide incidences where in the other incidence, the man assaulted and killed the wife (no stabbing) but the journalist reported these incidences as isolated events with no commonality.

- “Woman burnt to death” (Lesotho Times, 12 May 2011).

The above headline is one example where there is more than one story of femicide under one headline. In the above headline there were three stories under one headline. In the first incidence, there was the burning of the victim which dovetails with the headline. However, the second femicide case under this headline is that the man shot and killed the victim which is a mismatch with the headline. In the third incident, still under the same headline, the man stoned the wife to death which is in contrast to the burning that is shown in the headline. Was there any correlation drawn in the news story which embodied the three femicide cases? No. Each and every incidence was presented in isolation, in isolation from each other, and further in isolation from the failure to locate femicide as an outcome of intimate partner violence and domestic violence.

#### **4.3.9 Normalisation**

Normalisation is the frame that is achieved by backgrounding the perpetrators’ responsibility, and cultural and structural factors that enable gender-based violence to occur. Gender-based violence and femicide are reported in this frame as being ‘expected’ incidences and outcomes. One key characteristic of the nominalisation frame is that femicide is not reported as a social nor public health problem. That is, there is either covert or overt acknowledgment of violence as an inherent part of intimate relationships and domestic habitation. The normalisation frame is pervasive within the analysed archives as selected and in this case, the researcher will report on two cases from fifty-four that reported intimate partner femicide as contrary to the normalisation frame: “Let’s tame the beast” (Lesotho Times, 26 September 2013). Although the headline fitted the frame of aberration, the content nonetheless did not normalise femicide:

Recent police reports show a disturbing trend among men, a developing tendency that does not see a woman as an equal partner, does not respect women and views women as sex objects. This justifies why men should be targeted in projects that seek to fight gender-based violence and campaigns to [sensitize] men and boys that women are equal beings.

#### **4.4 Addressing Research Objective 3: Analyse how the Media reports Intimate Partner Violence: Individual Pathology or Social Problem**

Of the fifty-four articles analysed, one of the codes was to see if, within the news stories, femicide was reported as an individual pathology or a social problem that warranted a socio-political response. It should be noted that individual pathology here is not a phrase that is in any way medicalising violence and femicide but basically a reference to map if the accountability of intimate partner femicide is put on the perpetrator. The objective here was to interrogate if the framing of intimate partner femicide holds the perpetrator accountable or if femicide framing is beyond the individual and relates to the bigger picture of a society. Whether femicide is framed as a social and public health problem or as an individual problem is the crux of this objective.

The results in this case indicate that intimate partner femicide is framed as an individual problem and not a bigger socio-public health problem. The fifty-four articles analysed virtually framed intimate partner femicide as an individual problem. It should be reported that out of the fifty-four, only two articles attempted to frame femicide beyond the individual problem by interrogating femicide beyond the perpetrator's motive and police voice albeit not convincingly.

#### **4.5 Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, there was a systematic presentation of the results of the study, that is, the discourse analysis of the interviews and media corpora in line with the study's aim and objectives. The motives, extent, and implications of intimate partner femicide was the first objective and the results as per it were presented. The results of the second objective, which is the examination of the frames of intimate partner femicide and their influence in the Lesotho context, were also presented. Thirdly, the results of media presentation of intimate partner femicide were also presented where the major focus was on the analysis of whether the Lesotho media presents femicide as an individual pathology or a social problem. The motives are clear and straightforward, and they are all those factors that stem from patriarchy and misogyny. Due to lack of systematic records, it is a challenge to claim with certainty whether the extend of femicide in Lesotho is high or low. There were seven media frames that the media in Lesotho was found to be using in the presentation of femicide and that femicide is virtually reported as an individual pathology rather than a social problem.

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the results will be discussed in relation to the literature review and theoretical framework. The results of the three objectives from the previous chapter are discussed herein to establish if the results connect with the reviewed literature and theoretical framework.

### **5.2 Examine the Causes (motives), Extent, and Implications of Femicide**

The causes of intimate partner femicide in Lesotho are consistent with other countries, cultures, and societies. To start with, what forms and triggers violence – Allport (1954) posits that the oasis of violence is prejudice. It is this violence that, when it is not addressed and mitigated, escalates to intimate partner femicide. Femicide is defined as the killing of women and girls by men because of their gender. The factors that cause femicide are described in the sub-sections that follow.

#### **5.2.1 Patriarchy**

In the current social mental default (patriarchy, male privilege, male hegemony, etc.), one would be baited to quickly point to women as the causes of femicide whilst those with a little awareness on gender dynamics will point to men as being the causes of femicide. Logically speaking, the system of patriarchy and misogyny are the causes of femicide, as evidenced by (Choquette 2012). Now claiming that the system of patriarchy causes intimate partner femicide does not in any thread of imagination absolve men or devoid them of agency and accountability, but for the clinical approach to appropriately address femicide, the diagnosis has to be proper. Patriarchy is an inimical social system that sees and privileges men as dominant figures and women as subordinates (objects). What and how is patriarchy maintained and sustained? Culture responds to the question of what and cultural constituents such as customs, norms, traditions, and other behavioural deeds respond to how patriarchy is sustained. Galtung's (1969) structural violence theory clearly indicates that cultural violence props up physical violence in his typology of violence. Individuals are culturally indoctrinated in a hierarchy where women are subordinates and men are superior. That is, the oasis of prejudice is culturally cultivated and as such manifests itself in physical violence, as evidenced by the violence triangle by Galtung (1969). The response from the participants validated that cultural indoctrination is key in

enabling gender-based violence by claiming that the socialisation process brings females up to be good wives and not as human beings with agency, voice, and choice.

Moreover, the cultural claim is that in the Basotho society, being a patriarchal society, the boy child is given the mentality of dominance and ownership of the female body and it is where the culture of violence is born and that of tolerance is initiated on the side of girls. This resonates with literature that femicide is hinged on hatred, contempt, and a sense of ownership by men (Anderson 2017; Geldenhuys 2018; Branch 2019). The socialisation process to which both boys and girls are subjected compels them to internalise violence and tolerate it.

This is where culture and masculinity confluence and as such that ought to be interrogated. In patriarchal cultures, masculinity is superior and normalised. This concept and these attributes of being male are inimical to equality – in other parts of the world, it is called “machismo” (Adebayo 2015: 79), and in Lesotho, it is referred to as *\*bonna/poho* [manliness/male animal]. Masculinity is re/produced as well as maintained by culture because it is constructed as a default set of male attributes and anything that does not fit into it is construed to be defiant. Therefore, hegemonic masculinity makes it difficult to question alternative healthy forms of masculinity that embrace equality.

The question is, can the media challenge this cultural value of machismo? Firstly, for the media to curtail the reproduction of machismo, there is a need for conscious decisions and training of media personnel. Simply because they (media personnel) are the products of a patriarchal society, it is evident that they are inclined to re/produce media content that sustains gender inequality unless there is conscious training, as the one that is done in this study, to alter their convictions.

There is evidence from language to deeds in the continuum of Basotho socialisation that violence and its tolerance are c/overtly re/produced which lead to it being sanctioned. For instance, there are assertions such as *'khang ea monna e khaoloa ke letlaka'* (in the case of misunderstanding between men, fighting will settle the conflict). This and many other cultural impressions are ingrained in society and become part of it. They normalise the culture of violence, emasculating males from being responsible and loving humans who have the capacity to face and diffuse conflict without violence.

This supports the assertion that if media practitioners are social products, the media therefore has to take a conscious calculated effort to frame intimate partner violence and femicide from a position that they do not perpetuate but rather report it in a manner that holds the perpetrators accountable, interrogating institutional responsiveness and response. There is a need to cleanse not only the media but also society from patriarchal culture that upholds women as subordinates and men as generic and authorities. The femicide story content and interviews reflected, without doubt, that the thinking still departs from hegemonic masculinity.

### **5.2.2 Legislative Framework**

The issue of a lack of, or uncoordinated, as well as the incapacity of criminal and justice systems emerged as one of the factors that undermine and counter gender-based violence efforts. It is noted that legislation alone cannot solve the challenge of intimate partner femicide but there is also a need to change the attitude of people. There was a view from the participants that potential perpetrators are not deterred by an outmoded, lax, and conflicting legislative framework. For instance, the Sexual Offence Act 2003 (SOA) states that a child is any individual under the age of sixteen, while the Child Protection and Welfare Act 2011 stipulates that a child is any individual under the age of eighteen. On the journalism side, the legislations section in the Constitution of Lesotho (Sec 14), the Official Secrets Act of 1967, and the Criminal Procedure and Evidence Act of 1981 (Sec 85 & 173(4)) are some legislative hiccups that make gender-responsive journalism a challenge in Lesotho. In the instances where there is a legislative framework, it appears not to talk to issues and challenges of women sufficiently. Currently, there is no Domestic Violence Act (DVA) in Lesotho and as such, gendered violence is still conflated as common assaults which, in true terms, undermines the gendered aspect of the assault. This goes further to impact on the justice for victims because practically speaking, the perpetrator is accused and sentenced on something closer to what he has committed, and not exactly on what he has done. This is where and how the challenge for quality victim-oriented journalism arises – if the case is not exactly what the perpetrator has committed, then how does a journalist report *'reality from purported reality'*.

The matter of the unavailability of legislative framework and other blueprints to guide journalism in Lesotho is a serious challenge. MISA Lesotho indicated that journalism in Lesotho is on *'auto pilot'* because it is operating with archaic legislative frameworks and, in other instances, there is absolutely nothing in place, such as the unavailability of the Media Act and the Access to Receipt of Information Act, to mention a few. The atmosphere for effective and efficient journalism is currently not available, as one interview summed that violence and



sexual violence in Lesotho are rampant because the laws are 'wanting in certain areas or they don't exist at all'.

Having discussed the outmoded and unavailability of legislative frameworks for gender-based violence and media, it is notable then that writing a news article on gender-based violence and intimate partner femicide is a challenging issue to an individual behind the microphone and the pen. That being the case, such individuals are left to lean on their innate cultural dispositions that sadly sanction violence and objectify women. Galtung (1969), in his theory of structural violence, clearly articulates that cultural violence is imprinted upon the process of socialisation. Therefore, journalists, being the products of patriarchal society, write stories that are likely to precipitate towards the ideals of patriarchy with which they have been socialised and which they have internalised, as well as normalising them albeit they all disempower women, objectify them, and invalidate their rights as human rights.

On the other side, where legislative frameworks are available, it has appeared that journalists lack knowledge and understanding of them and how such frameworks are related to each other. For instance, in one femicide article: 'A male soldier kills wife' (Lentsoe La Basotho, 29 January – 3 February 2010) reads:

Multitudes of villagers congregated at Mr. Napo Mabesa rented flats and there were also soldiers ring-fencing the residence as people were shocked by the male soldier having murdered his wife.

The framing is problematic on many fronts – for the journalist to claim that the rented flats belong to Mr. Napo Mabesa and deciding not to mention Ms. Manteboheleng Mabesa is disturbing because one would wonder if such a journalist was aware that the couple is married not in community of property. If not, why did the journalist decide to mention emphatically that the rented houses belong to Mr. Napo Mabesa? The first plausible submission would be that the journalist is still displaying vestiges of the Laws of *Lerotholi* wherein the household assets belong to the head of the household who is a male figure.

Secondly, a logical conclusion would be that the journalist considers the wife as one of the man's properties (objects) who cannot have assets nor hold tenure (marital power). These views and assumptions that underline the journalist's convictions are outdone by the introduction of the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act 2006. Lastly, the framing begs the question of whether the journalist is aware and has full comprehension of the latest legislation of the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act of 2006 that specifically erases the minority status of women

as espoused in the Laws of Lerotholi. Another legislation that ought to have been thought of in this case was the Land Act of 2010 that outlines and clearly stipulates that land ownership is equally and jointly held. Therefore, this instance and many others indicate that there is inadequate comprehension and appreciation of legislative frameworks to assist journalists to frame gender-based violence and femicide properly.

### **5.2.3 ‘The Fall of Breadwinner Crown’**

The ideal of a patriarchal setting is that men are providers and women are recipients. This outlook is the one that props up and sustains patriarchy. In a way, that is how male superiority and female inferiority are maintained in a social setting. Men were breadwinners because they have for long made public sphere participation their monopoly and women are leashed unto the private sphere where there is no form of remuneration and power. With time passing by and efforts on gender equality coming to fruition, patriarchy is no longer as stable as it used to be. Women are slowly trickling into the public sphere where there is power and remuneration to sustain livelihoods. Men now are finding it difficult because one of their oppressive and selectively empowering system called patriarchy is crumbling. Men are failing to acknowledge and appreciate women as equal partners with human rights, choice, and agency. Women’s considerable strides to liberty and empowerment have sparked a wave of animosity in men who have resorted to violence as to intimidate women and make them fearful to enjoy their human rights. These sorry and acceptable events have been carefully orchestrated to intimidate women to prevent them from taking their rightful position in the society by being equal members who partake in not only reproductive roles but productive roles as well.

In an attempt to seek exculpation from the might of the law, men resort to alcohol and substance abuse as an excuse for their violence and assault on women. As Goldstein (2002) and Rude (1999) accurately posit, since the sites of power such as the judiciary still operate on the *‘reasonable man and provocative woman’* doctrine, it becomes easy for men to continually assault and violate women’s rights without the judicial and criminal system responding accordingly because they still operate sub/consciously on patriarchal ideals. The respondents rightly indicated that violence is a choice and as such the perpetrators find a niche in uncoordinated legislative frameworks and judicial and criminal justice systems that are incapable of addressing gendered cases.

However, it needs to be pointed out that the researcher does not claim that a lack of legislative frameworks, the use of alcohol, and abuse of substances cause intimate partner femicide but

they are intertwined intricately to effect intimate partner femicide. Perpetrators indulge in intoxication knowing very well that they will be exonerated c/overtly by uncoordinated legislative frameworks and the incapacity of the criminal and judicial system. A niche to interrogate in this view is that if legislation is *watertight*, could gender-based violence and femicide be eradicated completely? The answer is an emphatic 'No'. Why? Intimate partner violence is a social problem that stems from prejudice of other genders thus efforts must be directed to reimagining socialisation and cultural values whilst legislative frameworks become supplements. There is a need to tighten laws but not laws only, as Johnson *et al.* (2019) maintains that the criminal law and justice system responds to incidents (episodic response) while intimate partner violence is perpetual. This perpetual nature of intimate partner violence warrants a thematic social and behavioural change. Two key areas to be targeted should be socialisation by the introduction of positive non-violent parenthood programs and targeting culture by introducing new values that embrace equality.

Therefore, men respond by violence in the new world order of equality because they feel that gender equality is emasculating them. Violence from men is not that it is inherent to them but it is a defence mechanism that they stimulate in order to prevent women from partaking in the public sphere but also to defend the privileging system of patriarchy. Media has a role to play in advancing the course of equality not as a concept that effeminates or emasculates males but as a concept that seeks to establish harmony, participation, representation, justice, and accountability. Media trainings such as the one that this study undertook (gender-sensitive journalism) are necessary to conscientise the media on how important it is to write from an indigenous perspective because there are dissenting voices that the current form of media is an imperialist concept aimed at diluting culture. However, literature negates that – media has evolved from that of town criers to this contemporary digital format.

The question remains whether the evolution was for good or worse. Taking into consideration that that media format in the times of town criers was purely to inform the public, there was no form of economic input and manipulation of messaging in the name of profit. The media, so to speak, was a key community commodity. The evolution scrapped all those attributes. The media today is an individual commodity of capitalists shaped in such a manner that profit is the central motive. It is true that the informative element of music is indelible and indeed it has stood the test of time even today but the information format has changed considerably to that which targets the profit margins.

#### 5.2.4 Descriptive Data

Descriptive data was basically a compilation of alleged motives, victims' and perpetrators' bio-data, and weapons used. The researcher felt that all these aspects are important to fully understand patterns of intimate partner femicide. Data indicated that in approximately 43.24% of the news articles, there was no revelation of the motive of the killing. A basic journalism course would maintain that the 5Ws and H are the cardinal points of every news article in information gathering (Grundy *et al.* 2012). A journalist response to these six questions is a forensic technique to assist in presenting a news story that is not only informative but powerful as well.

It was perplexing to note that virtually half of the news articles reviewed missed one W (why). The highest alleged motive mentioned was domestic dispute. This is interesting because this takes one back to the doctrine of the '*reasonable man and provocative woman*' to see if it is valid or not. That which constituted domestic disputes were instances where the news article pointed out that the perpetrator was angry, raged, had a domestic misunderstanding, had a domestic dispute, etc. First, the journalist naming the conflict as a domestic dispute is problematic, as Gillespie *et al.* (2013: 223) indicate that the diagnosis of men's violence as domestic leads to the wrong prescription (understanding it and solutions to it). This naming is seen to have effected neglect of alternative interventions because this form of abuse is seen and construed to be a family matter to be solved by concerned parties of immediate family members. The theory of agenda setting posits that the way in which an issue is framed suggests how it should be discussed and conclusions to be reached are predetermined. Thus, in this case, the framing of these intimate altercations suggests how the public should understand them and the reactions.

Second, considering that the perpetrator was angry as espoused by the results – does that hold? Considering the doctrine of the '*reasonable man and provocative woman*', a reasonable man is the one who is law-abiding and has foresight and observation of fundamental human rights. How and why does this *purported* reasonable man, in the case of conflict, resort to violence? The results herein indicate that this doctrine is selectively invoked to prop male privilege and to continue the subordination and violation of women and their rights. Hereafter, the researcher has selected a few excerpts from the news articles to underline that the doctrine does not hold:

- “A 74-year-old man stabbed his 70-year-old wife after being angered by being served small food portions” (Lentsoe La Basotho, 10-16 January 2010).

- “A 31-year-old police officer from Leribe shot and killed his 28-year-old wife last week following a domestic dispute” (LesothoTimes, 27 May 2010).

The above excerpts defy the doctrine of a reasonable man, taking into consideration that a septuagenarian is at all costs an individual who cannot be angered by petty matters such as food that can even lead to him killing his wife. Similarly, a police officer has undergone intensive training on weapon handling and conflict transformation thus for him to recklessly shoot and kill his wife over whatever dispute is not reasonable.

The two remaining motives were classified as infidelity/adultery with 18.92%, and lastly estrangement at 13.51%. The supremacy and superiority of men is culturally sanctioned and sustained through a system of patriarchy and that sustains the subordination of and violence against women. In the Sesotho culture, socialisation of women from the cradle and the expectation to their grave is that they are subordinate to men and men’s needs and gratifications ought to be served and satisfied first. Women are socialised that even if a man is abusive and violent, she should not leave him (*Mosali u ngalla motseo maxim*). This is lethal to the lives and rights of women but they are indoctrinated to tolerate violence and this states that men are culturally sanctioned to be violent as well. One of the common adages in the socialisation of men is that a man never shows emotions nor cries, or in the case of conflict, fighting will resolve all. These and many other patterns of socialisation are those that have perpetuated gender-based violence and injustice. Galtung’s (1969) theory of violence speaks to these situations in the sense that cultural violence and structural violence intersect subtly to produce physical violence. Culture socialises, and sites of power (such as religion and education) are repositories of structural violence that intersect to breed physical violence.

Victims’ and perpetrators’ age range is another variable that the researcher considered and he felt that it had relevance in intimate partner femicide. Similar to the above consideration, the unmentioned age of victims and perpetrators was the highest. The subsequent highest age range was 25-34 and 15-24 in both incidences. It is prudent to underline that these age cohorts lie in the youth continuum. At about 15 years of age, both boys and girls start their intimate partner relations and the incidences of femicide start from here (Ndlovu *et al.* 2020; Nduna 2020). Perhaps it is also prudent to raise the issue that in this age cohort is where individuals start to blossom in their careers and seek as well to be financially independent to sustain their livelihoods. Considering the fact that the researcher has mentioned that cultural socialisation which raises a girl child to serve and be subordinate to the boy child is where conflict that

escalates to violence starts when they develop intimate relationships, that ought to be anchored on subordination and supremacy. The male individual lives on a sense of ownership and proprietorship and as such the female's independence, choice, and agency are seen as revolts that are met with brutal force. Apparently, age (youth range) is a risk factor in intimate partner femicide, especially for youth because evidence leads to this conclusion (Jewkes 2002; Ndlovu *et al.* 2020; Nechama 2020). This is consistent with the results because intimate partner femicide is rife in the youth age cohort. The researcher thinks that it speaks to the fact that males want to assert their supremacy while females revolt against patriarchal ideals of subordination and the collision course is set.

It is also important to discuss the weapons used in the events of intimate partner femicide. Data indicate that in 22% (refer to Figure 4.4 in Chapter 4) of the incidents, the weapon was not mentioned. It is alarming and worrying how the journalists did not mention the weapon in so many incidences. It brings to the discussion the six cardinal pointers of journalism being 5Ws and H as being fluffed. The weapon, within the mentioned cardinal, has to be mentioned on What and How but it was missed glaringly and, in a way, that opaqueness the gravity and adequate understanding of femicide. The second highest weapon recorded in intimate partner femicide is the gun. Reckless and abusive males are in possession of guns and it is clear that in the event of any conflict, they pull the trigger. This cause is consistent with literature where Campbell *et al.* (2003), Jankey (2009), and Mellado (2013) have indicated that misuse of guns and alcohol are at the forefront of intimate partner femicide. However, this backs the question of why men, when drunk and in gun possession, chose women as their targets? Galtung (1990) theory of structural violence has indicated that women are not killed because men have guns and are drunk but because structural and cultural violence intersect to objectify women's lives, undermine their fundamental right to life, and make their lives unlivable and ungrievable, as echoed by Butler (2010). For instance, the headline "*A 74-year-old man stabbed his 70-year-old wife after being angered by being served small food portions*" (Lentsoe La Basotho, 10-16 January 2010) clearly explores the cultural disposition that women are expected to cook and serve food. Appending the phrase "...after being angered by being served small food portions" taps on cultural construct that cultural roles dictate that women's role is to cook and be the servant of a man. This is meant to psychologically sway the audience that the woman has failed her cultural duties and as such inadvertently justifies her husband murdering her. This illustrates a clear link of how physical violence (visible) is anchored in cultural violence, as was postulated by Galtung in his structural violence triangle. The frame positions the victim as someone who

deserved to die because she has betrayed her cultural prescripts. This outlook to this form of violence is often called honour killings (Cetin 2015; Tütüncüler *et al.* 2015; Brannon 2021)

Furthermore, the journalists' failure to indicate the weapons. Galtung's (1990) theory of structural violence provides an understanding that people are inclined to put attention on the visible and ignore the invisible (motives and causes). The view is similar to Ogundola (2013), that media often have a tendency to make salient certain issues and background others. This is how media sets its agenda- by leaving out some elements of the story and either intentionally or unintentionally to create a particular interpretation and understanding of a problem (McCombs and Shaw 1972). There was concern from the participants that the laxity of laws from accessing the guns to the sentences were very doubtful in having any deterrence effect.

Motives of killings also follow the same pattern from previous bio-data – in virtually half (41%) of the incidences of femicide, the motive of the killing is not mentioned (refer to Figure 4.1 in Chapter 4). It brings the concern of how the journalists have fluffed the fundamental elements of a news article of 5Ws and H. Obviously, the motive should be addressed by Why but it was strange that it was not in almost half of the news articles. One may have a legitimate question of why the journalist missed reporting sub/consciously the motive is worrying to the effect that one would want to believe that the normalcy of femicide is established. From a theoretical point, it is clear that the journalists only focus on the visible (physical violence) and lack the necessary awareness and appreciation of the invisible structural and cultural violence which enables the physical violence. Arguments and infidelity are the second top-most motives standing at 20% each (refer to Figure 4.1). This outlook takes one back to masculinities and femininities that are curved by socialisation. As Basotho, what kind and forms of masculinities have the Basotho produced – with reference to the motives of intimate partner femicide? This outlook echoes that which one of the participants in the interview stated that in the Basotho culture, boys are raised with the entitlement mentality. The researcher must point out that entitlement in this case is multi-dimensional in the sense that males are considered (the way males are socialised) to be entitled to female bodies (seen and considered as objects but, at the least, as subordinates) or rather they are socialised in a manner that gives them entitlement to the female body. Intimate relationships and ultimately marriage are not a communion of partnerships but sadly of ownership where males' supremacy reigns and owns. Secondly, the entitlement is on the means of production (breadwinner) – that is, men are raised with the mentality that they have to be 'providers' in the household. Now one can consider how the two forms of entitlements intersect to perpetuate intimate partner femicide. In the Sesotho culture, male promiscuity is c/overtly

sanctioned in norms and practices such as in this adage: *monna ke mokopu oa nama: mosali ke cabbage oa ipopa* (loosely translated as a man is like a pumpkin – can spread as far and wide as possible while a woman is a cabbage). This is one of the socialisation modes wherein males are sanctioned to be promiscuous and females to tolerate male promiscuity and preserve chastity. How and why is this a problem and a factor to be worthy of consideration for intimate partner femicide? In the case where a female does not approve of this barbaric behaviour, the man then sees the woman as undermining him and cultural prescripts. This then leads to conflicts where ultimately; a man kills a woman. On the flip side, if a woman therein internalises these practices of multiple sexual partners out of defiance or genuinely not being sexually satisfied by her intimate partner because he serves multitudes, that stance is seen also as a grave affront to the man and the entire clan. The man is thus expected to react strongly to admonish the wife thus often leading to the death of the woman. The reviewed literature indicated that if a woman is seen or considered to be promiscuous, killing her is a '*crime of honour*' (Shalhoub-Kevorkian 2003) or '*crime of passion*' (Jankey 2009) to spare the family of bad omens.

In the event where the man is not the '*breadwinner*', this becomes a potential conflict situation because he has been socialised to be the one who sustains livelihoods and the society expects that. The inability then not only becomes a threat to the woman but also a psychological challenge. The man then becomes violent to intimidate a woman who is or might be providing for the family. Most often, the violence ends in the murder of the woman, which Cetin (2015) refers to as '*revolt killings*'. These intimate partner femicides are results of men revolting against the new world order where merit is order not masculinity, and where women's rights are human rights. This new norm is erroneously considered by patriarchal culture as emasculating while, in essence, it is empowering to all genders. Living in a world where women are seen and understood not only as reproductive agents but productive agents as well seems to be meeting male resistance.

One of the study's objectives was to measure the extent of femicide in Lesotho. The intention was to extract a decade of intimate partner femicide cases from two sampled print news outlets. One news outlet was publicly owned while the other was privately owned. The extent of intimate partner femicide in Lesotho, taking into consideration the population (2,007,201 Census 2016), one would cautiously conclude that it is high. UNDOC (2017) reports indicate that Lesotho's homicide rate is one of the highest not only in Africa but globally as well as it is fifth, and as such that raises a red flag. The disaggregation of those deaths is key to unpacking



how women are affected. However, the extent, as the researcher has already indicated and that he cautiously but not emphatically concludes, is high because the data collected was a little vague. Why and how was the data vague – first of all, the incidence to match the set criterion was that the news article had to indicate that intimacy was one of the elements. Thus then, quite a number of suspected intimate partner femicide news stories did not qualify because there was no mention of whether there was intimacy involved. The other factor undermining intimate partner femicide cases to make it into mainstream media is the lack of resources within which the media operates. The lack of resources is a barrier for them to cover widely all areas and incidences. Concerning the lack of resources, hypothetically one would expect it to come from private media but surprisingly, the state media also claim that they are operating under a very lean budget.

The crux of the concern on the extent of intimate partner femicide was to be settled by the police records since no death goes unreported from all ten districts of Lesotho. The picture is very oblique and depressing on multiple views: firstly, there is no disaggregation of homicide data. Secondly, there are no legislative prescripts that recognise and appreciate femicide, hence incidences are all classified as murder. Thirdly, there is no systematic data keeping and securing of homicide cases at police offices – that is, there is no database and that makes it a challenging, daunting, and tedious task to search manually for cases, withstanding the fact that they were not disaggregated. Only four districts out of ten districts were able to submit their femicide data which was also grossly prepared because there could be a case of femicide in a newspaper but not reflecting on the submission of a particular district. The incongruence was one of the challenges that pointed and led the researcher to cautiously conclude based on the liquidity of available data. Looking back to the theory of structural violence by Galtung inclines the researcher to make a reserved conclusion because oftentimes, the type of violence that filters into record books is physical violence while structural and cultural violence are hardly noticed.

Had data from the police been in order, the intention was to use it to triangulate data from the newspaper archives to determine how widely the media covers intimate partner femicide, but the exercise did not come out as cleanly as anticipated. That data was also going to be a reliable benchmark to comprehend the extent of femicide. The police data was also going to be significant because it was going to provide a full picture of all incidences of femicide and not only those that made it to the mainstream media. This leaves one large hole in the exercise and

an opportunity for the establishment of a Gender-Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) database to inform further interventions and programmes.

#### **5.2.5 Implications**

Femicide is the outcome of heinous gender crimes that one could think of. Sadly, it is not an impulsive outcome but an ultimate outcome of protracted episodes of abuse, assault, and violence that victims suffer at the hands of perpetrators. Looking at the height of the intimate partner femicide age range, it is clear that it is rife from 15-45 years of age. That is the productive and reproductive height of every woman and it therefore means that their lives being cut short is a fatal blow to society in its entirety. Notably, literature does suggest that women contribute significantly to food security and environmental preservation (Jankey 2009; Gunnarsson 2011; van der Gaag 2014).

The majority of intimate partner femicide cases occur at the age when these victims are active in food production and environmental protection, thus their demise means food insecurity and environmental degradation. Overall, it is safe to conclude that global food insecurity increases severely with an increase in intimate partner femicide while economic development decreases. What, and how much is the economic cost of violence against women? Since intimate partner femicide has a background of episodes of violence, the Commonwealth Secretariat funded a study on the economic cost of violence in Lesotho that indicates that GBV cost Lesotho 5.5% of GDP of the 2017 fiscal year (Bazlul 2019). It is axiomatic that gender-based violence is profusely bleeding Lesotho significant amounts that could be geared to developmental issues for the empowerment and betterment of women such as building health centres. One interviewee says that the informal sector consists largely of women and gender-based violence hinders their participation which is a significant blow to national revenue, employment, and food security. Lopez-Ekra *et al.* (2011) claim that women have the propensity to make meaningful household savings that contribute to national savings, and as such, violence interrupts this behaviour leaving households, and most importantly children, vulnerable.

Zeroing in on the implications from the national to family level, the children are the immediately hurt victims of intimate partner femicide. Firstly, there are direct implications borne by children. One interviewee opines that the children's lives are never the same from their nutrition, education, and their entire social conduct. The children left behind in the case of Lesotho become a burden on the state in terms of welfare, education, and health. This indicates how far-reaching the implications of intimate partner femicide are. It is underscored

that women are undeniably a force to reckon with when it comes to food production and preparation. Their premature deaths signal a disorder in nutritional intake hence health complications for children are inevitable. On another note, the perpetrator, from the time that he is indicted until incarceration, also becomes a state burden in terms of welfare, health, and rehabilitation costs. This interconnectedness affirms that a consolidated inclusive approach should be taken to address violence as its implication are far reaching.

The indirect implication of intimate partner femicide on children is sustainability of the culture of violence. It is belaboured that femicide is not an outcome of one fatal encounter of violence – femicide is a terminal end of a series of violent encounters of which women are victims. Sadly, children are not only emotional, psychological, and physical victims of abuse but they internalise and normalise violence as an alternative to conflict. This breeds an intergenerational culture of violence. Literature does suggest that exposure of children to violence as they grow up dictates how they address conflicts and their tolerance to violence (Gage 2005; Stöckl *et al.* 2013; Anderson 2017; Branch 2019). KPMG (2014: 1) does concur that children's exposure to violence for both sexes is toxic. In the Sesotho culture, some cultural inscription of marriage dictates that '*mosali u ngalla mots'eo*' (loosely translated: a wife does not leave a marriage), which therefore indoctrinates the wife to tolerate and endure abuse.

In addition, it is a *blank cheque* to the man to abuse and assault women. Media failure to appropriately frame femicide is in a sense a structural reinforcement of femicide.

## **5.3 Media Frames in Lesotho's Context**

### **5.3.1 Victim-Blaming and Responsibility**

The frame of victim-blaming was evident in the analysis of the corpus. For this study, the researcher felt that it was prudent to tie or lump victim-blaming with responsibility because whenever there is victim-blaming, there is invariably a responsibility shift from the perpetrator. It is important to point out that the victim-blaming frame is the one that seems to put the blame on the victim and exonerate the perpetrator. The frame of victim-blaming was consistent with literature that, in a number of instances, the victim was blamed for her own victimhood. In the victim-blaming frame, two techniques were employed: direct blaming and indirect blaming.

### 5.3.2 Direct Victim-Blaming

In this technique, the victim is usually described in negative terms framed in a manner that she is at fault (Meyers 1997; Taylor 2009; Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2011; Balica, Marinescu and Balica 2020). For example, in *LesothoTimes*, 15 August 2014, the headline indicates that “women remain silent until it’s too late”. The agenda setting theory posits that the media has no business in telling the public what to think but its core mandate is to suggest to the public how to think about the issue and dictates logical conclusions about the issue. In light of the agenda setting theory, it is clear that in the above headline, the onus of femicide rests squarely on the victim as to why they remain silent for too long. The tragedy of being killed and the responsibility to stop that violence is directly put unto the victim, therein exonerating the perpetrator of his heinous act. The framing is cunningly un/consciously prepared such that the audience sees, understands, and concludes that the victims have all powers, capacities, and abilities to stop intervening in their conflicts before they escalate into tragic violence.

A further analysis of this headline sets the agenda to the audience to never think of the state apparatus and private apparatus working independently or collaboratively to prevent violence. Why are these apparatuses ineffective to detect violence reported and not reported? – why are the anti-violence apparatus not responsive? The agenda set here is that victims are at fault, not the perpetrator, and not the anti-gender-based violence and femicide apparatus. Perhaps, in light of the reviewed literature, victims positively calculate risk by staying longer in the abusive relationships because they are mostly killed when they decide to leave that relationship (Easteal, Holland and Judd 2015; McCormick 2015).

The headline appears to be inconsiderate about the challenges that victims of gender-based violence face in the reporting of their ordeals. Violence against women and girls (VAWG) appears to be normalised. Galtung’s (1990) theory of structural violence indicates that physical violence (assault) is a manifestation of cultural and structural violence interplay. It has been pointed out that in the Sesotho culture, the norm is that ‘*mosali u ngalla motseo*’ (a wife’s refuge is in the kitchen). This means that wife battering is sanctioned culturally, and in case such a woman feels abused, she can only lodge a claim in structures that operate under the doctrine that battering is not criminal. Thus, it is imperative to understand femicide (direct violence) as an outcome of the interplay of cultural and structural violence. Thus, in a way, it makes sense albeit sarcastically why women ‘*remain*’ silent. They endure prolonged abuse *not* because they enjoy the abuse but simply because they have no suitable space and structures to

report abuse – in cases where there are such structures and spaces, the researcher can state that they are pseudo anti-GBV spaces and structures because they lack capacity and are not victim-friendly.

### 5.3.3 Indirect Victim-Blaming

In the indirect victim-blaming technique, the perpetrator is described in positive terms such as *loving father*, or his status in society is forwarded such as *a senator*, or his *profession*, to mention a few strategies that the media uses in indirect victim-blaming. Balica, Marinescu and Balica (2020: 2) posit that indirect victim-blaming is achieved by describing the aggressor in positive terms, having financial difficulties, loss of control, and poor mental health (Meyers 1997; Taylor 2009; Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2011; Gillespie *et al.* 2013). This form of victim-blaming was seen to be used quite often in the analysed corpus. Two selected excerpts from LesothoTimes 2010 are: “Leribe cop shoots wife during disputes”, and “...the man was irate and he stabbed the wife to death”. Lentsoe La Basotho 2007 illustrates the indirect victim-blaming technique in use. In the case where the media foregrounds the perpetrator, one of the strategies is evoked.

In the first excerpt, the media tells the audience outright that the aggressor was the ‘*Cop*’. The immediate question is what was the wife’s profession? Who the deceased wife was, in terms of profession, was not mentioned in the whole news story. Why? This points to the fact that the media is resisting to accept that the removal of the notion that ‘*a woman’s place is in the kitchen*’ is long overdue. The historical position of women has shifted and they now partake in the public sphere. The ‘*housewife*’ tag has been removed not only in theory but also with legislative blueprints such as the Land Act 2010 (which secures women land rights) and the Legal capacity of Married Persons Act 2006 (which removed marital power). Perhaps it is intelligent to conclude that the media, in foregrounding the profession of the aggressor, un/consciously is contesting and cajoling (setting the agenda) the audience that the aggressor is an important figure within the society or community. Therein, the aggressor must have been provoked by the victim. Herein, the audience is initiated to the reasonable man and provocative woman doctrine (Rude 1999; Goldstein 2002; Monckton-Smith 2012). The reason why the aggressor’s status/title is inserted alternatively is to seek clemency for him from the audience, portraying him as a well-mannered important member of the society hence the need for exoneration. The victim’s social status or profession not being mentioned is too acute to be ignored. Perhaps for the purposes of this discussion, one can assume that the cop’s wife was a Professor in Cancer – her profession being mentioned would call for a different audience

reaction. Therefore, the omission of the victim's profession is a strategy to shift the whole focus on the status of the perpetrator. It was very bizarre that of all the fifty-four victims for the study, in only two instances was the profession of the victim ever mentioned. Could it be that all 50 victims were not formally employed or informally generating their income – the logic states 'no'. This is a systematic omission that solely seeks to set a public agenda that the public sphere is a territory for men only whilst women who partake in it should be construed as defiant.

The other strategy that is common in indirect victim-blaming is an embedded excuse next to the perpetrator's name or a textual excuse phrase. For instance, in the headline "A Leribe cop shoots wife during dispute" is a typical display of the strategy in question. The phrase 'during dispute' exemplifies how this strategy is engaged. These phrases matter not if they follow the perpetrator or precede it. One can consider an instance where they precede the perpetrator – "the man was irate and he stabbed his wife" (Lentsoe la Basotho, 2007). These excuses are meant sub/consciously to play to the psychology of the public in some way to try to justify and mitigate the heinous act of femicide thus exonerating the perpetrator.

#### **5.3.4 Pathologising the Perpetrator (aberration)**

The aberration frame appears to be one of the frames that is employed to background the perpetrator. In this frame, violence against women is framed as the outcome of mental breakdown, rage, or animal behaviour. Men's violence is framed to be understood through the lens of pathology (Isaacs and Mthembu 2018).

In instances where the media chose not to mention the perpetrator, there is a technique that is used. The use of metaphors is employed to set an agenda that will lead the audience to think differently about the perpetrator. For instance, the headline reads "Let's tame the beast". The metaphor 'beast' refers to the perpetrator. The perpetrator is animated or referred to as a mythical savage character to psychologically affect public demand for accountability. Easteal, Holland and Judd (2015: 106) argue that the media's choice to name the perpetrator is an ideological choice. The results are consistent with literature (Gillespie *et al.* 2013) that animating/pathologising the perpetrator as a beast, monster, or fiend or name-calling him as ripper frames him as 'other' which, in a way, stifles the audience in demanding him to account for his atrocities because he is '*not a human being*'. As Entman (1993) opines, frames in a news story diagnose the problem and prescribe the solution. Framing the perpetrator as a '*beast*' suggests that he should not be held accountable on account of being a human being who has an appreciation of right and wrong. He is purely an animal that acts on instinct as opposed to a

human being that acts on intelligence and cannot be subjected to laws of the land upon femicide transgression.

### **5.3.5 Exonerating the Perpetrator**

Exoneration of the perpetrator is a frame that, in a way, sums all the frames. The current media frames are steeped in deep heteropatriarchal ideas that seek to maintain the supremacy of men and sustain gender inequality. Any form of framing that attempts to obfuscate the motive and heinous killing, shields the responsibility from the perpetrator falling within the purview of exonerating the perpetrator. The use of passive language, and the misrepresentation and silencing of women is another strategy that is used in exonerating the perpetrator (Sweeney 2012; Jóhannsdóttir and Einarisdóttir 2015; Martin and Grüb 2016). For instance, “...they were both drunk” (LesothoTimes, 2013) is one of the examples of how the perpetrator is absolved and femicide is obfuscated as well as being trivialised. This frame sits in the cusp of the structural violence theory in the context of Basotho culture. In the hegemonic patriarchal culture of Basotho, women drinking is a practice that is culturally frowned upon and for the journalist to claim that ‘they were both drunk’ in a way cajoles the audience to overlook femicide and questions the victim’s cultural adherence and moral expectations.

This frame taps into what Johan Galtung, in his triangle of violence, posits that physical violence (visible violence) is a resultant of cultural and structural violence. Herein one sees the media tapping (un/consciously) into that knowledge that hegemonic patriarchal culture has double moral and behavioural standards. Highlighting that the victim and the perpetrator were drunk culturally insinuates that the victim was loose, careless, and deserved it. In a way, it is like stating that she ought to have not intoxicated herself or it matters not because she was drunk, and so was the perpetrator. This pattern of framing primes the audience to focus on the state of the victim and the perpetrator as opposed to focusing on the gratuitous femicide because of Basotho cultural default prescriptions to women.

### **5.3.6 Voice of Authority and Opinion**

There is a serial deficiency of voices behind femicide news stories. The orthodox approach to news stories of 5Ws and H appears not to be serving justice to femicide as a phenomenon and the victim as well as secondary victims (those left behind). One ‘W’ that addresses who appears to slant on the law enforcement agency to tell the story. The femicide corpus analysed virtually corroborates with the literature wherein reliance on one voice from the police is the only voice

(Meyers 1997; Bullock 2007; Sutherland *et al.* 2016; Branch 2019). The over-reliance on the police to give not only a voice on the story but opinion as well is a grave mistake from journalists. The police voice is a '*conduit*' in a way as they speak of what they have been told after the victim has been killed. Richards, Gillespie and Smith (2011: 183) stress that the importance of sources in femicide news stories cannot be overemphasised because they give a rounded view of the femicide.

What is wrong with voice of authority reliance? First and foremost, police are not gender experts but in the continuum of gender-based violence and femicide, are situated on the point of criminal procedure not commentary, opinion, or analysis. Their unilateral commentary shifts femicide from being a socio-political matter and restricts it to being only a criminal issue. Monckton-Smith (2012) vehemently maintains that symbiotic relations of the media and police amount to '*disinformation*'. Reflecting on the framing theory tenets, there is a selection of some aspects of perceived reality and making them more salient. Therefore, police opinion on femicide is on legal transgression thus there is a need for the opinion on femicide as a socio-political ill to avoid the risk of monopolising it as a legal issue. Perhaps also from the theoretical viewpoint, the structural violence theory maintains that violence can also be structural. The police, being an institution that is steeped in deep heteropatriarchal ideals, is not ideal to comment on gendered violence because it is '*one of the accused*'. A view of the selected excerpts includes:

- “Inspector Mphana said...” (Lentsoe la Basotho, 2006).
- “According to senior Inspector Lerato Motseki...” (Lesotho Times, 2016).

This is a window to the toxic symbiotic relation of the police and media where femicide news stories miss the expert opinion on the gendered aspects of femicide and family opinion to give femicide a much-needed historical background. Using only police voices and erasing other voices in femicide partially tells the tail-end of the story because it turns femicide into an accidental and isolated incident which is far from true. Femicide is a fatal end of episodes of physical violence that is anchored on cultural and structural violence, as the Galtung violence triangle maintains. Physical violence is only a visible outlook and for fairness, commentary/opinion should consider the underlying forms of violence such as cultural and structural in which police opinion has an acute deficiency.

Voice from authority makes femicide accidental and isolated events because the police only talk about legal matters devoid of socio-political matters of the incident. Had the close family



members of the victim and experts been involved in the making of the story, evidence would be given that prior to the killing, there were perpetual (precursors) incidences that lead to the ultimate killing. The police opinion is *'photographic'* – tells only what happened on that fateful day, and lacks what led to the killing. Hence why it is vital to include voices beyond that of the police since it gives a historical background of the phenomenon thus informing the interventions. The risk of police opinion is that the interventions will respond to tightening the laws only while a rounded opinion will diagnose that femicide is not a legal issue only but widely a socio-political issue that warrants socio-political intervention.

Lastly, the voice of authority frame erases the victim in the sense that the narrative from the police is about the perpetrator and the legal tenets that he has overstepped. In this frame, in the narrative, since it is about the perpetrator and the laws of the land, the victim is somehow backgrounded. This narrative framing leads the audience to think that there are only two parties in conflict, being the law and the perpetrator, whilst in reality, there is a victim who has prematurely and brutally lost her life.

### 5.3.7 Trespassing

This femicide frame of trespassing is manifested in the way the victim and the perpetrator were introduced. Basically, Basotho cultural prescriptions maintain that women belong to the private sphere and men belong to the public sphere. Therefore, women participation or representation in the public sphere is seen and construed as defiance that warrants appropriate force to reposition such a woman into her purported natural place which is in the kitchen. A mental mode of media always reclines to the default archaic expectation that it is an act of transgression for women to partake in the public sphere. This is evident in the text analysed and excerpts give testimony: “A former soldier with Lesotho Defence Force (LDF), Motloang Molapo, allegedly shot and killed his wife at Good Times Café last Saturday in what police suspect was a love triangle” (Lesotho Times, 23 April 2009).

In the above extract, the trespassing is achieved through mentioning the perpetrator by his profession as a *'former soldier...Motloang Molapo'* while the victim as *his wife and no mention of her name*. This form of framing makes salient the cultural expectation in this case that the job of the perpetrator is made known as well as mentioning him by name and the job of the victim and her name are simply omitted because the default mental mode is that the women are or should be *'housewives'*. This framing strategy is to silence the job of the victim which is quite interesting as to why it is not mentioned or ever highlighted. Coincidentally, in this

femicide, the researcher personally knows the victim and the perpetrator and they were both soldiers at the time of him killing her. Interestingly, the media chose to mention the perpetrator as a soldier but erased/omitted mentioning that the victim was a soldier as well. This behaviour is all too familiar in virtually all the cases analysed. The victims' jobs or professions are silent, and could it be that they were seen to have trespassed their defined stereotypical gender roles? The logical conclusion is yes, because even in the case where the perpetrator and the victim were both soldiers, the media fails to pick that out. The agenda that is set for the audience is that women are invisible hence their violations should remain as such. This frame dovetails with Butler (2010) assertion that women's lives are not liveable and grievable hence why they are easily disposable.

The other strategy employed is objectification and commodification of the victim in a trespassing frame to assert women as belonging rather than being individuals with human rights. The object or the commodity are inanimate items that are to be possessed. The manner in which the phrase '*his wife*' is constructed in a way makes it evident that the former soldier has killed his object. The victim reference frame sets the object/commodity agenda which in some way dehumanises the victim to be a mere belonging for the perpetrator. Thus this frame of trespassing ideologically pins women to their orthodox gender roles in the manner that they are presented in the news stories. In Turkey, femicide is framed as '*revolt killings*' (Cetin 2015) which dovetails with this frame of trespassing because that is where men kill women who revolt against male oppression and gender inequality. In her book entitled *Femicide in South Africa*, Nechama Brodie (2020: 19) echoes that one of the motives in killing women is to intimidate any other potential revolt by women to have jobs outside the home, drive cars, or stand up for their rights. It is important to understand that the femicide agenda is packaged in a manner so that the heinous killing is backgrounded.

### **5.3.8 Isolation**

The frame of isolation is another frame that came out of the analysis. Intimate partner violence is treated as an isolated event that is devoid of history (lacks background) of domestic violence (Taylor 2009; Branch 2019). This is manifested in the manner that intimate partner femicide is presented in the mainstream media. Literature indicated that presenting femicide in an episodic pattern as opposed to a thematic pattern is problematic. In this frame, the agenda set is that of the incidence without prior details or any surrounding factors that transpired before the intimate partner femicide. The analysed corpus indicated that in Lesotho, intimate partner femicide is still reported as in an episodic frame. Only the episode or the fatality incidence is reported –

what happened (through the orthodox 5Ws and H) – which features in Entman’s theory of structural violence where physical violence is the visible form of violence and sadly fails to appreciate and acknowledge cultural and structural violence (invisible forms of violence).

Isolation is further seen when the media does not bother to engage the diversity of voices in a femicide news story. Depending largely on the voice of the police and in some instances of the perpetrator indicate to what extent femicide is framed as an isolated event. The police voice only points to points of law with regards to the fatality and the perpetrator as well cannot dare to incriminate himself, thus on that note, he will respond to the matter as an accidental outcome. He cannot in a sane mind relate that this is an outcome of protracted and repeated episodes of abuse that he (the perpetrator) has been inflicting on the victim. In this manner, femicide is stripped of history and that adversely affects intervention that can be premised on that misguided picture. There is an un/deliberate media effort to frame and set the agenda of intimate partner femicide as an *out-of-the-blue* outcome that lacks any socio-political connection and implications. For instance, “Man kills wife: stabs her trying to stab another man” (Lentsoe la Basotho, 5-11 January 2012) is one headline that epitomises the framing of isolation.

In the above headline news story, the headlines set the agenda of one woman being killed. The agenda setting theory indicates that the public is given issues in a directive manner and how to think about them and proposed conclusions to be drawn. The headline frame is problematic: in a way, it obfuscates or negates the killing of the woman by inserting a clause that indicates that the man was trying to stab another man. That clause has the potential to set a different agenda to the audience as the focus and discussion may be drawn to the man who was stabbed, why he was stabbed, etc. This pattern of crafting headlines such as this isolate the killing of women by drawing the audience’s attention towards other issues. Interestingly, in the news story, there is no news of the man who was intended to be stabbed which qualifies the theory that indeed it is put in the headlines to dilute the public attention. Furthermore, in the news story under that same headline, there is another case of intimate partner femicide that is inserted as a filler. There is no connection outlined to the other case to draw similarities and the severity of the phenomenon of femicide.

The classical isolation frame is also highlighted below wherein there is a headline and news to follow:

- “Leribe cop shoots wife during disputes”

- “A 31-year-old man police officer from Leribe allegedly shot and killed his 28-year-old wife last week following a domestic dispute...”
  - “In a separate incident, a 29-year-old man from Mokhotlong also shot and killed his 27-year-old wife...”
  - “Meanwhile, Lena reports that an 18-year-old man yesterday was sentenced to two years imprisonment, or option of a M2,000 fine after he was convicted for housebreaking...”
- (Excerpts from Lesotho Times, 27 May 2010).

The researcher has adapted the lexeme ‘*multitap*’ to refer to this journalistic style. Multitap means that there is one headline but beneath it there are several news items that may be directly related to them or indirectly related. This journalistic style is problematic as it is visible from the above excerpt that the first paragraph of the news story corroborates with the headline but the second does not, and neither does the third which interestingly thematically is not and that undermines the severity of intimate partner femicide. Now the discussion of how the isolation frame is set would be on the two incidences multitapped under one headline. The journalist isolated the second femicide case completely first from the grammatical construction and presentation as it is stated ‘*in a separate incident...*’. Basically, this framing curtails the audience’s ability to connect this femicide to the above femicide case as a larger social problem but rather renders femicide as isolated sporadic cases. Isolation framing trivialises the magnitude of the problem (Jóhannsdóttir and Einarsdóttir 2015; Balica, Marinescu and Balica 2020).

A logical argument on the phrase ‘*in a separate incident...*’ could be that the phrase had spatial intention – to highlight that this other incidence took place in Mokhotlong whilst the previous one was in Leribe. That contention is problematic in two ways, firstly, there is no coordination with the headline that categorically states that ‘Leribe Cop...’ thus the perpetrator in the third incident is not from Leribe and secondly, not a police officer. Therefore, conflating the third incident under one headline clearly demonstrates the press’ lack of appreciation of the power of language in the construction of a problem and more importantly, how to prime the audience to react to the problem (Branch 2019).

Secondly, nowhere in the story line were the relationship of the two incidents mentioned or highlighted. Therefore, the thought that the introductory phrase’s intention was to highlight spatial issues is disqualified on account of the above points. The only logical conclusion herein is that femicide is framed as an isolated phenomenon. It is worrying that “the media consistently

portrays domestic violence as an individualized problem instead of a widespread social issue” (Richards, Gillespie and Smith 2014: 25).

### **5.3.9 Normalisation**

The frame of normalisation is one where the offender’s criminal behaviour towards the victim is normalised (Balica, Marinescu and Balica 2020: 18). The manner in which the agenda is set in a normalisation frame is such that femicide is framed as an isolated incidence and not a larger social problem. The press, in its failure to acknowledge femicide as a systemic social problem, fails to report it as the anticipated and normal outcome of a conflict between intimate partners (Branch 2019).

Femicide is a manifestation (physical violence – visible violence) of unresolved conflict between two parties. In the Galtung triangle of violence, femicide falls at the apex of the triangle meaning that it is a resultant of the cultural and structural violence. Now, why and how is femicide normalised? It has been highlighted that Lesotho is a patriarchal state like many other states where the status of women is structurally and institutionally minor. To make matters worse in Lesotho, the minority status of women was legislated in the Laws of Lerotholi albeit the Equality of Married Persons Act of 2006 has recently repealed that marital power thus granting women equal status with men. However, it is inevitable that vestiges from the practice of attitudes still remain large. This reflects perfectly in the framing of femicide because for far too long women’s rights were not human rights. Therefore, the media frames their abuse as normal or business as usual.

Femicide framing as a normal occurrence is consistent with the framing of homosexuality, as evidenced by the study of Kahur who looked at how homosexuality is framed in the American press (Namusoga 2016). In Juárez, Browne (2017: 50) maintains that violence is normal and femicide is the accepted endured outcome. The framing of any matter is significant in how it is understood by the audience. Isaacs and Mthembu (2018) study is consistent with the results albeit they were looking at the media’s social representation of male perpetrators, and they found that the press was presenting violence as an expected outcome that ought to be attributed to a justice breakdown or mental breakdown of the perpetrator.

## 5.4 Femicide: Individual Pathology or Social Problem

The third objective of the study is to look broadly on intimate partner femicide as to how and why it is reported as an individual pathology or a social problem. In a way, this objective was to sum the frames or condense them to precisely position the state of the social representation of femicide, therein informing interventions from policy to press capacity building moving forward. The researcher contends that femicide is an outcome of misogyny and patriarchy – it is the systemic nature of patriarchy and misogyny that not only support but sanction violence of women from the private to public sphere (Meyers 1997; Taylor 2009; Mathews 2010; Monckton-Smith 2012; Sutherland *et al.* 2015). Hence why the researcher thought it is prudent to establish if a femicide agenda is framed as an individual pathology or a social problem to inform ways of new thinking in terms of policy and capacitation.

The reviewed literature categorically indicated that in Violence Against Women and Femicide (VAWF), its agenda is set and framed as an individual pathology rather than being framed as a bigger socio-political problem (Taylor 2009; Gillespie *et al.* 2013; Branch 2019; Spies 2020). Then the question is how is femicide presented as an individual pathology. It has been mentioned that this section attempts to consolidate the understanding of the social representation of intimate partner femicide in the media. The strategies that the press engages in representing femicide are basically the frames that they use which speak to the overall understanding of how femicide is re/presented. The frames that came from corpus analysis: isolation frame, victims blaming, exoneration of perpetrator, normalisation, trespassing, voice of authority, and pathologising the perpetrator lead to one conclusion that the Lesotho press media reports intimate partner femicide as an individual pathology as opposed to being reported as a bigger social problem not because there is a fantasy for it to be so but for the fact that it is. The results of the Lesotho press media corroborate with reviewed literature that indicate that intimate partner femicide is largely reported as an individual pathology rather than a public health and socio-political problem (Anderson 2017; Branch 2019; Johnson *et al.* 2019; Spies 2020).

The framing of intimate partner femicide ignores the social problem of intimate partner femicide thus relegates it to be individual pathology (Anderson 2017). This is achieved through agenda setting and framing. The agenda setting theory is about the ability of media through choice, prominence, and repetition of stories and issues to suggest to the public what matters and what to think about (McCombs and Shaw 1972; Miller and LaPoe 2016; Vargo, Guo and

Amazeen 2017). Framing is Erving Goffman's (1974) theory that posits that selections of particular aspects of the story are given salience in text to effect a desired communication and understanding about the issue. In social re/presentation of intimate partner femicide, the study, using the agenda setting and framing theories, has discovered that the Lesotho media re/present femicide as an individual pathology and not as a social problem.

This conclusion is anchored on the fact that femicide in Lesotho media is framed as episodic instead of thematic. Episodic means that it is reported as an event-based outcome that does not have a domestic violence background (Adebayo 2015; Namusoga 2016; Sutherland *et al.* 2016). Episodic framing is problematic on account that it narrowly focuses on discrete incidents and completely ignores social overarching aspects of the femicide. This is critical and key in the social re/presentation of femicide because framing has an impact on how femicide is understood, where the public will locate the problem and responsibility, and the interventions thereof. A lack of thematic framing of femicide suggests that the press is missing the opportunity to accord femicide a proper re/presentation. Gender-based violence in episodic framing is not part of femicide whilst in thematic framing, gender-based violence is key and the departure point. Thematic framing of femicide will bring to focus misogyny and patriarchy as anchored on gender-based violence that leads to femicide. This approach is ideal as it corresponds to Galtung's triangle of violence: it is logical to understand that episodic framing of femicide narrowly focuses on physical violence (visible) whilst thematic framing takes into consideration invisible factors such as misogyny and patriarchy as enablers embedded in cultural and structural streams.

## **5.5 Chapter Summary**

This section has deliberated on the frames that Lesotho media engages in the re/presentation of intimate partner femicide. The frames that Lesotho media uses are similar to that which literature has highlighted: voice of authority and opinion, normalisation, blame and responsibility, exonerating the perpetrator, trespassing, pathologising the perpetrator, and isolation. That which ties together all these frames is that they are all engineered to perpetuate and sustain misogyny and defend patriarchy. It is so because the social representation of femicide in Lesotho as per the analysed corpus and literature corroborate that femicide framing conclusively fails to challenge male violence to women but rather blames women for challenging misogynistic and patriarchal oppressions. Media agenda and framing in Lesotho

and elsewhere in literature – in South Africa (Spies 2020), Mexico (Branch 2019), Botswana (Jankey 2009), Turkey (Cetin 2015), to mention a few – have indicated that the femicide agenda is framed to an isolated event that is individual rather than a bigger social problem.



## CHAPTER 6: THE TRAINING

### 6.1 Introduction

Good journalism is difficult to undertake and most importantly at the time of tragedy. There is limited time and space, and key informants reserve their opinions in trepidation. This is a time when journalists need to tap into and adhere to their standards to deliver not only timely but accurate messages about the tragedies. Journalists need to respond to the call of informing the public about the tragedy and equally respond to the call of informing action and reaction post tragedy (policy and interventions implication). This is the role of journalism to assist the public with necessary but accurate information because people have an insatiable need for news, especially in times of crisis.

Reporters need to appreciate the dynamics around femicide, and why and how it happens. In this manner, journalists will be in a position to make the public aware of the precursors of femicide, femicide, and its dynamics.

This is the outcome of the analysis of the two selected newspaper archives (Lesotho Times and Lentsoe la Basotho) from 2006-2010 as well as interviews and focus group discussions held to determine the frame of intimate partner femicide in Lesotho. This training of journalists on gender femicide framing is purely an introduction to assist journalists on how to consciously set the agenda and frame femicide in a manner that is gender-sensitive and empowering to all victims as well as holding accountable the perpetrator and the society at large with the intention to influence interventions and policy (see Appendix E for the training guide). The objectives of the training were:

- To challenge the normalisation of GBVF in news content through discourse and text
- To capacitate journalists to set agenda and framing GBVF in news stories from a Human Rights Based Approach and Gender Justice
- To capacitate journalists to write victim-oriented news stories from different voices and orientations

#### Methodology

The training adopted a participatory format because it is that type of atmosphere where every experience and all ideas are valued. Since the study is action research, where the practice is key, the inputs of the journalists are fundamental as people on the ground. The participatory approach also offers an opportunity for participants to learn from each other more importantly from a practical perspective as opposed to a theoretical perspective.

#### Pedagogical Format

The training was a compact of three full days that took place at Victory Hall. The researcher must point out that Covid-19 added to the challenges; health protocols were also another dimension to take care of besides the finances. The training started at 0900Hrs to 1600Hrs. There was a tea-break for 30 minutes and lunch for 1 hour. The researcher was the lead facilitator and other facilitation was done by representation from the Lesotho Council of Non-Governmental Organization, Mrs Mantsalla Ramakhula; the MISA Lesotho Chairperson, Mr Lekhetho Ntsukunyane; and Ms Luxolo Matomela (GIZ South Africa) who joined the group together with Ms Pinki Manong-Mokuena (GIZ Lesotho) via Zoom. Last was Mr Ntheka Matobo from the Ministry of Gender and Sport, Youth and Recreation (MGYSR).

#### Who was in?

The participants for this training session were journalists from print and broadcast media who have been populated by MISA Lesotho as its current and active affiliates. The participants were:

- Minimum Diploma holders
- Currently working with media house/s

Table 6.1 presents the outlook on training participants.

**Table 6.1:** Training Participants Outlook.

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Media house</b>	<b>Total</b>
Female	16	Broadcast	6
Male	9	Press	19

#### Training Rules

The rules of Dos and Don'ts were basic rubrics:

- Respect individual views
- No cell phones
- All discussed here remains confidential
- No wrong or right answer

### Unit Pattern

The training constituted six units:

- Unit 1 – Gender and Development nexus
- Unit 2 – Journalism and Development
- Unit 3 – Conceptualisation
- Unit 4 – Theories
- Unit 5 – Framing Models
- Unit 6 – Gender-Sensitive Journalism

Figure 6.1 depicts workshop participants



**Figure 6.1: Workshop Participants**

## **6.2 Unit 1: Gender and Development Nexus**

In this section, the journalists were introduced to three fundamental concepts being: sex, gender, and desire. This was done in order to ground each participant in the understanding of these concepts because they are ultimately pertinent to intimate partner femicide. How they set the agenda and framed femicide is informed partly by their comprehensive understanding of these basic concepts.

There was first a list of roles that were projected for them to sort out the role that they deemed appropriate for men and women and thereafter, there was a brief discussion on why they had

such views. This gender appreciation assessment was done in order to establish participants' understanding of gender and gender roles. The exercise was successful and the participants demonstrated sufficient knowledge and understanding of gender and gender roles. Their understanding was then adjusted to see the link between the three concepts, as defined by Judith Butler as the heterosexual matrix or compulsory order of sex (Butler 1990). In this unit, the focus was more on imparting the understanding that '*biology is not destiny*'. For example, with regards to sex, it was emphasised that, in as much as it is determined by genitalia, that is not conclusive because gonads and chromosomes are some aspects that constitute the sex of an individual but are not considered in the determination. It was also discussed that sex does not determine the gender of oneself but society appears to do that. It was a breakthrough when the facilitator indicated that gender is a *performance* and a benign coercion that an individual does not have choice to self-define. Lastly, desire was discussed as the expected outcome from sex and gender. That is, society expects and has attempted to normalise attraction from the opposite sex. Same-sex attraction has been labelled as immoral and defiant. The discussion was lively and a common understanding was reached that social constructions are not to be understood and viewed as *ends* but simply as *means* that can be reconsidered with regards to how watertight they are. Figure 6.2 depicts the compulsory order or heterosexual matrix.

### COMPULSORY ORDER/HETEROSEXUAL MATRIX

SEX	GENDER	DESIRE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ANATOMICAL BODY PARTS THAT ONE HAS: VAGINA &amp; PENIS ***</li> <li>• (SEX IS A JUST A TRAIT OF BEING HUMAN, BUT SEX DOES NOT DETERMINE WHAT GENDER ONE CAN BECOME)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SOCIALLY CONSTRUCTED PERFORMANCE THAT MAKES ONE APPEAR RECOGNIZABLY MALE OR FEMALE TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC</li> <li>• PERFORMANCE IS NOT ACTIVE CHOICE - IS IT A BENIGN COERCION - IS GENDER ANTICIPATION, REPETITION, RITUAL?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SEXUALITY: SEXUAL EXPRESSION- BIOLOGICAL, EROTIC, PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, SOCIAL, etc.</li> </ul>

### **Figure 6.2: Compulsory Order / Heterosexual Matrix**

In this section, a brief summary and discussion of development paradigms was highlighted. The intention of this discussion was to introduce participants to the development phases in respect of gender such that they can begin to appreciate the intersection of development and gender as concepts that have, from time immemorial, been inseparable.

The three development phases introduced were Women in Development (WID), Women and Development (WAD), and Gender and Development (GAD). This introduction was successful since the participants appreciated the intersection of gender and development. The transition from WID (1970s) viewed women in isolation to men and overlooked care work or unpaid labour. The subsequent paradigm of WAD (1970s) was also critiqued that it fails to take into consideration the lives of women and their reproductive roles. The current paradigm of GAD (1980s) is a response to the two previous paradigms and it seeks to transform social relations between men and women. It is an approach that focuses on institutional and structural reform to achieve gender equality and justice.

Last in this section, the participants were introduced to two types of needs: practical and strategic needs. This was intended to lead participants to understand that in the agenda setting and framing of this gendered killing, they ought to understand the importance of setting the agenda and building frames that will secure strategic needs. Figure 6.3 depicts participants in group work



**Figure 6.3: Workshop participants in group work**

## **6.3 Unit 2: Journalism and Development**

### Why Journalism

- To use gender as an analytical framework for development
- To prioritise development content to be inclusive of women's issues (diversity)
- To effect change in comprehension of power and its custodians (sites of power, finance, religion, education, etc.)

### Gender: an axle of struggle

The relationship is drawn from previous development paradigms that gender was a hinge on all of them. The participants were asked how important is consideration of gender in their reporting – largely, they responded that it is key to see and represent an issue from both gender perspectives. The deliberations were then elevated to the discussion of the impact and implications of awareness or omission of gender in reporting intimate partner femicide.

The researcher herein wanted the participants to see women's and children's rights as inherent of human rights since femicide is a gendered killing and leaves gendered grief.

### Content

The research then moved to the format of femicide content. The researcher introduced intersectionality as a concept and the need to adopt intersectional journalism where individuals' social and political identities intersect to create a unique set of privileges and discriminations. The researcher introduced to the participants how social aspects such as gender, sex, class, sexuality, and race need to be noted in setting agenda and framing intimate partner femicide.

The participants were urged to:

- Challenge patriarchy and male privilege
- Interpret development through a gendered lens
- Conceive of development as social re-distribution of resources and power

Figure 6.4 Facilitator addressing participants



Figure 6.4: Researcher addressing participants

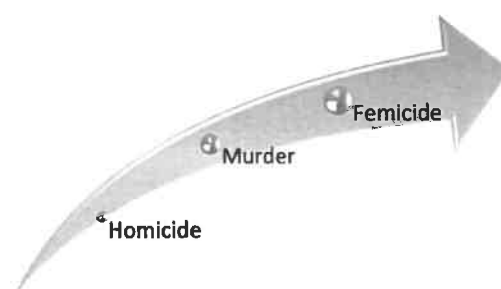
## 6.4 Unit 3: Conceptualisation

‘Personal is Political’: Why is it fundamental to classify this killing as femicide?

This unit introduced the participants to the importance of language as a tool that is inherent of power, re/produces power as well as distributes it and further creates social characters. The importance of language was underlined as to how it can create powerful characters or

disempower characters. The participants were introduced to the importance of calling these killings of women femicide – to precisely raise the plight of victims and potential victims.

The discussion of the continuum of killings classification was discussed and the importance of why it is necessary to transition from generalised homicide to specific femicide was outlined. Figure 6.5 depicts killing continuum



**Figure 6.5: Killing Continuum**

### Getting the Fundamentals Right

#### 5Ws & H

The cardinal point of every journalist is that the story must at all times respond to: who, what, where, when, why, and how, as presented in Table 6.2. The researcher highlighted that this orthodox approach can still be used but is innovatively adapted to be gender-sensitive.

**Table 6.2: Who, what, where, when, why, and how of Journalism.**

WHO: Who should be concerned: all (journalists, editors, managers, etc.). who is missing from the story
WHAT: what is the context, issues of gender to be incorporated to put a story in a fair balanced manner for women and men
WHERE: everywhere – at managerial level, editorial level, where information is gathered, where information is processed
WHEN: every time – there should be awareness of when to use racial, ethnic terms. When to mention gender of victim/perpetrator
WHY: there has to be solid reason why certain issues are included or excluded
HOW: Achieved through – conscious selective sources, use gender-sensitive language, balanced representation of women & men, no stereotypes

### No bare facts

In this section, the participants were briefed on why it is paramount for femicide to have context – if barely reported, the audience is likely to leanly understand femicide as an isolated outcome or as being pathological. Contemporary journalism should move beyond trails of orthodox journalism and provide audiences with more than just incidences and numbers, and present



more background information to sufficiently inform policy and interventions. Gender-sensitive journalism adopts an intersectional approach to every issue. Gender-sensitive journalism is that kind of reportage style that challenges the existing status quo and offers the audiences news that is reliable, diverse, and factual. Figure 6.6 depicts Facilitator addressing participants



**Figure 6.6: Facilitator addressing the participants**

## **6.5 Unit 4: Theories**

*Agenda Setting Theory (Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, 1972)*

### Synopsis

Central to the agenda setting theory is that the media have no business in telling the public what to think but their core business is to suggest to the public what to think about (setting an agenda) and how to think about it, and more importantly, channel conclusions and opinions.

Historical background of Agenda Setting Theory (Town Criers & Lipmann 1922).

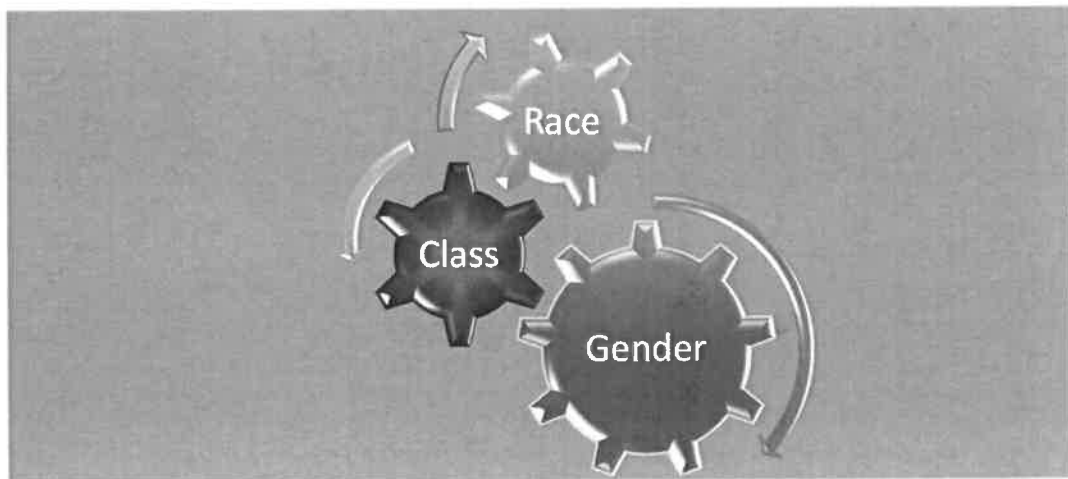
The researcher indicated that agenda in Lesotho's cultural context was earlier set by town criers prior to the establishment of media in today's context. It was mentioned that the consistent presentation of and selected aspects of an issue become a public agenda (emphasis, amount of airtime, frequency, positioning, and depth of a news story). This is achieved by either inclusion

or exclusion (omission) of certain aspects. It was also indicated that agenda or frames can be un/conscious (diction and syntax).

#### How is the agenda set?

It is set through text – discourse (semiotic, diction), rhetoric, metaphors, etc.

Figure 6.7 depicts the factors that influence agenda.



**Figure 6.7: What influences agenda?**

Example: Oscar Pistorius murder of Reeva Steenkamp versus Donald Sebolai murder of Dolly Tshabalala.

#### Effects of Agenda Setting

Journalists have the privilege to select certain attributes of the story and give them emphasis and salience:

- Informing opinion (reportage angle/position – accomplice versus activist).
- Priming (targeting audience memory – frame intimate partner femicide in a manner that resonates with culture or prior knowledge). He killed her for poorly cooked food (Lesotho Times) – this framing is a typical example that aimed to stimulate audience gender roles not highlighting the heinous act of killing.
- Shaping public opinion (selecting certain attributes and putting more emphasis often deflecting/trivialising the core issue).

*Framing Theory (Erving Goffman, 1974)*

#### Synopsis

Framing is understood to be the second level of agenda setting – to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in text with an intention to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation.

#### Historical background

Framing comes from photography and cinematography, referring to the angle of the camera, thus it applies to journalism (the individual behind the pen and microphone).

#### Microconstruct and macroconstruct

Microconstruct (opinion is formed upon first contact with the issue) versus macroconstruct (issue resonates with what the audience already knows – e.g. Lentsoe la Basotho (03 February 2009): Soldier kills wife, The Times: *Oscar's darkest day*).

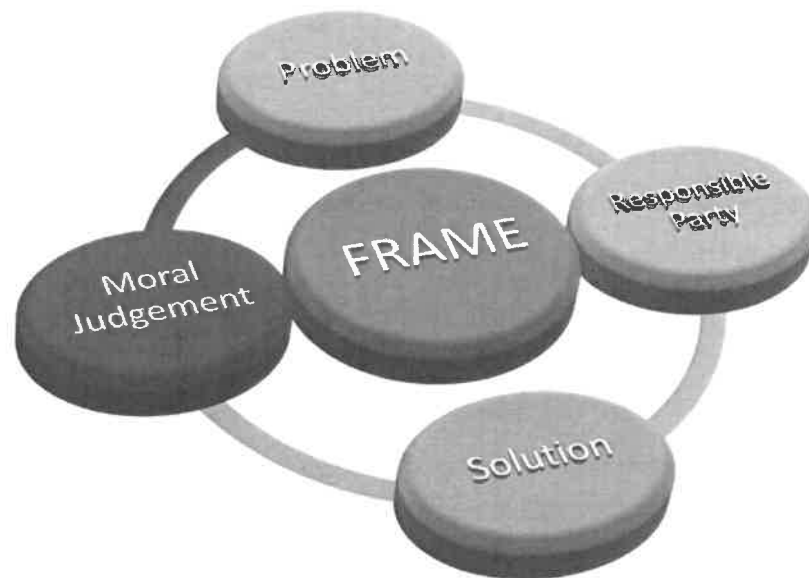
Figure 6.8 depicts Participants during workshop



**Figure 6.8: Participants during workshop**

## **6.6 Unit 5: Framing Models**

In this section, the participants were addressed about Robert Entman's frame model where they were introduced to what frames are and how they work. Frames suggest what the problem is, which party is responsible, possible solutions, and the moral judgement. This made the participants excited to see that how they tell a story of femicide will suggest where the problem is – they can frame the problem not to be the killing but a weak criminal justice system or the mental health of the perpetrator. Figure 6.9 depicts a framing model



**Figure 6.9: Framing Mode**

Shanto Iyengar – forms of frames:

- Episodic – News as stand alone
- Thematic – News part of the broader spectrum

Under this theme, two forms of framing, being episodic and thematic, were discussed. Shanto Iyengar forms of frames is added as part of learning to highlight to the journalists that framing has two forms: episodic and thematic. They learned and compared the two forms how they convey the issue and ultimately the views the audience derive in any case either of them is used. It was imparted to the participants that episodic framing is reporting femicide as an isolated incidence, while thematic framing looks before and after the incidence of the killing. Figure 6.10 depicts participants in group discussion



**Figure 6.10: Participants group discussion**

## **6.7 Unit 6: Gender-Sensitive Journalism**

### *Activity 1*

#### Case Study

The participants were divided into two groups and tasked to evaluate a given article (Case study may accessed here: <https://lestimes.com/man-kills-girlfriend-over-poorly-cooked-food/>).

Points for consideration included:

- Identify gender representation
- Identify language use
- How many sources (voices)
- Which framing model is employed: episodic or thematic
- Suggest alternative article presentation

#### Presentations and Comments

Each group made a vivid presentation that covered key points of the article. They both observed that the language used is not neutral and gender-sensitive. The framing that is employed is episodic as opposed to thematic which presents the issue in a broader manner. The comments from the two groups were that perhaps it was time that journalists take a conscious step to produce news articles that are more gender-sensitive and those that centre around the victim as well as seeking justice for the victim.



## **CHAPTER 7: EVALUATION OF TRAINING**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the training that the journalists underwent. The intention is to evaluate the pedagogy (as well as the training content) and the assimilation of the training content. Basically, the training aimed to assist journalists on gender-sensitive agenda setting and framing of intimate partner femicide.

### **7.2 Evaluation Procedure**

The evaluation is twofold: the process and impact evaluation.

#### **7.2.1 Process Evaluation**

Process evaluation is where the researcher aims to measure the training from the facilitator's perspective. That is, aspects of the training such as content, pedagogy, target audience, and objectives of the training are also reflected on.

##### **(a) Content**

In the researcher's considered opinion, the content of the training was suitable for the target audience. Taking into consideration that the training was anchored on their day-to-day practice as journalists, the content also brought a consciousness on the use of language. The content was packaged such that it re/awakened them to the fact that language is not only a tool for communication but inherently has a power and ability to effect a desired response. Thus, the content was basically a summation of capacitation gaps exposed by reviewed literature and data collected and analysed. The content of the training was divided into six units, namely:

1. *Gender and Development* – the aim here was to assist journalists to appreciate the intersection of gender and development, and how the two concepts interact and impact each other.
2. *Conceptualisation* – this unit was setting the scene for gender-sensitive journalism in intimate partner femicide. The political motivation of identifying these gendered killings as femicide, as opposed to murder or homicide, was one key aspect of this unit.

3. *Journalism and Development* – this unit’s aim was to link how and why journalism matters in the gender and development confluence.
4. *Theories* – two key theories that are the pillars for the training were introduced to the participants: the agenda setting theory by McCombs and Shaw (1972), and the framing theory by Erving Goffman (1974). A theoretical outlook was used to anchor participants to appreciate agenda setting and the framing of issues with particular interest on femicide.
5. *Framing Models* – Shanto Iyengar’s framing model of news was introduced. Episodic and thematic models were explained, where the former refers to news as standalone and the latter to news in broader aspects. The discussion highlighted the need to report IPF within the thematic model because it is not an isolated outcome – it is an outcome of episodes of GBV.
6. *Gender-Sensitive Journalism* – this was the last unit that looked at what the concept of gender-sensitive journalism looks like in practice. There was a media content creation and analysis of it to see how gender-sensitive content appears. There was also sharing of media tips as guiding posts to writing a gender-sensitive news article.

On reflection, the content was satisfactory to urge and stimulate journalists to report IPF in a gender-sensitive manner, as a matter of social and public health concern and most importantly, not as an isolated outcome.

#### **(b) Target Audience**

The audience selection was facilitated by MISA Lesotho with the instruction from the facilitator that it be a journalist with a minimum academic qualification of a diploma and obviously being an affiliate of MISA Lesotho as well as currently being with media house/s. It was highlighted that the selection be inclusive as much as possible. Twenty-five (25) participants took part in the study which was a fair number taking into consideration Covid-19 regulations. MISA Lesotho wrote an invitation to media houses to nominate participants for the training. An overall evaluation of the participants’ designation was unsatisfactory because they were all junior journalists – no editor was part of the training which in itself is potentially a ‘zero-sum’ exercise because ultimately, the editors and administrators have a final say on the news content.

#### **(c) Objectives**

The objective of the training was informed by the reviewed literature as well as the data collected (the newspaper archives, interviews, and focus group discussions with journalists). In



a way, besides that it was mandatory for the thesis to undertake an action research approach, the thesis was a response to capacitate journalists on the need for gender-sensitive journalism and its importance for sensitive and emotional matters of intimate partner femicide. The objectives were achieved although the researcher admit much could have been done had it not been Covid-19 disruption and limited time. Therefore, it is fair to admit and acknowledge that the achievement of the objectives was not wholly satisfactory because the training was somehow philosophical. That is, it was challenging participants' stereotypes, *normalised anomalies*, as well as cultural dispositions all located in language use and the prescription being the same language as a remedy.

More time and exercise could have been appreciated to hone closely on how language in journalism becomes problematic and how the very same language is prescribed as a corrective measure. However, time and resources were not friendly, so to speak.

In conclusion, for the process evaluation, if one asks: given time and resources, will it be necessary to repeat the training, perhaps on a larger scale? The answer would be an emphatic 'YES!'.

### **7.2.2 Impact Evaluation**

In any training undertaken, measuring the immediate effects of the training is called impact evaluation. It is an assessment that is duly done to determine changes to the training of participants in relation to the set training objectives. Impact evaluation is mainly an attempt to assess the effectiveness of the training with the view to improve intervention (James and Kirkpatrick 2016). A classic training evaluation of questionnaires after the training was not engaged by the researcher because trainees often get excited after training and their responses may not necessarily be valid. Muchemwa (2015: 7) corroborates that immediate post-training assessment produces a '*feel good*' effect thus it is advisable not to undertake it. Instead, the researcher decided to be practical and opted for critical discourse analysis of purposively selected journalists' content to determine if their reportage embraced aspects of the training post the training. Basically, the analysis looked at whether the journalists had adopted a gender-sensitive journalism approach to their news content. There was a caveat in the evaluation in the sense that the researcher wanted to strictly evaluate the journalists who were trained and the possibility was that they could not be the ones to cover a femicide story if it occurred, or the femicide incident could not happen in the meantime.

Gender-sensitive journalism is an approach that is cautious about language and content, where the language is aware of gender and is empowering, and the content holistically looks at women participation and representation.

Table 7.1 presents the sampled articles.

**Table 7.1: Sampled Articles.**

S/N	SOURCE CODE	ARTICLE TITLE	DATE
1	JM1	i. Stakeholders discourse over e-learning ii. Villagers worried over sanitation vulnerabilities	13/Aug/'20 28/Aug/'20
2	JF1	i. Princess hands over dignity kits to girls and young women ii. First lady and ministry of gender wage war against women abuse	August 2020 August 2020
3	JF5	i. Robbed of their childhood ii. The battle to eat	04/Aug/'20 11/Aug/'20
4	JF9	i. Lerotholi student raped, murdered ii. Lesotho reopens the borders	17/06/'20 07/10/'20
5	JF11	i. All hail for the return of the abducted baby ii. Women in science sensitised on the impact of mercury on the environment	August 2020 August 2020
6	JF16	i. Leribe murder victim identified ii. Yet another heartless killing debases women's month commemorations	04/Aug/'20 19/Aug/'20

**(a) JM1 Articles**

The first story for JM1 was entitled '*stakeholders discourse over e-learning*' which was basically a meeting about e-learning based on the current status of the Covid-19 lockdown. The journalists did not consider women's plight in the e-learning discourse. The journalists were expected to consider the digital gender gap where women are a little behind. That is, e-learning is going to benefit men more than women taking into consideration that women are not as technologically savvy as men. The articles also did not take into consideration the household dynamics as one learns at home. Women, as a fact, still have many household chores, and learning at home would disadvantage them more than men.

The second article entitled '*villagers worried over sanitation vulnerabilities*' was also silent on the plight of women, taking into consideration that water and sanitation are closely related and

affect women more. For instance, women on period have no choice to observe hygienic standard with water. It is also a male-dominated voice although one would expect some voices of women in the water and sanitation discourse.

**(b) JF1**

In the article '*Princess hands over dignity kits to girls and young women*', the story, even as much as it was about mensural hygiene which is exclusively about women, failed to encapsulate their voices.

The second story entitled '*First lady and ministry of gender wage war against women abuse*' was not explicit in talking about women as victims. The abuse was just mentioned as something that affects both genders equally which is not the case – gender-based violence disproportionately affects women and should be framed as such. The frame also partially blames victims (women) as to why they are not reporting abuse. The frame is problematic in the sense that it partially blames women for their victimhood.

**(c) JF5**

The first article for this journalist is entitled '*robbed of their childhood*' and is about a child who was abused and married as a child-bride. It was a news story that was framed properly as the abuse was mentioned and named properly. The victim is distinguished as well as the perpetrator and how child marriage affects and infringes on the rights of children. The story had a wide representation of voices.

The second article was entitled '*the battle to eat*' which basically details the plight of teachers who work at private schools and who currently are not earning their salaries due to closure of schools on account of Covid-19 regulations. The article falls short of coming out clearly to look at the matter in a gendered lens. Due to the fact that the majority of teachers are women, one would expect the article to explicitly interrogate the state of unpaid salaries within the purview of women as a group that is disproportionately affected by this state of affairs. However, the representation of women voices is sufficient.

**(d) JF9**

The journalist in the article '*Lerotholi student raped, murdered*' gives an account of the student of Lerotholi Polytechnic being raped and a femicide incidence. The journalist however did not

mention or name the killing a femicide which was emphasised in the training. Referring to the murder as *barbaric* misleads the public and is a wrong diagnosis that will lead to a wrong prescription.

In the second story '*Lesotho reopens borders*', the journalist details protocols for border crossing after restrictions were partially lifted. The journalist did not adopt a gender-sensitive framing in the sense that economic inequality between men and women was not factored in the story. Since economic historical background has given men a head-start, they are more likely to afford paying for the Corona Virus certificates more than women, and that ought to be a frame of which to make note, that women are disadvantaged to cross the border as compared to men.

**(e) JF11**

The journalist's first-reviewed article is '*all hail for the return of the abducted baby*' which is about the story of the child who was abducted from her mother while she was doing grocery shopping. The framing of the story seriously excludes women discourse in the sense that the voices in the story are all male voices except that of the two females who only appeared by virtue of their position: one being the Minister of Social Development, Hon. Doti, and the second one being Free State Premier, Ms Motshemane.

The second article is entitled '*women in science sensitized on the impact of mercury on the environment*' which is about appreciation of women's participation in science and awareness raising of the hazardousness of mercury. The framing of the story is satisfactory because it takes into consideration the lack of women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) subjects in schools and careers. The story framing interrogates the barriers and opportunities for women to partake in STEM subjects and careers.

**(f) JF16**

The first article, '*Leribe murder victim identified*', is about intimate partner femicide but it fails to call it femicide as it was emphasised that there is a need to name it. The frame that is used in this article is that of victim blaming. In the article, the extra-marital affair of the victim is mentioned and that, on its own merit, agitates for the conclusion that the victim deserved it. The entire story was focused on the victim and framed her as a vulnerable individual who needed male-figure protection.

The second article was entitled '*yet another heartless killing debases women's month commemorations*' which is, or at least is expected to be, about the identification of the dismembered body of a murder victim. The article adopted that which the researcher called multi-tapping – that is, there is more than one story under this headline which is problematic and, in a way, obfuscates as well as lessens the scourge of men killing women. The framing was not properly executed. To start, the killing was not named intimate partner femicide, which is crucial as the training had emphasised. The headline does not follow gender-sensitive journalism guidelines that the headline must be in the active voice as well as clearly outlining that it is a femicide case. The storyline also does not frame this femicide within the context of the gender-based violence continuum but the frame used is that of normalisation. The story largely details the goriness of the incident and the perpetrator is shadowed.

#### **(g) Impact Assessment**

Honestly speaking, the impact is not very satisfactory. One would expect that the first expectation of the training be cleared without any hassle – that of calling it femicide. None of the journalists called it femicide; they all called it murder and barbaric acts. Perhaps they felt comfortable with what they were used to. There is also a thread to be considered that not all the journalists analysed reported cases of intimate partner femicide.

In cases where the news stories were general news stories, in the training they were exposed to how to apply the gender lens or rather become gender-sensitive to issues. The expectation was that they would approach news stories with a view of how women and men are affected by or benefit from every news content that they create. On this expectation, it was not exceedingly done but there are positive outcomes. In most stories, the approach was broad, a variety of voices were included, and the frames used were gender-sensitive.

### **7.3 Limitations**

The study adopted action research because the researcher wanted to produce, administer, and evaluate the intervention in an effort to change practice. The study produced a gender-sensitive journalism training guide where the journalists attended a workshop on it and thereafter it was evaluated. Theofanidis and Fountouki (2018: 156) maintain that limitations are potential weaknesses of the study that are out of the researcher's control. One of the limitations of this study was the unavailability of data: the police homicide data and radio program archives. The

researcher was only served with data for four districts out of eleven districts. The data for four districts was also not as comprehensive as the researcher would have desired. Homicide data from the police was aimed to triangulate data from the newspaper archives – that is, to see the extent of femicide as per objective one of the study and also to see whether the femicide reportage coverage matches the extent.

The radio program archives' unavailability (inaccessibility) was also another limitation dimension. The intention was to have radio program archives together with newspaper archives such that the design of the training guide would draw from both. However, the programs were not available and in some cases it was a matter of inaccessibility due to a lack of trust that the researcher sensed.

The other limitation of the study is that newspapers demand a certain level of literacy and that brings a question on the generalisability of the study. In an attempt to address this, the radio presenters were made part of the interviews, both the face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions, as well as the training.

#### **7.4 Validity and Reliability**

Lesotho media is structurally fluid and still in its infancy stage, or more precisely, has become stunted taking into consideration that the current media outlook continuum can, in the case of Lesotho, be traced as far back as the 1860s. Lesotho, with a population of 2 million and a media concentration of 21 radio stations and 11 local newspapers has a satisfactory media coverage per capita. The results of the study can, to a safe degree, be generalised to be the true reflection of media frames of femicide in the Lesotho mediascape. However, caution should be exercised with regards to the phenomenon of intimate partner femicide in that it is a *tip of an iceberg* because it was clear from this study that there is a serious incongruence with police data and what is reflected in media platforms. The framing of femicide can be generalised but it should not be conflated with the magnitude of femicide, as the two are separable issues.

Validity and reliability increase transparency of the research and guard against the researcher's biases. Validity is about what an instrument measures and how best such an instrument measures (Mohajan 2017: 1). In the case of this study, semi-structured interviews were carefully designed to be the guiding schedule for collection of data. There were personal interviews and group interviews (focus group discussions) that were undertaken. The two interviews were

carefully undertaken as a form of triangulation to guard against potential pitfalls in clean data. Personal interviews as well as group interviews have the potential to produce anxiety that may affect the responses thus there is a need to take both of them as a form of triangulation of the responses (Adebayo 2015). The fact that there is similarity in the responses to the literature and the results of the study is a seal of validity of the study.

Reliability is generally referred to as the ability of the data collection tool and techniques to produce the same and consistent results if replicated (Mohajan 2017). The data collection tool that the study engaged were interviews (personal and group) and the newspaper archives from 2006-2016 of the two selected national newspapers (Lesotho Times: Private, Lentsoe La Basotho: State ownership). There are two errors and biases that every researcher and research ought to take into consideration. The errors are participant error and researcher error. Participant error is any interference that may alter the participant response while researcher error is anything that may alter the researcher's interpretation of data. Researcher bias is any factor that triggers bias from the researcher in the recording of responses whilst participant bias is any factor that may produce undue response. In this study, the biases and the errors were duly guarded as all the responses were recorded and transcribed and the participants were engaged at the place and time convenient to them. However, the researcher must acknowledge that critical discourse analysis as a tool for analysis has inherent potential bias since the researcher is the one who chooses what to analyse such as words, phrases, and pictures.

In addition to ensuring that the study is valid and reliable, the researcher applied a tripartite theoretical framework (see Section 2.2 in Chapter 2) as the basis and a guiding framework for the study. The three theories applied were, in a way, complementing each other and giving more clarity to the study.

## CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

### 8.1 Introduction

The increase of gender-based violence is a phenomenon that is escalating globally and has become a major public health concern (Weil 2016; Ndlovu *et al.* 2020). Efforts globally are being rolled out to raise awareness and advocate for gender equality but it appears that more is needed to be done. The media, being the fourth republic, is not only strategic but key as well in addressing the issue of gender-based violence and femicide. Media framing of intimate partner femicide in Lesotho was the focus in order to determine how best the media can be used in the journey to reach gender equality and a violence-free society. Social representation of intimate partner femicide in the media has considerable implications on how the issue can be understood to be demanding urgent policy response and attention or it is a matter of business as usual. The manner of framing is key and that is why the study looked at the framing of femicide to establish if it is the framing that raises awareness and demands accountability or that which normalises and upholds this heinous violence on women. The study aimed at assisting journalists to adopt a gender-sensitive journalism approach in their reportage on intimate partner femicide. The objectives of the study were as follows:

1. Examine the motives, extent, and implications of intimate partner femicide.
2. Examine media frames in intimate partner femicide and their influence in the Lesotho context.
3. Analyse how the media reports intimate partner femicide: Individual Pathology or Social Problem.
4. Develop and test a training manual for journalists.
5. Undertake preliminary evaluation of the training manual.

The study reviewed intimate partner femicide newspaper archives, interviewed the journalists, and carried out focus group discussions to determine the content for capacitation. Since the study was action research, the cycles which are exploration, design, implementation, and evaluation were undertaken. The study was qualitative and the data collected was analysed using critical discourse analysis as a tool for analysis to determine the frames that are used in the re/presentation of intimate partner femicide.



## 8.2 Research Objectives

### 8.2.1 Examine the Motives, Extent, and Implications of Intimate Partner Femicide

The objective examined the motives, extent, and implications of intimate partner femicide in the context of Lesotho. The study first acknowledged that causes and motives have a hair-line difference and opted to use the term *motives* even though much of the reviewed literature has used *causes* because motives are about aspects that urge one to act out (being urged to act in a particular manner). It was pointed that the causes of gender-based violence and femicide are misogyny and patriarchy (Anderson 2017; Ndlovu *et al.* 2020; Nechama 2020).

The motives of intimate partner femicide were found to be patriarchy, a systemic subordination of women that is even legislated (Laws of Lerotholi). The Laws of Lerotholi stipulate that a woman is minor and as such, positions the man as superior who can even reprimand her which, in a way, sanctions violence. The patriarchal system as the motive for gender-based violence and femicide is consistent with literature from various backgrounds where in Turkey, it is manifested as revolt killings (Cetin 2015), in Botswana as passion killings (Jankey 2009), and in South Africa, every eight hours, a woman is killed (Abrahams *et al.* 2012). The second motive of violence against women is found to be an ineffective and unresponsive legislative framework. Literature indicates that the legislative framework appears not to be effective in addressing gender-based violence and femicide and in cases where there are legislative frameworks, there is a serious inadequacy of the criminal justice system in case management and successful convictions (Geldenhuis 2018). There is a global concern on the covert impunity when it comes to cases of gender-based violence and femicide (Dawson 2016). In Lesotho, the context is not promising since inequality is legislated in the Constitution in Section 18 (4) (c) where inheritance of chieftainship is exclusively set for males. It is a call for concern for social and gender justice if women are refused some positions of power and leadership. The other concern is the absence of an Counter Domestic Violence Act which means that legally speaking, in Lesotho, currently there is no such matter as domestic violence let alone femicide because everything is collapsed as assault under the Sexual Offence Act 2003.

The third motive of gender-based violence and femicide is '*the fall of the breadwinner crown*'. In archaic gender roles, women were on unpaid reproductive care work and men on paid productive work (Anderson 2017: 15). The contemporary world economic order has overturned this '*assumed natural order*' of things because women now can partake in the productive sphere as well. Women participating in the public sphere has caused the '*fall of the breadwinner*

*crown*’ because women too can now talk of financial independence. This came with frustration to men because monopoly of the public sphere was part of the pillars that propped patriarchy (Mathews, Jewkes and Abrahams 2015). The fourth motive of gender-based violence and femicide is alcohol and substance abuse (Johnson *et al.* 2019; Nechama 2020). The use of alcohol and substances was consistent with literature reviewed and the context of Lesotho.

The extent of femicide in other settings where there are laws specifically for gender-based violence and femicide can be measured, while in the context of Lesotho, it is impossible news because there is no law that acknowledges gender-based violence and femicide. Thus, there is no data on intimate partner femicide, and even assaults data in police records is not properly arranged. Thus, to summarise, the anecdotes that one can safely state are that cases of intimate partner femicide are indeed significant and visible but to which extent one can cautiously conclude that they are indeed significant.

The implications of femicide in Lesotho are succinctly summed by the commonwealth secretariat funded study in Lesotho that indicated that the cost of GBV is 5.5% of GDP in 2017 (Bazlul 2019). The implications are widespread but of note is the contagious violence to children, food insecurity, poor health, and environmental degradation, to mention a few.

### **8.2.2 Examine Media Frames in Intimate Partner Femicide and their influence in the Lesotho Context**

This objective was to establish the current media frame in intimate partner femicide in Lesotho media where two local newspapers were purposively selected and their archives from 2006-2016 were retrieved to analyse stories on femicide. The analysis of the frames was done using critical discourse analysis. The frames that are used in Lesotho media are: victim blaming and responsibility (direct and indirect), exonerating the perpetrator, voice of authority and opinion, trespassing, isolation, and normalisation. To frame basically is to select some aspects of the reality and make them more salient (Kuypers 2002; Choquette 2012). Media frames reviewed in the literature are consistent with the frames that are used in Lesotho – they all sustain and entrench gender-based power imbalances (Spies 2020). The framing of intimate partner femicide is the one that seeks to find fault in the victim, that which blames the system and structure of not being friendly to men (perpetrators), normalising violence against women, talking about femicide as an isolated incidence, and in the case where they covertly and partially put blame on the perpetrator, they will invoke sympathy for the perpetrator (Anderson 2017; Branch 2019). The framing, in this instance, takes a turn of that which Kate Manne sums up as

*himpathy* (2018), which is a narrative that by all means is seeking to protect the patriarchal system and immunises the perpetrator.

### **8.2.3 Analyse how the Media reports Intimate Partner Femicide: Individual Pathology or Social Problem**

The third objective was to analyse if intimate partner femicide is framed as an individual pathology or a social problem. In the previous objective where focus was on frames that are used, it transpired that one of the frames used is isolation which inevitably spells that femicide is framed as an isolated event unconnected to the entire continuum of abuse. Literature unequivocally affirms that intimate partner femicide is the outcome of protracted episodes of gender-based violence. Intimate partner femicide is not about men snapping (Monckton-Smith 2012; McCormick 2015; Spies 2020), meaning that it is an outcome of a series of acts of violence and abuse to which a victim has been subjected in a system that does not respond. In the framing of intimate partner femicide in all the fifty-four articles analysed, only two attempted to interrogate it beyond the perpetrator. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that femicide in Lesotho is framed as an individual problem which, in a way, has the potential to mislead policy and programming because, in essence, it is a public health issue.

### **8.2.4 Action Research**

The study used an action research design because it helps to formulate solutions that are practice-oriented (solution-oriented) and are shared by the researcher and the participants. That is, the solutions are tailored by both researcher and participants for the problem identified.

Having analysed the newspaper archives from two selected newspapers from 2006-2016 the basis of media framing of intimate partner femicide was solid as it was complemented by the reviewed literature. However, to achieve ownership and participation as tenets of action research, the participants were interviewed and engaged in focus group discussions to complement the literature and data from the newspaper archives. The first step in the cycle of action research is about planning. This is where ideas are generated or the problem is identified. In this study, a review of the literature and analysis of newspaper archives tentatively located the problem that was to be validated by interviews with participants and focus group discussions. The second stage in the cycle is designing where the content of the training manual was conceived being informed by literature and data from the newspaper archives, interviews, and focus group discussions. The third step is the implementation of the intervention which, in

this case, was a workshop on gender-sensitive journalism administered to twenty-five purposively selected journalists. The last step is evaluation of the intervention. Six selected journalists' articles (two articles per journalist (n=12)) were analysed to see if the objectives of the workshop were achieved. Generally, the articles were not satisfactorily gender-sensitive. The researcher should admit that perhaps the other challenge was that because femicide is something that the researcher could not wait to evaluate, in the intervention, the researcher taught them how to write in a gender-sensitive approach even if the article was not about femicide which, in hind sight, the researcher must admit that it was not well understood. Given time and resources, the researcher would very much appreciate to run the workshop again.

### **8.3 Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework that guided the study was anchored in three theories: agenda setting, framing, and structural violence. Central to the agenda setting theory by McCombs and Shaw (1972) is the media's capacity to suggest what the audience can think about and which conclusions to make and not necessarily what to talk about. Thus it was a significant framework to guide how best the media can suggest to the public what to think about in terms of violence against women and femicide.

The second theory employed was the framing theory by Goffman (1974). The framing theory is understood to be the second level of agenda setting where some aspects of reality are selected and given prominence. The selected aspects are emphasised thus presupposing to the audience that which warrants attention and matters most. This theory was important because in instances of intimate partner femicide, there is what the journalist decides becomes part of the news content and that which does not. Thus the framing theory offers theoretical tools of which elements of the story are most important and why.

The third theory is the structural violence theory by Galtung (1969) which interprets the interplay between cultural violence, structural violence, and physical violence. It was imperative to have these theoretical tools because intimate partner femicide albeit physical violence, it is anchored in structural violence and cultural violence. To highlight the consistency of this is on some motives of intimate partner femicide which is *the fall of the breadwinner crown*. Since the patriarchal system has reserved structurally the public sphere for men, this theory provides insights into understanding how that was violent to women. Furthermore,

pertinent to intimate partner violence and femicide is culture and this theory provides an understanding of its contribution to violence against women and their subordination.

#### **8.4 Avenues for further consideration**

There is a need to raise some possible avenues that this study has opened that were not entertained because the study had its own limitations. There is a need to embark on a qualitative study to analyse representations of perpetrators in the media. Perhaps the study can further be a comparative analysis with this study to establish the difference of frames to victims and perpetrators. This will, in a way, close the circuit of media framing of intimate partner femicide and comprehensively and conclusively inform interventions and policy.

#### **8.5 Conclusions**

The historical and cultural backgrounds of women in Lesotho are not apart from those of other women from the rest of the world. Oppression, subordination, commodification, and sexualisation are but some of the albatrosses that have been dragging women down since time immemorial. Friedan (1974) laments that women have been suffering from *a problem that has no name*. However, today the problem has been discovered and named to be gender-based violence that, if not interrupted, terminally ends in femicide. There have been intrepid endeavours in Lesotho to sign and ratify international protocols against gender-based violence and the enactment of laws nationally to address the scourge.

However, the attitudes and prejudice to women has not been consistent with the introduction of legislative frameworks and it is evident in the media representation of women. The analysed media indicated that the media frames intimate partner femicide in a manner that favours perpetrators and blames the victims. Intimate partner femicide is framed as episodic as opposed to thematic and as such it appears to be a once-off or out-of-the-blue event. The truth of the matter is that intimate partner violence is an outcome of gender-based violence that is, by its nature, a repetitive and diverse form of abuse. Therefore, to frame intimate partner femicide as episodic is a serious undermining and misunderstanding of the phenomenon and its deadly impacts. Govender (2015: 234) submits that subjective presentation (framing) of women is a serious destruction of the milestones that have been accomplished.

The six frames that were identified by the study include: blame, isolation, trespassing, voice of authority and opinion, sexualisation, and exonerating the perpetrator, and all of them have a thread of maintaining the *purity and sanity* of the perpetrator and shifting the blame to the

victim. This is purely from the fact that journalists are the products of the patriarchal society that not only views but understands men to be perfect and default, while women are imperfect and defiant. The framing of intimate partner femicide as a gendered crime reflects those inherent biases and blindness hence why it is important to capacitate journalists to use gender-sensitive language and positive frames in intimate partner femicide and in other discourses.

The study evaluated the extent and impact of femicide in Lesotho. This was a challenge because in Lesotho, gender-based violence is still an absent concept within the judicial and criminal justice system. All acts of gender-based violence are classified as assault under the Sexual Offence Act 2002. Therefore, it means that legally speaking, gender-based violence is not present, however, currently there is an anti-gender-based violence bill which is going to bring gender-based violence as an agenda item for the criminal justice system. Secondly, gender-based violence and femicide challenged the study and revealed that its lack of a tracking and monitoring system made it near impossible to establish the extent because there is no systematic recording and tracking of cases. A lack of data on gender-based violence and femicide makes a serious dent in the interventions and policy because data is a mandatory prerequisite for effective interventions.

Thirdly, the episodic approach is an approach that the media in Lesotho adopts in framing intimate partner femicide. The problem with episodic framing is that intimate partner femicide appears to be a once-off, trivial outcome that is individual rather than an ongoing and cumulative phenomenon (Monckton-Smith 2012: 41). Mellado (2013: 48) argues that episodic framing is problematic on account that previous episodes of abuse and other protection provisions are not incorporated and as such, intimate partner violence is understood to be isolated thus affecting the understanding of the phenomenon and interventions. Episodic framing masks intimate partner violence's pervasiveness and presents it as an event-based issue (Sutherland *et al.* 2016), an issue that does not warrant commitment and social intervention (Mellado 2013).

## **8.6 Recommendations**

The thesis, being a maiden scientific enquiry on the Lesotho mediascape in how intimate partner femicide is framed, is a breakthrough in terms of setting the stage for further scientific enquiries. Perhaps it is logical to point out from the onset that in this study, in as much as its focus was on media frames on intimate partner femicide, the training has assisted journalists to adopt a broad-based reporting on any news content. Event-based (episodic) reporting has been

highlighted to be an inadequate approach and thematic is the preferred reporting approach because it presents a bigger picture.

Media is dubbed the fourth republic or fourth pillar of democracy, hence media capacity is fundamental in maintaining healthy national affairs and most importantly, upholding and observing the rights of women and other vulnerable groups. Gender representations in a plethora of media platforms – from traditional to digital media – are of cardinal importance. The media plays a key role in checks and balances in the equality agenda and can re/produce narratives of empowerment and equality. On the background of this, it is very important to constantly keep training the media on gender-sensitive journalism for it to be on point in gender representation across all news content. The manner of media presenting women as the weaker sex, frail, and provocative, while on the other hand framing men as intelligent, strong, and the ideal sex ought to be rooted out by trainings and more capacity building of journalists to appreciate gender equality as an axle of human rights, economic prosperity, and social justice. Still on the aspect of training, the researcher cannot emphasise how much capacity is needed in the gender machinery in Lesotho. The researcher is an optimist, but the picture is worrying. There is a need for the Ministry of Gender to set up and have coordinated capacity training programs for gender machinery personnel – indigenous leaders, local councilors, police, and judiciary. It is unfathomable how even today the police, with their Child and Gender Protection Unit, still do not have a database of GBV cases and disaggregated data (a need for them to be proactive albeit there is no legislation specifically for GBV). In the absence of data, how GBV programming is done remains a mystery.

There is a pressing need to have appropriate laws and policies to address gender-based violence and femicide as well as media laws and policies to shape the mediascape in Lesotho. The researcher acknowledges that laws alone cannot address this scourge without investment and commitment to behavioural programming such as positive non-violent parenthood programmes. Laws in Lesotho do not explicitly talk about gender-based violence and femicide, therefore it is clear that whatever legislative instrument that is currently in use is the Sexual Offences Act of 2003. The problem with the Sexual Offences Act is that nowhere in all its sections does it explicitly mention or give reference to gender-based violence. Thus, all that is deemed to be gender-based violence is conflated under common assault and as such, gender-based violence aggressions are only *approximated* and also the sentencing is an *approximation* because there is no law for GBV, or legally speaking, in the *eyes, ears and mouth* of Lesotho, currently gender-based violence is a non-existent phenomenon. On this note, there is a binding need to speedily establish the Anti Domestic Violence Act. On the same token of establishing laws, there is a need to establish legal frameworks such as the Media Policy to solidify the mediascape

in Lesotho such that accountability may be established. In the absence of the Media Policy and other legislative frameworks, media operation is fluid and inimical to gender justice.

A last recommendation is the establishment of the Gender Commission (GC) as an oversight body mandated to oversee gender advocacy, mainstreaming, accountability, and monitoring of all institutional programs that are gender-sensitive and inclusive. A commission will undertake gender agenda in Lesotho more efficiently and adequately than the current set-up of the Ministry of Gender and Youth, Sport and Recreation because the commission will have powers to monitor all sister ministries without being accused of intruding and encroaching on their territorial mandates.

There is a need for not only media houses but also other institutions and bodies to have a gender policy. Currently, media houses in Lesotho do not have gender policy and policy void of relevant information means that news content is not guided by any framework but left to chance. In this era, gender inequality and women empowerment cannot be left to chance – there is a need to establish a systematic coordinated approach to address them hence gender policy is the blueprint that will provide direction in this regard.

## **8.7 Conclusion**

The history of Lesotho is unique and peculiar in the sense that it acknowledges and exalts male figures and most importantly, King Moshoeshoe 1. The researcher's feminist consciousness agitates him to enquire where are the '*sheroes*' of Lesotho and their '*herstory*'. The political erasure of women and their efforts need not be tolerated and as such the media must consciously note and re/present women in their media content as participants and not beneficiaries.

The media is still relevant as it was in the ancient times – it remains a *double-edged sword*. The media can be lethal and equally helpful. A typical case of where media can be lethal is in the Rwandan genocide experience where media agenda instigated the massacre of over a million Tutsis. However, the media has the power to change people's attitudes and sustain the change. A conscious decision by the media to frame women as equal partners with men is essential as well as framing precisely the gender-based violence and femicide. It is equally important to highlight the challenges that social media presents. It transcends national boundaries and control becomes a challenge. The social media spreads news quicker than the mainstream media and as such it is important to start on identifying influential pages and target administrators of such pages with trainings such as gender sensitive framing and peace journalism.



The study has lucidly diagnosed and catalogued media frames in femicide in Lesotho. Since it is a pioneering study on media frames in femicide, the study is a resourceful reference and a benchmark for scholarship on femicide and media. Episodic and thematic framing are two approaches in media framing, and Lesotho virtually uses episodic framing. Episodic framing is an '*event-based*' approach that locates intimate partner femicide as an incidental outcome. The journalists' training was crucial since it assisted them to appreciate thematic framing of intimate partner femicide since this approach precisely locates femicide as a fatal end of protracted episodes of gender-based violence that fatally ends with the killing. This approach is fundamental for the media to adopt because it has implications on programming and intervention.

There are seven media frames of intimate partner femicide in Lesotho analysed. All of them sustain stereotypes, do not challenge gender inequality and gender-based violence, nor advocate for gender justice. However, the training that was prepared for the journalists assisted them to be gender-sensitive in their reportage not only for intimate partner femicide cases but for their news content in general. A culture of positive social representation of women through the conscious and selective use of language was cultivated by the study.

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## APPENDIX A

### 1.11 INTERVIEW SCHEDULE –ADMINISTRATORS

#### 1. Opening

(Establish Rapport) [shake hands] My name is **Ramakoele Mosiuoa**, a **PhD Candidate from Durban University of Technology**, I have chosen you as one of the participants in my study. Your most welcome.

(Purpose) I would like to ask you some questions about your background, your education, some experiences you have in media, and to learn more about media and gender and the information will contribute to the study.

(Motivation) I hope to use this information to inform the design of Gender Sensitive Journalism Model (GSJM) to aid the use of media as peacebuilding tool.

(Frame-work) The interview is going to take about 30 minutes. Your free to decline answering any question or terminate the interview at your own volition.

(**Transition:** Let me begin by asking you some background questions)

1. Briefly, tell me who you are.
  - 1.1. Which media house do you work for and your position

(**Transition:** Let's get to the core business)

2. What's your view on violence against women leading to their deaths?
  - 2.1. How widespread is femicide (extent) in Lesotho?
  - 2.2. What are the implications of femicide?

(**Transition:** Let's look at the news stories about femicide)

3. What elements should a femicide story entail?
  - 3.1. Do you advocate for a different approach (frame) in reporting femicide or is it reported like any other news stories?
  - 3.2. Do you think journalist have enough capacity to report femicide? Elaborate please.
  - 3.3. Looking at the current reportage skill-level do you think stories of femicide are fair to perpetrators, victims and saviours?
  - 3.4. Do you see femicide news stories stimulating any public response? Why?
  - 3.5. As news administrator, how much important is circulation/listenership?
  - 3.6. Do you pattern news stories to stimulate circulation/listenership?



(**Transition:** We are wrapping-up now)

4. In which context do you see femicide news being reported- as individual problem or social problem? Elaborate.

4.1. In a femicide offence, who do you think should be held accountable and why?

**Probe:** Who is at fault

4.1. Any suggestions on alternative ways to report femicide?

**Thank you for your voluntary participation and may I reassure you that this information is going to be used anonymously in my study.**

Thank you.

## Appendix B

### Interview Schedule- Journalists

#### 1. Opening

(Establish Rapport) [shake hands] My name is **Ramakoele Mosiuoa**, a **PhD Candidate from Durban University of Technology**, I have chosen you as one of the participants in my study. Your most welcome.

(Purpose) I would like to ask you some questions about your background, your education, some experiences you have in media, and to learn more about media and gender and the information will contribute to the study.

(Motivation) I hope to use this information to inform the design of Gender Sensitive Journalism Model (GSJM) to aid the use of media as peacebuilding tool.

(Frame-work) The interview is going to take about 30 minutes. Your free to decline answering any question or terminate the interview at your own volition.

**(Transition:** Let me begin by asking you some background questions)

#### 1. Briefly tell me who you are.

1.1. Educational background.

1.2. Which media house are you from, position, how long have you been in media fraternity.

1.3. Growing up- what has been your dream job or profession?

**(Transition:** Let us move on to the next phase)

#### 2. Let us look at Domestic Violence: In general, what do you think are the causes of Violence Against Women (VAW)?

2.1. In your own opinion- do you think it affects all women irrespective of their background (e.g. educational & economic status) (**follow-up:** if it affects a certain group of women- why do you think it does)

2.2. Gender Based Violence fatally ends with murder- what are the implications of women being murdered (Femicide)

**(Transition:** Can we move on to femicide framing)

3. I want to believe that you have reported quite several different news-stories- do you adopt a same/different reporting approach in incidence of femicide and general issues such as cash heist? (**Probe-** if yes, why do you report them the same or different)
  - 3.1. As a journalist, let us be specific, how to you report femicide, any approach?
  - 3.2. Do you think that the way femicide is reported is sufficient and just to victims and saviours?
  - 3.3. Do you find femicide news stories clear or ambiguous? Elaborate.
  - 3.4. Let us look at the language used in reporting femicide- what are your thoughts on it.
  - 3.5. What is your opinion on the way femicide is reported- do you think femicides reports stimulate public opinion or sedate it.
  - 3.6. The way femicide is reported what influence does this reporting have on the public?

(**Transition:** Let us give a microscopic analysis of femicide stories in our media)

4. In femicide there are three actors: the perpetrator, the victim, and the society. In whose context among the three elements do you think media reports femicide? (**Probe:** in your opinion which context is ideal and why)
  - 4.1. Why do you think it is framed in that context? (**Probe:** What effect on the public do you think this context brings)
  - 4.2. '*It takes two to tango*' in your opinion do you think femicide is framed as individual pathology or bigger social problem?
  - 4.3. In your opinion how should it be framed and why?

**Thank you for your voluntary participation and may I reassure you that this information is going to be used anonymously in my study.**

**Thank you.**

## APPENDIX C

### Interview Schedule-Listener/Reader

#### 1. Opening

- A. (Establish Rapport) [shake hands] My name is **Ramakoele Mosiuoa**, a **PhD Candidate from Durban University of Technology**, I have chosen you as one of the participants in my study. Your most welcome.
  - B. (Purpose) I would like to ask you some questions about your background, your education, some experiences you have in media, and to learn more about media and gender and the information will contribute to the study.
  - C. (Motivation) I hope to use this information to inform the design of Gender Sensitive Journalism Model (GSJM) to aid the use of media as peacebuilding tool.
  - D. (Frame-work) The interview is going to take about 30 minutes. Your free to decline answering any question or terminate the interview at your own volition.
- (**Transition:** Let me begin by asking you some background questions)
- 5. Briefly tell me who you are.
    - 5.1. Educational background. [gender]
    - 5.2. How often do you read/listen to newspaper/radio?
  - 6. (**Transition:** Let us get to the core of our interview)
    - 6.1. What do you think are they causes of Violence Against Women (VAW)?
    - 6.2. Are all women potential victims of violence (femicide)- elaborate?
    - 6.3. It is apparent that women are victims, what are the implications of this violence in all?
    - 6.4. What is your view on the extent of femicide- elaborate
  - 7. (**Transition:** Shall we turn our focus to journalism & media)
    - 7.1. Do you consider coverage of VAW adequate- why?
    - 7.2. Is the coverage articulate or blurred? What makes it clear or vague?
    - 7.3. Do you find stories of femicide in media informing – why?
    - 7.4. Let us look at language in femicide stories- what is your take on it- **lead in:** is it appropriate, polite, misleading or panicky. Explain
    - 7.5. If you read/listen to a femicide story- what are elements that you like or dislike about the way femicide is reported?
    - 7.6. After listening/reading a femicide story, how do you feel?
      - Probe-** do you feel scared,
      - do you feel that you must take care of yourself that this should not befall you
      - do you feel sorry and have a deep sympathy for the victim

7.7. Generally, how to you think news of femicide are reflected in our media? Are they put with total impartiality, fairness and justice or they are put in a bias manner? Substantiate please.

8. (**Transition:** we are moving to the bigger picture now, a general one)

8.1. Reading/listening to femicide news do you find them being reported within the binary gender? Men's or women's fault?

8.2. In your own view- is femicide the fault of men or is it a social problem for failure to undo patriarchy? **Guide-in:** This is not to say killers are not guilty or should not be held accountable.

**Thank you for your voluntary participation and may I reassure you that this information is going to be used anonymously in my study.**

**Thank you.**

## Appendix D

### Focus Group Discussion Guide

#### Introduction & Welcome

Hello, my name is **Ramakoele Mosiuoa** [moderator], am a PhD candidate at **Durban University of Technology**. Thank you for taking time to participate in a focus group on media frames of femicide in Lesotho. This focus group is part of my data collection for my study. May I also introduce to you our assistant moderator ..... You are a group of media professionals purposively sampled from entire media fraternity. We would like to hear your insights on media frames on femicide and your journalistic experiences around femicide. Thank you for volunteering to take part in this focus group. I realize you are busy and I appreciate your time.

#### Anonymity

Although you will be recorded, I would like to assure you that the discussion will be anonymous. All the information gathered here will be safely kept as per DUT research ethics.

#### Ground rules

- ✓ Respect individual views
- ✓ No cell phones
- ✓ All discussed here remains confidential
- ✓ No wrong or right answer

#### Warm-up

Ok- Clock-wise let's introduce ourselves: your name, where you come from & your media house.

#### Ice breaker

*[a similar picture- one with background & the other without background is presented]*

Let us pause for a minute and look at the two pictures- what are your thoughts? [2 min]

#### Questions

- 1) What are the causes (motives) of femicide in Lesotho? [5min]
- 2) What is the extent of femicide in Lesotho? [10min]
  - a) **Probe** *[why do you think so- can you elaborate please]*
- 3) What are the implications of femicide? [10min]
- 4) How do you approach a news story of femicide [15min]

- a) **Probe** [e.g. A femicide story and cash heist story- is there any presentation difference you adopt and why?]
- b) Reporting femicide, what message do you want your audience to understand: do you want the audience to understand murder, women been killed and/or men killing the women
- 5) Who bears the brunt of femicide [10min]
- 6) Who is at fault in this phenomenon of femicide [10min]
  - a) **Probe** [could it be men, women, lax laws, media, socialisation etc.]

#### Exit question

1. Is there anything you would like to say about media frames and femicide?

#### Round-up

1. Assistant moderator in brevity gives a summary of what was discussed and conclusions.

## **Appendix E**

### **GENDER SENSITIVE JOURNALISM TRAINING GUIDE**

Prepared by:  
Mosiuoa Joseph Ramakoele (PhD Candidate)

Supervisor: Dr Sylvia Kaye  
Durban University of Technology 2020

#### **Table of Contents**

##### **1.11.1 Introduction**

Good journalism is difficult to undertake and most importantly at the time of tragedy. There is limited time, space and key informants reserve their opinions in fear. This is the time when journalists need to tap and adhere to their standards to deliver not only timely but accurate messages about the tragedies. Journalists need to respond in twofold: delivering news that is accurate and also reliably informing interventions and policy. This is the role of journalism to assist the public with necessary but accurate information because people have an insatiable need for news especially in times of crisis.

It is axiomatic that reliable information to the public in the context of citizen journalism is proving to be a challenge and that calls for additional skills for journalists. Reporters need to appreciate the dynamics around Femicide, why and how it happens. In this manner, journalists shall be in a position to make the public aware of precursors of femicide, femicide and its dynamics.

This training guide of femicide framing is purely an introduction to assist journalists on how to consciously set the agenda of femicide and frame it in a manner that is gender sensitive and



empowering to all victims as well as holding accountable perpetrators, society and most importantly inform interventions and policy response.

Much of this training guide is influenced by the literature of my thesis and data (from participants and newspaper archives).

### **Objectives of the training manual**

This manual, besides being an outcome of my thesis, is a fundamental blue-print that necessarily complement journalists skills to approach issues with a gender sensitive outlook. It aims to:

- capacitate journalists to set agenda and framing GBVF in news stories from Human Rights Based Approach and Gender Justice and
- to challenge normalisation of GBVF in news content through discourse and text,
- to capacitate journalists to write victims'-oriented news-stories from different voices and orientations.

### **Methodology**

The training shall adopt a participatory format because it is that kind of atmosphere where every experience and views are valued. Since the study is action research wherein the practice is key- the inputs of the journalists are fundamental as people on the ground. Participatory approach also offers an opportunity for participants to learn from each other more importantly from a practical perspective as opposed from a theoretical perspective.

### **Pedagogical Format**

The training shall be a compact full day because of time and financial constraints. I must point that Covid-19 has also added to the challenges; health protocols will also be adhered to. The training will commence at **0900Hrs** to **1700Hrs**. There will be a tea-break for **15min** and lunch for **35min**.

### **Who is in?**

The participants for this training session shall be journalists from print and broadcast that have been populated by MISA Lesotho as its current and active affiliates (n25). The participants were:

✍ Minimum Diploma holders

✍ Currently working with media house

### Training Rules

The basic rules of Dos and Don'ts shall be basic rubrics:

- ✓ Respect individual views
- ✓ No cell phones
- ✓ All discussed here remains confidential
- ✓ No wrong or right answer

The facilitator shall afford the participants a chance to add or alter some rules for their own comfort. These rules shall be validated and as such observed throughout the entire training process.

### 1.11.2 UNIT 1      Gender & Development Nexus

Expected Outcome:

- ♠ Clear understanding of what gender is and is not;
- ♠ Grasp development paradigms;
- ♠ Demonstrate clear understanding of intersection of gender and development.
- ♠

Development Paradigms	Development Paradigms
Women in development (WID) Ester Boserup – role of economic development, Adopted 1979 in Mexico at 1 <sup>st</sup> UN conference of women	Women and Development (WAD) a response to WID – colonialism & unequal global relations were pertinent issues
Aim: Provide women with money & other resources for income generating activities. Develop appropriate technologies to ease women's work	Aim
Critique: viewed women in isolation, misconstrued unpaid labour & Eurocentric since it is grounded in modernisation theory	Critique: failed to factor patriarchy as a system the subordinate women & favours men, focused on international relations & neglected relation between gender & class, race, ethnic difference not factored (erred that women are homogenous group)

### Unit 2 Journalism and Development

Expected Outcome:

By the end of the unit, journalists will be able to understand the intersection of journalism and development.

## Why Journalism

- ☐ To use gender as analytical framework for development
- ☐ To prioritise development content to be inclusive of women's issues (diversity)
- ☐ To effect change in comprehension of power and its custodians (sites of power; finance, religion, education, etc)

## Gender: an axle of struggle

- ♠ Fight from public sphere exclusion: how does exclusion look like, feel like and operate (the moderator sparks a conversation on slavery, apartheid and ultimately patriarchy- all these as systems of oppression). The facilitator asks the participants to recall the three paradigms of development (WID, WAD & GAD).
- ♠ Seeing women's and children's rights as inherent to human rights.
- ♠ Access to material and social resources.

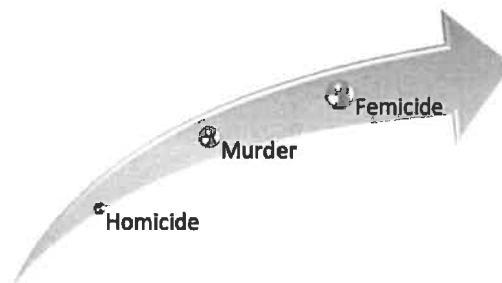
## Content:

The content of journalism should be intersectional: it should be all-rounder but most importantly look at sites of oppression and exclusion. It should: -

- ♣ Challenge patriarchy and male privilege
- ♣ Interpret development through a gendered lens
- ♣ Conceive development as social re-distribution of resources and power
- ♣

## UNIT 3 Conceptualisation:

**'Personal is Political':** Why is it fundamental to classify this killing femicide?



Getting the Fundamentals Right

5Ws & H (Journos and Saviours)

The cardinal point of every journalist is that the story must at all time respond to: who, what, where, when, why and how. This orthodox approach can still be used in a more gender sensitive manner.

WHO: Who should be concerned: all (journalists, editors, managers, etc.). who is missing from the story
WHAT: what is the context, issues of gender to be incorporated to put a story in a fair balanced manner for women and men
WHERE: everywhere- at managerial level, editorial level, where information is gathered, where information is processed
WHEN: every time- there should be awareness of when to use racial, ethnic terms. When to mention gender of victim/perpetrator
WHY: there has to be solid reason why certain issues are included or excluded
HOW: Achieved through- conscious selective sources, use gender sensitive language, balanced representation of women & men, no stereotypes

#### No bare facts

Femicide should have context- if reported barely the audience is likely to leanly understand femicide. Contemporary journalism should move beyond trails of orthodox journalism and provide audiences with more than just incidences and numbers; present more background information and provide possible solutions. Gender sensitive journalism adopts an intersectional approach to every issue. Gender sensitive journalism is that kind of reportage style that challenges the existing status quo and offers the audiences news that is reliable, diverse and factual.

## UNIT 4 Theories

Agenda Setting Theory (Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw, 1972)

### Synopsis:

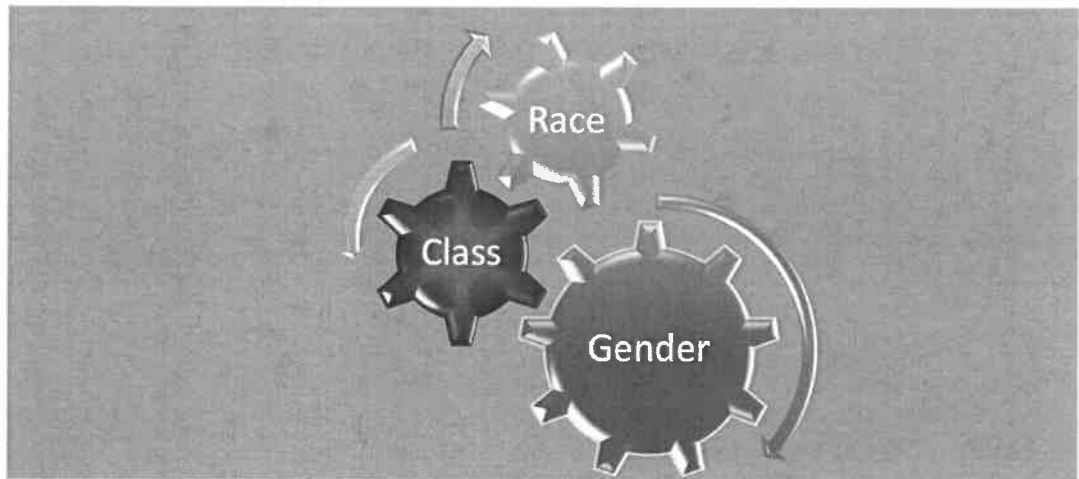
Central to agenda-setting theory is that the media have no business in telling the public what to think but their core business is to suggest to the public what to think about (setting an agenda) and how to think about it and more importantly channel conclusions and opinions.

- Historical background of Agenda Setting Theory (Town Criers & Lipmann, 1922)
- Consistent presentation of an issue becomes public agenda (emphasis, amount of airtime, frequency, positioning and depth of a news story).
- Inclusion/exclusion
- Un/conscious agenda (diction & syntax) */\*paramente e poma Tona-kholo lipheo\*/*  
*Parly curtails PM powers/*

### How is the agenda set?

- It is set through text (discourse (semiotic, diction))

## What influences the agenda?



Example: Oscar Pistorius murder of Reeva Steenkamp vs Donald Sebolai murder of Dolly Tshabalala.

### Effects of Agenda Setting:

Journalist have privilege to select certain attributes of the story and give them emphasis and salience-

- Informing opinion (reportage angle/position- accomplice versus activist)
- Priming (targeting audience memory- frame news in a manner that resonates with culture or prior knowledge)
- Shaping public opinion (selecting certain attributes and putting more emphasis often deflecting/trivialising the core issue)

Framing Theory (Erving Goffman, 1974)

### Synopsis:

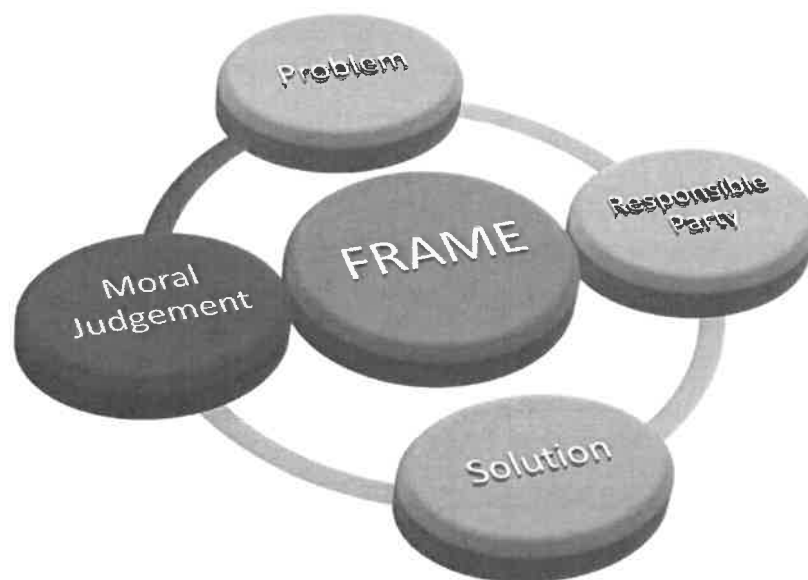
Framing is understood to be the second level of agenda setting- to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in text with intention to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation.

- Historical background- framing comes from photography & cinematography, referring to the angle of the camera thus applies to journalism (the individual behind the pen and mic)

- Second level of agenda setting. The public rely on their schemata & cultural background to respond to frames /*ngoana mahana a joetsoe u bona ka mali ho fopha/ (likhapa- tears drop in happiness and sorrow/grief) PM Motsoahae consciously coining the proverb to inject public fear in exercising their democratic right (PM speech inCovid-19 on 03 April 2020).*
- Microconstruct (opinion is formed upon first contact with the issue) vs macroconstruct (issue resonates with what the audience already knows- e.g. Lentsoe la Basotho (03 Feb 2009): Monna oa Lesole o bolaea mosali, The Times: *Oscar's darkest day*)

## Unit 5 Framing Models

Robert Entman- Media Frames suggest:



Shanto Iyengar- forms of frames:

<b>Episodic</b>	News as stand alone
<b>Thematic</b>	News part of the broader spectrum

## Unit 6 Gender Sensitive Journalism Media Tips

**Objective:** At the end of this unit journalists will be able to analyse the way women are represented in media discourse.

### Framing and Gender sensitive approach Media Tips:

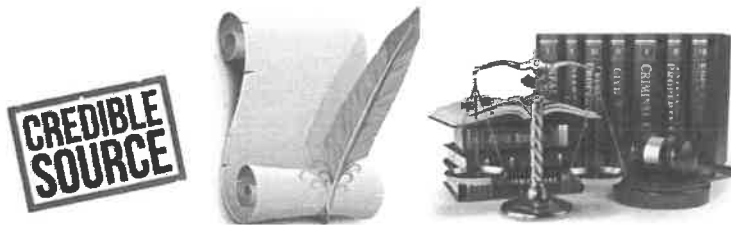
#### Media tip 1:

Naming the killing of women and girls #femicide can contribute to public awareness, reduce tolerance toward and activate appropriate institutional #VAW. Public awareness can be further enhanced when root causes of #femicide are identified. #gender inequality #racism #colonization #patriarchy #impunity.



#### Media tip 2:

The focus on use of alcohol in incidences of #femicide in news and in media diffuses responsibility & accountability of perpetrators for violence against women. #Femicide is a choice someone makes to kill a woman. #VAW #GBV #media.



#### Media tip 3:

Police most often quoted in news stories of #femicide. Reach out to professionals/advocates and other stakeholders working to prevent #VAW for their expertise and way forward. The continuing absence of their voices provides incomplete and skewed picture on #VAW to readers.



#### Media tip 4:

When stories focus on #femicide & #VAW incidents without broader context, it leaves the impression of individual tragedies and no solutions. Statistics help provide a big picture, showing frequency of violence and should be publicly available.



#### Media tip 5:

Describing #femicide perpetrators as 'a quiet man', 'a great father', or 'a loving guy' leaves the impression that killing was out of character, but was it? Do you know that really? If not, don't mitigate the crime.



#### Media tip 6:

Avoid sensational headlines using words like 'shocking' which portray femicides as isolated incidents rather than final acts in often ongoing, chronic violence. Is it shocking if every woman is killed every eight hours by male partner?



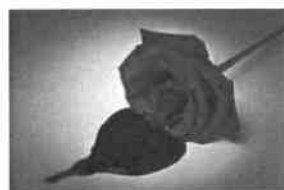
#### Media tip 7:

Using language such as 'domestic dispute', 'volatile relationship', or 'domestic disturbance' minimizes and trivializes a violent situation. It ignores reality that incidents are often part of chronic, and ongoing violence.



#### Media tip 8:

Domestic violence often reported with headlines 'women stabbed', 'woman assaulted', 'woman beaten'. Violence doesn't just happen to a woman, someone perpetrates violence on her. Say that! 'Man stabs woman', 'man assaults woman', 'man beats woman'.



#### Media tip 9:

Media often refers to male jealousy to explain men who kill female partners/ex-partners. Terms used are 'love gone wrong', 'from love to murder', 'crime of passion'. It's a crime, but it's not passion or love.

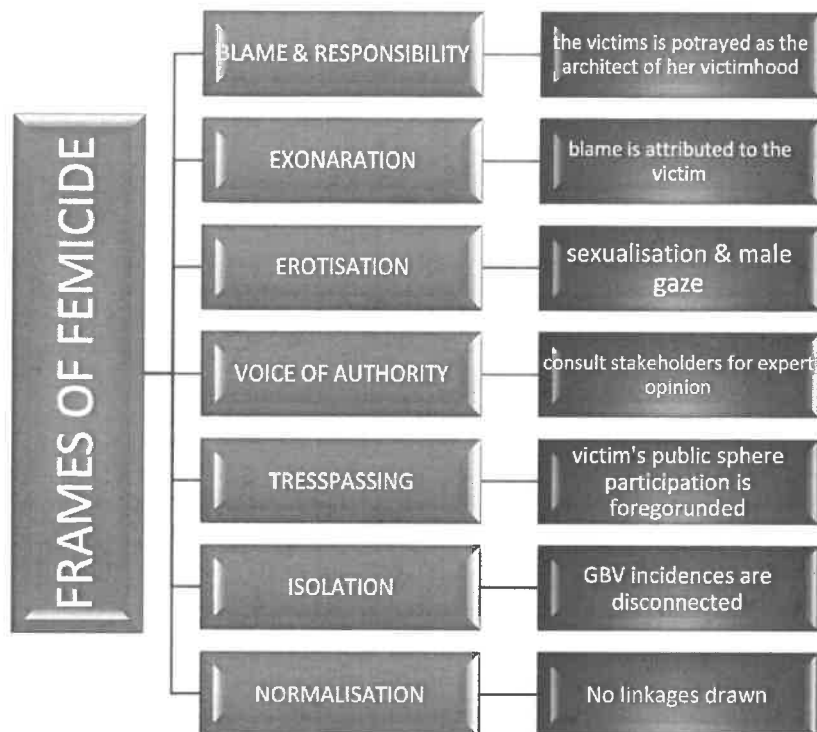


#### Media tip 10:

Too many news stories focus excessively on behaviour of survivors/victims. Regardless of your intent, this suggests she was somehow to blame for the violence. It is the perpetrator's behaviour that is a crime.

### Overview of Current Femicide Frames in Lesotho Media:





### Activity 1

#### Case Study: Evaluation and Analysis of media articles

The journalists are divided into groups and analyse a given article.

Points for consideration:

- Identify gender representation
- Identify language use
- How many sources
- Which framing model is employed: episodic or thematic
- Suggest alternative article presentation

### Presentations and Comments

#### Practical Tools & Glossary

#### CHECKLIST FOR DETECTING AND AVOIDING GENDER INSENSITIVE REPORTING

Who are the sources of the reports?

- How many sources are government and corporate officials?
- How many belong to the progressive, public interest groups?
- How many sources are women?
- How many sources are from minority groups?

From whose point of view is the news reported?

- In whose interest does the report serve?
- Does this interest coincide with that of the government?
- Does it coincide with that of the corporate world?
- Is the report in the public's interest? Which public?

Are there double standards in the news report?

- Are there contradictory double standard? For example, single fathers sympathized with their circumstances, while single mothers are said to "deserve" the hardship.

Are stereotypes used in the news report?

- How is one group portrayed in the story?
- Is this group always associated with certain characteristics?
- Avoid using man as generic */manmade resources/*

Is loaded language used?

- Is the language objective enough to not sway public opinion?
- Is the language objective enough so the public can form its/ own opinions?

Is the report contextualised?

- Is the story put in context so the public can form its own opinions?

Does the graphics used match the content?

- Do the images and illustrations used contradict the content?
- Do they lead the public to understand the story content differently?

Adapted from UNESCO, 2010

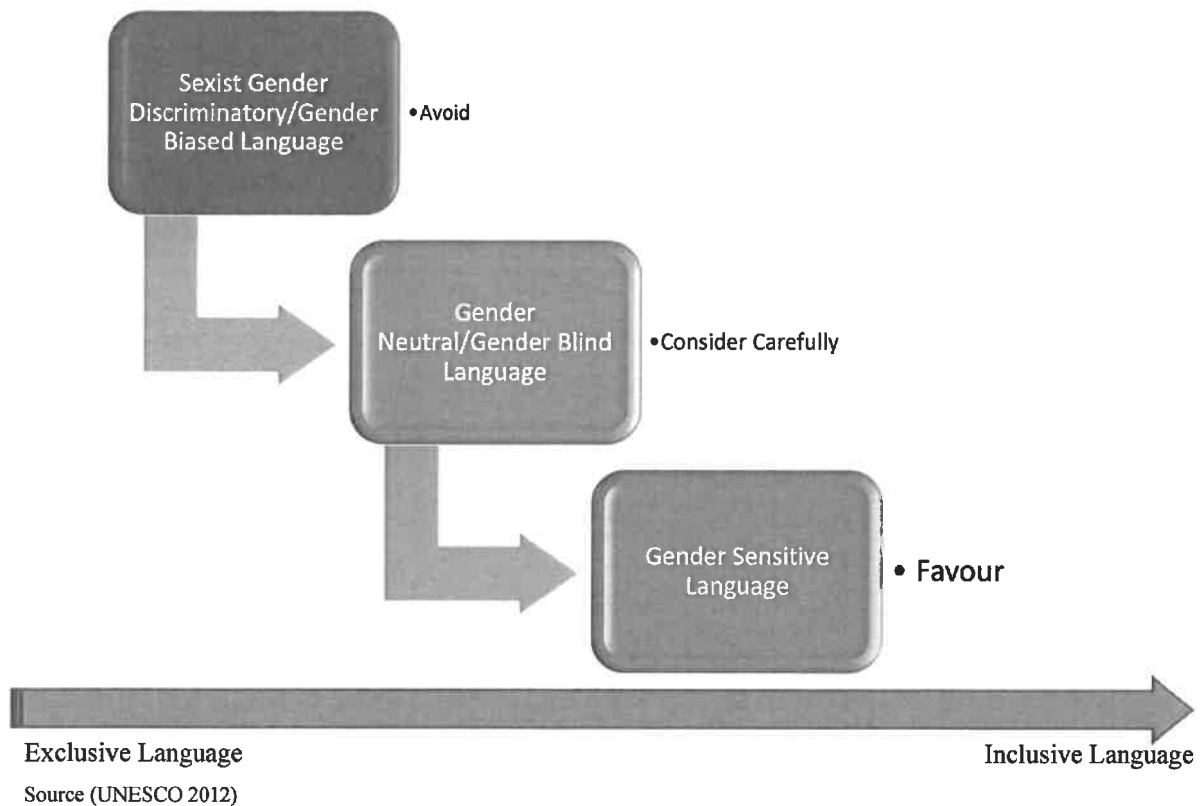
### **Avoid using man as generic:**

Gender-insensitive language usage	Gender-sensitive language usage
Man, mankind	People, humanity, human beings, humankind, the human species, the human race, we, ourselves, men and women, homo sapiens, one, the public, society, the self, human nature
Manpower	Staff, labour, work force, employees, personnel, workers, human resources, human power, human energy
Man-hour	Person-hour, work-hour
Brotherhood	Human fellowships, human kinship, solidarity
Founding fathers	Founders

### **Avoid gender stereotyping, avoid seeing women as possessions**

- Do not assume conventional kinds of gender relations.
- Alternate the word order in phrases that include both sexes so that neither women nor men always go first, to avoid giving the impression that women are after-thoughts.
- Identify women as individuals, persons in their own right, rather than as someone's wife, mother, grandmother or widow, unless it is appropriate given the specific context.
- Avoid seeing women as possessions by naming them in reference to their husbands or fathers.
- Avoid calling women "girls".

**Inclusion Continuum:**







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Lesotho Mounted Police Service  
Police Headquarters  
P.O. Box 13  
Maseru 100  
Lesotho

Ref: CP/C/HQ/51

15<sup>TH</sup> MAY, 2018

**MR RAMAKOELE  
P.O BOX 15369  
MASERU  
100**

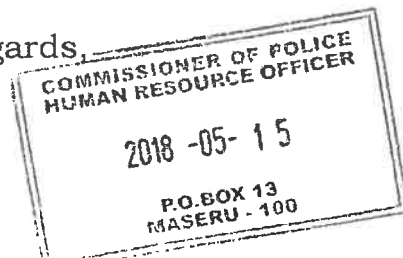
**Dear Officer**

**RE: REQUEST FOR FEMICIDE DATA (2006 – 2016)**

Reference is made to your letter dated 26/04/18 pertaining to the above captioned matter.

Kindly note that authority has been granted. By copy of this letter CID Admin is requested to smoothen the process thereof.

Best regards,



**Senior Superintendent L.C Ralethoko**  
**HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICER**

**Cc: CID Admin**

