



**VICTIMS AS PERPETRATORS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN BULAWAYO,
ZIMBABWE**

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NOZIPHO MATUMBU

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Student Number: 22064679

Supervisor: Dr. Sylvia Kaye, PhD, M.Sc.

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ABSTRACT

This study sought to address the research question: How victims of violence become perpetrators of the same violence they suffered in Bulawayo? With the advent of the Covid-19 virus, gender-based violence cases drastically increased during the lockdowns making it a pandemic within the pandemic (John et al 2020:65). Studies on gender-based violence have largely focused on violence against women and the prevalence of this kind of abuse; few studies have focused on men as victims of this violence. This study focused on men in Bulawayo who have suffered, witnessed or perpetrated domestic violence and sought an understanding of the causes of violence by women as well as the types of violence they commit. Through an examination of existing literature and the conducting of participatory action research (PAR) with participants from Bulawayo, this study also investigated methods for addressing gender-based violence with a view of breaking cycles of violence and reducing the occurrence of such violence.

Over the years, great strides and efforts have been made to correct the inequalities caused by patriarchal societal structures. However, the empowerment and emancipation of women and the provision of positive discrimination opportunities which were originally designed to reduce the gaps between the two genders appear to have created further imbalances as women now have become over-protected and are taking advantage of this situation. The study has led whether or not women are as much victim of gender-based violence as they are “perceived victims” given the fact that men are suffering in silence at their hands.

After selection the methods through interviews, discussions and a review of literature, an action plan for creating a safe space for dialogue was hatched. The team had already laid the initial groundwork on the intervention which was broader than gender-based violence against men and aimed to deal with numerous issues affecting men. The team required assistance in the formalisation the organisation and that was how they met the writer and discussed on which methods to utilise for a concerted peacebuilding project. They used their expertise and competencies to undertake a project through podcasts and broadcasts which is still on going. The project was well received and through its service to the community, difficult conversations have been held which was not obtaining before and this is one of its meaningful contributions to the Bulawayo community.

DECLARATION

I, Nozipho Matumbu, declare that this thesis is my personal original work. All work from additional sources is cited as such. I confirm that I have not previously submitted this research for any degree at any other university. I hereby give consent for my work to be available to the Durban University of Technology, for interlibrary loan and for cited use by individuals and organisations.

Nozipho Matumbu:

I hereby approve the final submission of the following thesis.

Dr S.B. Kaye:

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

The challenge of gender-based violence is a global pervasive problem that largely affects women all over the world regardless of age, status, race and creed (WHO 2013). There is a high prevalence of intimate partner violence, and by deduction gender-based violence, in Zimbabwe (Mukamana et al. 2020). The fact that this type of violence largely affects women does not mean that they are the only victims. Studies have focused on gender-based violence commonly known to affect women. However, this research was intended to investigate a less known and less understood problem of women being agents and perpetrators of gender-based violence. The study will also focus on the complexity of understating domestic violence holistically as well as specific incidences of violence.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released data from its National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (Leemis et al. 2022: np) in which incidences of physical violence were broken down by gender: “about 1 in 3 women and about 1 in 4 men report having experienced severe physical violence from an intimate partner in their lifetime”. According to previous studies, the CDC (2010 and 2011) indicates similar statistics. By the study’s definition, physical violence includes slapping, pushing, and shoving. More severe threats, such as being beaten, burned, choked, kicked, slammed with a heavy object, or hit with a fist were also tracked. Roughly 40 percent of the victims of severe physical violence were men.

According to UNICEF (2019: np), “Gender-Based Violence (GBV) is the most pervasive yet least visible human rights violation in the world.” GBV includes physical, sexual, mental or economic harm inflicted on a person because of socially ascribed power imbalances between males and females. Such findings challenge some feminist arguments that women are victims while men are perpetrators of domestic and gender-based violence. In Zimbabwe, where this study took place, the Herald (2019) recorded a case of violence against men where a woman provoked her husband with words. She verbally abused her husband, and subsequently claimed that he hit her. In another case reported in the Herald, a woman of 60 years of age killed her

husband with a catapult after a misunderstanding. Such cases of GBV cases are evidence of incidences of violence against men is prevalent and across all age groups.

This study was triggered by such issues where violence against men was evident but information on it as well as accessibility seemed difficult. It is necessary and important for researchers to develop complex and appropriate constructions of gender and address all types of intimate partner violence regardless of the sex of the perpetrator, bearing in mind the multifaceted causes of gender-based violence, this was captured by (Bronfenbrenner 1992). According to theorists, addressing issues of gender-based violence focusing on women only being victims has left men behind and has created a number of problems in African countries (Medzani, 2013). Zimbabwe did not have law covering domestic disputes until, in the late nineties, the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was authorized. In 2006 and 2007, reforms were made to the Criminal Law Act (Codification and Reform) and the Domestic Violence Act was adopted into law respectively. These laws, when examined closely, were meant to improve the welfare of women. Such laws are certainly necessary, protection of male victims is also important.

1.2 Background of the Study

Having stayed in Bulawayo in the high density suburb of Pumula South for more than five years, the researcher observed that families are comprised of different people who meet and fall in love with each other, learn to know more about abilities, disabilities and weaknesses of their partners. Traditionally, in Zimbabwe, it has been a norm that men would beat their wives as part of disciplining them and there was no problem whatsoever, because women were considered as children hence they would be beaten. According to Nkomo (2014), lobola leads to gender based violence because it gives the husband exclusive power over the marriage and solving matters through beating in the name of disciplining the wife. With changing of times, beating up of women has been made illegal and inappropriate, society and the law have been condemning the act. The change also came with challenges associated with violence among married people.

For a relationship to work, there is need for couples to settle their differences and tolerate each other, if not done, conflicts rise and lead to gender-based violence. In this study, the focus is on men who later became victims of women who had changed from being victims to being

perpetrators of GBV. The research is framed by the conflict transformation theory by Lederach (1999: 22), who defines peacebuilding as “an array of processes, approaches, and stages needed to transform conflict toward more sustainable, peaceful relationships.”

The hypothesis of the research is that women’s experience of being violently treated can cause them to become violent and perpetrate GBV. The assumption that women perpetrate GBV is an uncommon approach, as society perceives that women can only be victims and never instigators.

An action research approach was adopted to enable the researcher to study women as perpetrators of GBV in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. Action research is a research approach, frequently used for improving conditions and practices in a range of environments (Lingard et al. 2008). In, for example, healthcare, It involves healthcare practitioners conducting systematic enquires in order to assist them improve their own practices, which in turn can enhance their working environment and of those who are part of it, which can be clients, patients and users of facilities. In peacebuilding, action research can be used in a participatory manner, in which the researcher and stakeholders develop solutions to a conflict.

The aim of the study is to explore the causes of violence by female victims of gender-based violence from Pumula South, a high density suburb in Bulawayo and exploring possibilities of addressing the issue at hand which is often overlooked. The study employs action research as a means of enabling victims-cum-perpetrators of gender-based violence to envision, pursue and practice non-violence, and achieve healing from past pain and trauma.

It is interesting to note that despite the existence of increasing evidence of violence by women, society still finds it hard to classify women as perpetrators of violence. It is a fact that the mere mention of the words domestic violence conjures up an image of a man beating his wife or female partner and never a woman beating a man. However, that ugly and disturbing picture is only half of the picture and the other half is often unacknowledged.

The violence by women and abuse against men at the hands of women is perpetuated and compounded by the responses of the members of the community at large and the reactions of the law enforcement officials and other responsible authorities such as social workers. Responses to complaints range from ridicule and mockery to outright dismissal. The perpetration of violence by women deserves to be investigated because understanding the

motivations behind their violence contributes to possible ways of reducing such incidences. It is especially paramount to ascertain whether their violence is self-induced and if not, the extent to which it is a direct consequence of the violence that may be perpetrated against them. Despite the low propensity of women to commit acts of violence in comparison to men, they sometimes become offenders of severe acts of violence. It is a fact that during the pandemic of Covid-19, an increase in the number of cases of gender-based violence were recorded which has caused concern (John et al 2020:65).

1.3 Problem statement

The purpose of the study was to ascertain the reasons for the commission of acts of violence by women who have suffered gender-based violence and to understand if there is a connection between experiences of violence and perpetration of violence by women, to identify cycles and linkages, and to seek ways of ending the cycles of violence while promoting healing amongst the victims. The research sought to interrogate circumstances and reasons why victims of such violence become perpetrators of the same violence and thus, provide an understanding thereof. Gender-based violence is a gendered type of violence which has been framed in such a way that society has come to view it as being suffered by women only at the hands of men. In addition, the study also focused on the legal issues involved when dealing with gender-based violence and the processes involved. The assumption that violence is considered gendered because it is against women is evident both in gender-based violence interventions in Africa and in the argument that gender is irrelevant if violence is also perpetrated against men (Jakobsen 2014).

There is a high prevalence of gender-based violence cases in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city. Over 2,800 cases of violence against women were handled by the Msasa Project in 2018 alone (Harris 2018). Gender-based violence against women is a pervasive problem worldwide with physical, mental and psychological results. It is a damaging, painful and potentially traumatic violation. The physical scar, in most cases, is the fastest to heal creating the facade of complete healing, which may not always be true. In addition to violence against women, gender-based violence against men is also prevalent but as often ignored incidences, with similarly damaging repercussions.

It has been stated that “. . . females. . . are not passive victims of violence. Rather, they respond to provocation and are active participants in aggressive interactions.” (Richardson, 2005, p. 245) Aggression is a complex social behaviour with many causes and manifestations (Denson et al 2018:1). A pilot study carried out in Germany in 2004 investigated the general experiences of violence among men from childhood into adulthood and after 266 quantitative interviews had been analysed, revealed that one in four men had experienced physical violence at the hands of their female partners at least once (Kolbe and Buttner, 2020:534). Similar to the consequences of violence on women, gender-based violence against men also results in low self-esteem, the feeling of helplessness and entrapment of the men who are the victims.

The underlying assumption of the study is that the trauma and lack of healing from gender-based violence by women can cause them to become violent. The research, therefore, sought to examine the scenarios when women inflict such violence on others, in particular, the correlation between such violence and the failure to heal from violence previously suffered leading to the victims becoming perpetrators. Absence of healing is both a cause and an effect of violence. Gender stereotyping has caused people to associate violence with men and as such, when women commit atrocities, it raises concern particularly because of their multifaceted role in the family and as children’s primary caregivers. The prevalence of cases of transferred revenge, transferred anger, battered-wife syndrome and dysfunctional adults attributing their state to violent upbringing, confirms this position (Rakovec-Felser 2014).

The Constitution of Zimbabwe (No. 20), Act 2013, expressly protects the rights of women in Section 80, their right to human dignity in Section 51 and protection from torture, or cruel, or inhuman and degrading treatment in section 53. Although legislation such as the Domestic Violence Act [Chapter 20:15], has been enacted with the aim of promoting justice and protecting victims of such violence, this has done little to reduce the prevalence of this violence. The retributive nature of the current Zimbabwean criminal penal system causes most of its focus to be on the punishment of the offender rather than the restoration of the damage to the victim and society at large (Tshuma 2018). As a result, the criminal process achieves less for the victim, who is rendered voiceless and feels used as a pawn and only required to prove the state’s case beyond all reasonable doubt. The victim may be made to repeat certain parts of her ordeal which are considered relevant to satisfy the elements of the crime, contrary to her desire to tell the full story which may pave the way for healing. Once the sentence is handed down,

the assumption is that this is sufficient relief for the victim and society but often, they are left to piece themselves together alone. This legal recourse is inadequate for reducing the incidence of domestic violence or dealing holistically with the aftermath and may force some victims to take the law into their own hands.

Approximately 1 in 3 women aged between 15 to 49 years who have been involved in relationships have experienced physical violence and/or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner Garcia-Moreno et al (2013). A Daily News article of 7th of March 2016, entitled “Half of Zim women abused”, revealed that almost half of all women in Zimbabwe have experienced gender-based violence. The high prevalence of such violence means that many people suffer. According to Watts and Zimmerman (2002: 1233), “because of the sensitivity of the subject, violence is almost universally under-reported” and this is especially true for male victims of violence who have been cultured, like the female victims although differently, to be silent about such issues. Issues of the absence of healing of female victims were interrogated in this study and the extent to which this breeds abusers. Participants were asked to identify other possible causes of violence by female victims during the research, which will also be investigated.

Furthermore, according to figures announced by the Anti-Domestic Violence Council (ADVC) 2016, there was a 23 percent rise of cases reported by men with women`s cases dropping by about 10 percent from the previous year Makomo and Chisaka (2020). The shortcomings of the retributive system are shown by victims who may suffer depression, become suicidal, seek revenge, remain mentally stuck in that event, take to other means to suppress the emotional pain such as substance abuse and have a high risk of becoming repeat victims again or worse still perpetrators. The saying that “hurt people, hurt people” rings true and some of the indirect unintended consequences of the violence include children who learn by observation and may suffer secondary trauma or even become perpetrators in their own spheres of influence and ultimately in adulthood.

Unfortunately, gender-based violence against men is a subject of jest for many and victims are often subjected to ridicule and gossip which makes them close up. This is partly due to the patriarchal setup of the society, which may even promote violence as a sign of masculinity. Other reasons why men opt to be silent victims include fear of humiliation and being viewed as less of a man or such damaging beliefs such as that men don’t cry, which have severe

detrimental effects on their mental health and lead to more suicides among males than females. Gender based violence against men is a real and serious global violation which leaves them wounded and traumatised, physically and otherwise. Narrow interpretations of gender based violence must be abandoned in favour of wider conceptions which paint a clear picture of the prevailing reality that men are also victims. The exclusion of men from the ambit of victims or survivors of this violence also excludes them from support, interventions and even legal and other protective mechanisms (Graaff, 2021).

It is evident that violence is not only a legal issue to be addressed by imposing stiffer penalties on offenders, which, in any event, usually yields hardened and vengeful perpetrators but it is also a wider societal and public health concern. Adopting a transformative approach, which addresses the aftermath and deeper consequences of gender-based violence, may be useful in identifying fostering healing and building their resilience.

Gender-based violence severely affects women's capacity to participate, men's ability to contribute at their full capacity to the community and families of the victims and perpetrators are also affected. Furthermore, gender-based violence makes members fail to contribute productively in important societal issues hence the need to address the problem of the absence of healing for victims and other factors that cause women to be converted into culprits of the same viciousness they suffered. Much focus has been placed on the causes of gender-based violence against women. However, after obtaining such information, the logical steps should include the prevention of repeated cycles of violence. More needs to be done to address the unseen effects, which are, arguably, are the most devastating and destructive, hence the prevalence of fatal revenge acts.

1.4 Significance and Rationale of the study

The aftermath of gender-based violence on women has largely been focused on the physical effects of the violence. While it is a fact that injuries must be taken seriously, these must be considered simultaneously with the psychological effects which have since been discovered to be more far-reaching and with more long-term devastating consequences that affect not only the victims, but also the perpetrators, children and other witnesses. Gender-based violence prevention programmes have often been more focused on other causes of violence and can omit

the analysis of violence as a cause of violence in itself. This study examined the means that may assist in the prevention of violence by breaking cycles of repetition.

1.5 Aim and objectives

Aim:

The aim of the study was to explore the multifaceted effects of violence on female victims of gender-based from Pumula South in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe which were obtained through the use of the following specific objectives:-

Objectives:

1. To identify forms of gender-based violence against men in Pumula South, Bulawayo
2. To examine techniques used by the justice system to handle cases of gender-based violence against men in Bulawayo,
3. To explore the causes of gender-based violence by women in Bulawayo and the role played by experiences of violence at the hands of men in causing female violence,
4. Through action research, to deconstruct societal stereotypes and perceptions on the perpetration of gender-based violence and promote non-violence.

1.6 Theoretical framework

This study was founded on Lederach's theory of Conflict Transformation. The study also analysed the theory of conflict resolution and show the similarities or differences between conflict transformation and conflict resolution. It highlights the relationship between the theory of conflict transformation and Galtung's theory of violence, the Ecological theory by Bronfenbrenner as well as Freire's liberal theory of Education.

1.6.1 Conflict Transformation Theory

Conflict transformation is defined as envisioning and responding "to the ebb and flow of social conflict as life-giving opportunities for creating constructive change processes that reduce violence, increase justice in direct interaction and social structures and respond to real life problems in human relationships" (Lederach 2003: 22). Lederach's theory emphasises peace that is founded on justice, the building of right relationships and social systems and

mechanisms through radical respect of human rights and non-violence as a way of living (Lederach 2015). To increase justice, people must have a voice on issues that concern their lives. The term transformation is concerned with building healthy relationships and communities at local and global level. The key dimensions of conflict transformation are change in personal, structural, relational and cultural aspects of conflict brought about over different times, that is, short, mid and long-term. Peace is rooted in the quality of social, economic, political and cultural relationships. Lederach sees conflict as having a potential for constructive change giving opportunities for growth and understanding of self and others.

1.6.2 Galtung's Theory of Violence

Galtung defines violence as “present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations” (Galtung 1969:168). In this definition, violence is seen as the cause of the variance between what is and what could have been. He further distinguishes between direct and structural violence. Direct or personal violence is violence with a subject. A sender or actor intends to inflict consequences of violence (Galtung 1996). Direct violence is actual or threatened physical or psychological injury such as domestic violence, verbal and economic abuse and corporal punishment (Harris 2010).

Structural violence or indirect violence, on the other hand, emanates from the social structure itself (Galtung 1996). It refers to damage caused by social, political and economic structures in society (Harris 2010). The violence is built into the structure and manifests as unequal power and consequently, unequal life opportunities. The unequal distribution of resources and the power to decide on the distribution of resources gives rise to structural violence. The resources can be material such as economic or non-material, for example, health care and education (Confortini 2006). Structural violence involves a “process working slowly as the way of misery in general, hunger in particular erodes and finally kill human beings” (Galtung 1985).

Violence, in all its forms, is undesirable in society regardless of who perpetrates it and this theory is applicable as it is rooted on perspectives that promote non-violence as a way of life. The conflict transformation theory, while cognisant of the negative consequences of conflict, focuses on the potential for its positive effects, where the affected persons are willing to conflict respond in constructive ways. It is based on the understanding that conflict though disruptive

is normal in human relationships and is actually a motor of change (Lederach 2003). The theory's relevance lies in its capacity to foster an appreciation of social conflict as opportunity for positive endings if addressed through constructive change processes that reduce violence (Lederach supra). A short-term approach to the conflict is most likely to lead to recurrence. As such, the capacity of conflict transformation to surpass the resolution of the immediate surfacing problem to the context and relationship of the parties is crucial.

1.6.3 Ecological Theory

The ecological theory was originally developed by Bronfenbrenner (1992), who discussed development of a child based on inter-connected relationships occurring at different levels of society. The "ecological systems theory is presented as a theory of human development in which everything is seen as interrelated and our knowledge of development is bounded by context, culture, and history" (Darling 2007). The theory is critical to this study as it explains the multifaceted nature of humans and explains that violence is not caused by a single factor, this then necessitates a multifaceted approach to its solution as opposed to a one dimensional approach. For example, while legal solutions are important to maintain peace and order in society, they alone cannot suffice to address violence. Whether adversarial or rehabilitative, criminal penal systems play different roles but the continued increase of violence in spite of the promulgation of laws against domestic violence is evidence of the inadequacies of legal solutions, the reason being that violence has wide implications of its impact, causation and consequences. Gender-based violence is a crime, it is also a social problem, a public health concern, it also surfaces as having economic connotations for example, violence against women has a negative effect on economic productivity, their performance at the workplace and ultimately on the gross domestic product of a nation, whether directly or indirectly.

The theory is also critical because of its ability to distinguish between the different levels of causes and their interconnectedness as well as to separate between real causes and contributing factors of gender-based violence. A factor such as poverty is not itself a cause of gender-based violence but its effects on an individual contribute or increase the likelihood of such violence occurring in poor communities more than affluent ones although this does not mean it does not occur in the latter. Usually a number of factors contribute to cause a person to be violent, gender-based violence is rarely the result of an individual cause, which, in turn, makes it somewhat predictable where a number of contributing or causative factors are present.

1.6.4 Freire's Theory of Education

Another theoretical foundation of the research is that of the liberal approach to knowledge expounded by Freire (1971). It is both necessary and relevant because it recognizes that the capacity of victims to suggest solutions to their problems which is often disregarded and underestimated. His theory relates to this study as it adopted a qualitative research methodology. The interviews conducted during the research were engagements based on the understanding of dialogue as an important social process of knowing and learning (Freire supra). His problem-posing method of education where people develop their capacity to perceive their existence and see the world as being in a process of transformation made his theory relevant for this study.

The research aims to achieve 'conscientisation' (Freire supra) of victims by providing a platform for the women to decipher the motivation behind their violence and formulate ways to prevent this. The victims use violence as a defence and they must unlearn it and replace it with non-violent methods of achieving peace or other desired end. The need to draw attention to the violence perpetrated by women and find solutions to it cannot be denied. From a peace-building perspective, a peaceful society is one which promotes non-violence as a way of life (Lederach supra). Indeed, positive peace is an illusion without healing for victims of violence and injustice as it is prone to erupt sooner or later. The usual understanding of the cycle of violence is as an explanation of the perpetrator continued abuse and the victim's continued suffering.

However, Lederach's theory is the most relevant to the study and enabled this study to identify the root causes of domestic violence and why women have turned to violence. All key relational stakeholders were engaged in the study. The framework allowed participants to have a voice on issues that affect their lives.

1.7 Philosophy of the Study

Birks (2014:19) has defined philosophy as 'a view of the world encompassing the questions and mechanisms for finding answers that inform that view'. The philosophy of this study was premised on the application of qualitative research as a means to answer seldom asked and considered questions on violence. Qualitative research has the capacity to solicit different

answers and provides an accommodative method for the participants to liberally express themselves and this is ideal considering the sensitive nature of the issue under investigation. Investigations into real situations affecting real people through action research necessitates an approach that takes them as beings who have the capacity to think and come up with solutions to the challenges they face. This type of research is a gradual process of unearthing information that must involve different methods of collecting data collection such as narratives, observations, interviews etc. The simultaneous study of relevant literary works while engaging with actual victims and perpetrators provides a comprehensive result.

1.8 Research Design and Methodology Overview

1.8.1 Research Design

The research problem was investigated through qualitative research methods. Data was collected through use of questionnaires, transcriptions of focus group discussions, interviews and from observations during the study. Phenomenology is the study of life events through the tangible viewpoints of individuals, Groenewald (2004). People's perceptions are viewed as the concrete basis for the understanding of reality. Data was also collected through interviews and questionnaires administered after the action project was concluded for verification and validity and to enhance the reliability of results of the study. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, physical interaction and gathering was severely restricted and social media was then also utilised to obtain the required data from the participants. The data was then analysed by grouping the findings through thematic analysis which promoted the discovery of recurring patterns in the gathered data.

1.8.2 Research Methodology

According to Crotty (1998), the research methodology is the research design that influences the selection and application of, specific data generation and investigation methods to address the research problem. The research was conducted by reviewing related literature to establish the extent of knowledge available on violence by women and its causes. The research involved the use of the internet, case law studies, books and journal articles in the quest for exploring this phenomenon.

The study was also conducted using qualitative participative action research. This allowed truthful reflection and introspection on the part of the participants of their own contributions and role to violence in their spheres of influence and relationships. One benefit of action research lies in its capacity to accommodate the collective engagement between the research participants and researchers to discover new ways of tackling challenges (Babbie 2009: 19 324).

1.8.3 Sample Size

Men and women from different parts of Bulawayo, particularly from Pumula South, took part in this study. The sample was purposively selected to include both men and women who had experienced gender-based violence either as victims or as culprits. After the interviews with different participants, a group of between 10 to 20 men and women participated in the study. Creswell 1998: 65) suggested that long interviews with up to 10 people for a phenomenological study would be satisfactory in order to gather enough information for a qualitative analysis to be conducted effectively. Furthermore, Boyd (2001) suggested that two to ten research subjects are enough to reach saturation.

1.9 Data Analysis and Description

The collected data was analysed from a thematic analysis point through of Microsoft Excel because it can analyse and organize unstructured data in text and numbers. Visualize, manipulate, and evaluate the data. Its helped to create equations that can allow you to provide more data on vital company functions, such as workflow, project efficiency, financial projections and budgets, and even inventory levels and usage. It also had an ability to create an easy-to-read set of data that can be used by upper management to analyse current projects or situations in the company. Graphs, charts and tables can be organised better and provide a better picture of the information that is input. To add numbers to the story and embracing the remits of the qualitative study, Microsoft Excel was used to bring descriptive statistics to the study.

1.10 Ethical Considerations

On the subject of ethics, Magwa and Magwa (2015) suggest that, when conducting research with human subjects, the researcher needs to conduct the research in accordance with ethical considerations. Ethical considerations must cut across the entire research process from its start right to the end. The study was done with great care since the research is based on real life challenges of respondents hence there was need to be highly confidential so that the reputation of victims is not compromised and their privacy was protected through use of pseudo-names in place of their real names.

1.11 Overview of Chapters

Chapter 1 **Introduction:** This chapter provides a summary of the overview of the study and its historical background. It also gives a glimpse of the context of the research together with its aims and objectives. The statement of the problem and the research methods are also looked at in brief.

Chapter 2 **Literature review:** The chapter presents and explores the relevant theoretical foundations underlying the study through investigation in literature around issues of violence, healing and trauma. Empirical studies on the subject matter are also investigated.

Chapter 3 **Research methods:** This part details and justifies the methodology that will be used in the study. The research design, the data collection methods and data analysis processes are all explored in detail. The chapter provides an expose on the process of planning and implementing the study.

Chapter 4 **Data and analysis:** In this chapter the data which has been collected and gathered in the study is carefully analysed, interpreted and evaluated using thematic analysis and other means. Reflections on the outcomes are also applied in this chapter.

Chapter 5 **Conclusion:** The last chapter concludes the whole research by giving a summary of the research and its implications.

1.12 Conclusion

The first chapter offered a look into historical background of the study as well as the context in which it exists. The aim and the specific objectives of the research were also given together with the philosophy of the research. The problem was stated in sufficient detail to give an appreciation of the aim of the study. The overview of the design and methods of research used for this study were also provided.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

PART 1 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

2.1 The Theory of Conflict Transformation

The **principal** founder of peace and conflict studies has been identified as Johan Galtung. He has made significant contributions to peacebuilding globally as an eminent peace philosopher who is credited with propounding major ideas such as the transcend method of conflict transformation by peaceful means and the concept of direct, structural and cultural violence (Pathak 2016). Johan Galtung's contributions through the transcend technique have been utilised to change the institutional and individual attitudes, conviction systems, psychological understandings, and lifestyle of behaviours in different communities and nations.

The Transcend method involves overcoming conflicts or disputes through mediation, education, journalism, (action) research, and publication (Pathak 2013). It has also been termed the Galtungian Method and involves conflict theory and practice, violence theory and practice, peace transformation, dialogue, and negotiation to transform the conflict by peaceful means constituting a three-step approach. Galtung also propounded the ideas of negative and positive peace which involve the analysis of the realisation of third generation human rights. According to him, freedom from want ensures human security and encompasses the eradication of hunger, the advancement of gender justice and equality, the empowerment of women, promotion of public health etc. (Pathak 2013:170). He formulated numerous trademark concepts including the *attitude, behaviour, and contradiction* (ABC) triangle; the classifying of peace strategies into peacekeeping, peace-making and peacebuilding.

From Galtung's view, violence tramples basic human needs, rights, and fundamental freedoms (Galtung 2007). Furthermore, it includes latent or manifest, intended or unintended, physical or psychological suppressions of humans' feelings. There has been a cross-cutting and interdependent relation between structural and direct violence that includes family to racial violence, crime, terrorism, genocide, and war. He stated that conflict is initiated through

attitudes, physical behaviour, and contradictory goals of enemies and also because of level of understanding, culture of society, attitude, behaviour, and contextual factors.

The initial stage of the method is confidence-building where the mediator attempts to understand the disputing parties' goals and concerns involved directly or indirectly in the matter to gain their confidence. The second stage is that of reciprocity of relations where the mediator should allow time to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate ends and human needs of both parties. The mediator's independence plays a pivotal role in improving the reciprocity relations with the parties. The last stage of the technique is known as the identification of gaps and requires for the mediator to try and bridge the gap between the genuine but apparently inconsistent goals of the parties through reciprocally satisfactory, desired resolutions for a workable future that personifies originality, compassion and nonviolence, constructing a new reality (Pathak 2016).

The most crucial part of this technique does not lie in its ability to focus beyond the identification of who is guilty and punish them like the traditional legal process, but to generate a striking new favourable reality and inventiveness acceptable to all those that are involved in the dispute. The process is applicable at all domestic, public, and institutional levels within them and beyond. Galtung's successful mediation emanated from his ability to think beyond what the parties liked or did not like to hear and to inspire them by redirecting creative positive approaches and proposals that were not available elsewhere without criticizing their wrongdoings. Transformation changes the attitude and behaviour by applying creativity to contradictions at all levels of conflict including global, social and inter-and intra-personal ranging from mega to macro, meso, and micro (Galtung 2000:3).

The conflict transformation theory acknowledges that conflict is a normal part of life (Başoğul and Özgür 2016). Several authors have defined conflict transformation as the process that continues, beginning with conflict settlement to conflict management to conflict resolution and ending with conflict transformation' (Diamond et al. 1994:). This study is underpinned by the conflict transformation theory. Though violence is a choice that is not justified, it is a symptom or manifestation of disputes and conflicts not resolved properly. The theory emphasises peace as embedded in justice the building of right relationships and social structures through a radical respect for human rights and non-violence as a way of life with the aim of creating constructive

change that exceeds the resolution of particular problems. The theory posits that conflict is normal in human dealings and is an engine of change in society and life in general.

Lederach (2003) asserts that conflict transformation is both a way of looking and seeing enabling us to understand conflict in society looking at the immediate or presenting situation and the past it to a deeper relationship patterns forming the context of the conflict to the envisioning of the framework to bring these together and creates the platform to address these issues for solutions. Although violence is usually equated to conflict, the two are different. The relevance of this theory to the study is tied to the aim which is also the aim of transformation, that is, to reduce violence in human relationships and increase justice. The recognition of the need for the obvious issues and the underlying causes must be addresses to reduce violence emphasises its significance. The theory views peace as centred and rooted in a quality of relationships where intentional effort are made address conflict between people using non-violent approaches to promoted equality and harmony. GBV affects relationships and relationships are at the core of the conflict transformation theory.

Conflict transformation is gradual, so is the healing, process and forgiveness. According to the conflict transformation theory, peace is embedded in justice, the same may be said for healing and whether there is a relationship between healing and constructive change or its role. Ending violence goes beyond resolution that is ending the immediate danger and violence in the short term but by looking at the deeper lying causes, it prevents the eruption or repetition in future (Allen and Wozniak 2010). It is the author's view that gender-based violence is largely the outcome of the improper handling of conflict and disputes.

Lederach looks at how has the conflict developed over time, what dynamics have been taking place over time and the patterns of interaction and relationship that have been going on over time. He suggests a very deep look into not just issues but also history and patterns of interaction, hence its relevance to this study. After that has been done, one cannot figure out how they want to change until they know what they want their changed system to look like and their goals as well. Most often people think in terms of solutions, and think that they can jump directly from issues to solutions. However, in the diagram of the *Big Picture* as described in Figure 2.1, there is no arrow going that way because the solutions are more complicated and you cannot get anywhere without developing change processes.

The Big Picture is a circle that goes from presenting situations through change processes to the horizon of the future, depicted in Figure 2.1. It is also important to note that the horizon of the future has three elements which are the solution, relationships and systems. It is necessary to understand how people are going to relate to each other, how the dynamics of the system are going to be different from what was going on in the presenting situation that will enable this new situation, the new system to be more constructive than the current one (Draucker et al., 2009).

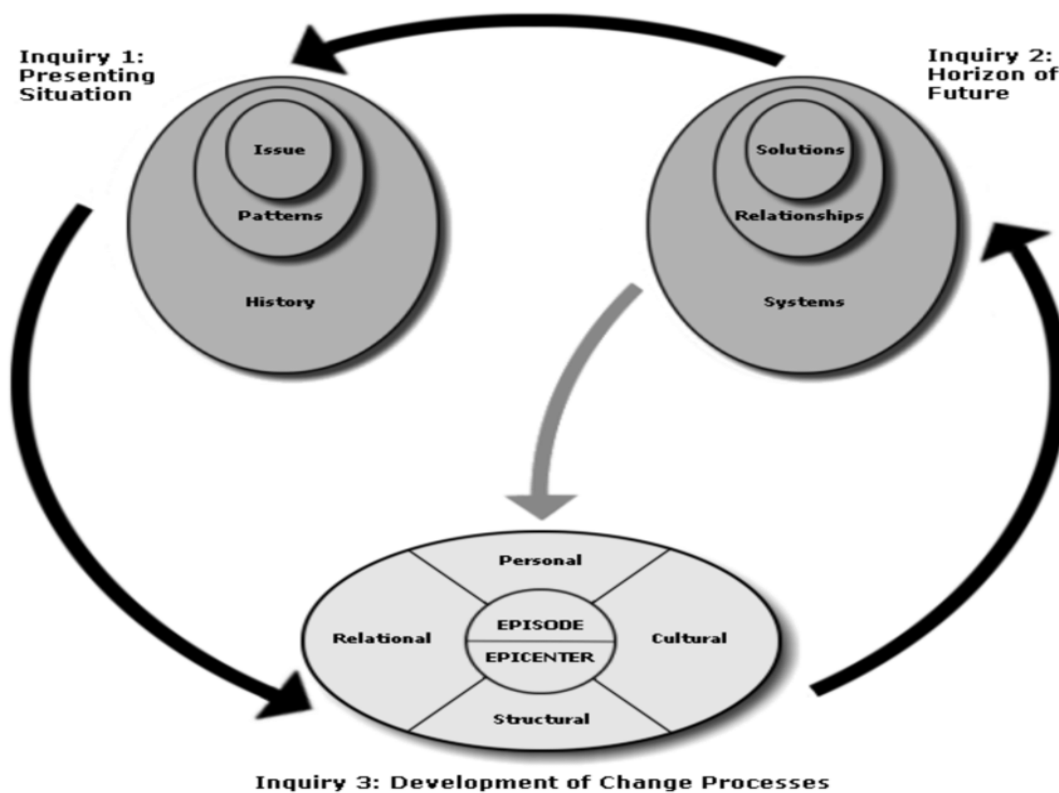


Fig 2.1 Big Picture. Source: Lederach 2003

In the bottom, on the development of change processes, he focuses on four different kinds of change: personal change of individuals, relational change, changes in the way people relate to each other and groups relate to each other, structural change, changes in government structure and education structure and health structures and all sorts of structural things that might be impeding more constructive ways of interacting, and cultural changes, ways in which current cultural norms are inhibiting conflict resolution and make changes to those norms or changes to behaviours that will be more constructive in the future. Furthermore, the light coloured arrow in the centre shows that this is all a continuing cycle so that if you make a change that leads to

new relationships and new systems, that's going to impact what you're doing, your change processes, which then cycles back to affect both the horizon of the future and the presenting situation. Equally, these can be used when dealing with conflict at family level and hence the relevancy of the theory to the study being done.

2.2.1 Means of Interventions

Basabose (2015) states that Healing the Wounds of Ethnic Conflict (HWEC) is the most common approach used for healing among people with conflicts. HWEC is a biblical based approach which is run in the format of workshops. Its aims are achieving the revelation of truth that sets people free, creating the opportunity for people to hear each other and express their pain in a safe environment; considering and using the cross as means of healing; enabling people to forgive or ask for forgiveness, discouraging and removing prejudices and judgments, and developing the ability to see the beauty in each other, bringing down dividing walls between ethnic groups and between different denominations, and finally, encouraging church communities to play its role in the healing of the nation.

It is further stated that people who implement the HWEC approach make efforts to ensure that everyone leaves the workshops with refreshed energy and feeling loved and affirmed. In addition, participants generally leave the workshops with a determination to live out the reconciliation practically in their churches and communities.

It is also important to note that conflict transformation theory is pertinent to the study because it acts as a base of solving relationship conflicts without using violence and other forms of abuse. The stages can also portray the steps in which conflict evolves and how it can be solved. Lederach uses the big picture of conflict transformation to map conflicts and it can be used when solving domestic issues among couples. For one to understand what is going on in any type of conflict you have look first at the present situation and not the obvious surface level things, issues but it involves deeper level of history.

Healing is a personal process and having victims participating in this research will afford them the chance to define what healing means to them. The connection between justice and healing requires investigation because, in the conflict transformation theory, there can be no positive peace without right relationships. Most research addressing the consequences of

intimate partner abuse has focused on acts of physical aggression, whereas significantly less attention has been accorded more subtle and difficult-to-measure dimensions of partner violence such as psychological abuse (Mechanic et al., 2008). To realise healing, conflict transformation, reconciliation and peacebuilding it is imperative to consider and balance various expectations, attitudes and interests with a futuristic mind-set (Del Felice and Wisler 2007: 6). The peacebuilding process requires creative interventions, activities and approaches to bring solutions which address the root causes of violent behaviours, attitudes, connections, and arrangements.

Because it has been proven that victims have the capacity to also become offenders, their healing is imperative as a preventative measure. The affected women are important as they understand better the devastating effects of violence and are likely to understand practical ways of making appropriate improvements and implement them. They are best positioned on how to achieve their healing instead of having bystanders imposing interventions which are highly susceptible to armchair approaches. It is possible to explore the development of healing mechanisms and helpful structures and strategies that lead to improvements can be efficiently explored through consultation, action and reflection with participants. Action research approach allows for comprehensive and practical discoveries that can help improve the success of trauma and healing empowerment programmes. High-quality, comprehensive evaluation is important to the future development and success of community programs for youth and should be used by all programs (Eccles and Gootman 2002:36).

2.1.2 Education of Non-Violent Alternatives

The philosophy espouses non-violence as a way of life by empowering women and others with the skills and methods to handle or react to violence differently. It accepts that at times one reacts with violence because that is all that they know.

The experience of healing after gender-based violence related events has been synthesized in various ways in the scientific literature to date. For example, a 2009 qualitative meta-synthesis described healing after sexual violence, highlighted key domains including the importance of feeling safe, relating to others, and re-evaluating the self as elements of the sexual violence healing process (Draucker et al., 2009). In addition, a 2020 review of recovery after intimate

partner violence described developmental aspects of recovery, including disentangling from the past, coping with the present, and moving toward the future (Flasch 2020).

Transformation through peace education indirectly addresses the forms of violence which are prevalent in society by teaching about its causes as this indirectly teaches about prevention (Harris and Morrison 2003: 9). This promotes the desire to pursue alternatives to violence. By creating avenues for women empowerment programmes, the alternatives can be put into practice and brought to reality. This gives them safe spaces to share their experiences and thoughts, develop healthy self-image; restore confidence, taking part in productive dialogue and reflection on their situations including how their own actions may contribute to increasing or reducing violence.

2.1.3 Necessity of Healing and Recovery of Victims

Allen and Wozniak (2010) state that recovering from abuse is a social, spiritual, cultural and psychological process. From the views of survivors, healing is non-linear (Sinko et al. 2020) and it requires active recovery engagement and consisting of integrating one`s trauma into their selfhood as they move towards their future goals, (Sinko et al. 2019). From these concepts stated, healing after GBV is defined in the present study as social, spiritual, cultural and psychological process in which one actively strives to find wellbeing integrate their GBV experience into identity, and move towards the future where their trauma does not limit their ability to connect with others and purse their goals and aspiration without being stigmatised and judged. One way recovery has been discussed in the literature is using the concept of resilience. Flexibility is hypothesised as one`s ability to bounce back after adverse life events or the ability of individuals facing adversity to utilise resources within an individual`s emotional ability to rise again after violence.

2.1.4 The theory of Conflict resolution

Burton (1986), an authority on conflict resolution, has described conflict resolution as seeking to resolve the problem which requires change. Resolution thus has a costing component which enables the status quo party to reliably assess the price and penalties of conflict 'management'. It represents a shift from the traditional theories of power bargaining and settlement of disputes to one of problem solving which involves analysis of goals and interests. Such an approach facilitates the discovery of possible options so that resolution of conflicts can be achieved.

Conflict resolution implies interventions in relations between states and people for the resolution of disputes and it is important to understand its causes but merely explaining on these is not enough to explain the failure to resolve them.

According to Burton (1990), it is most probable that conflicts sometimes persist, not because of their complexities, but because of the insufficient techniques which would have been adopted to deal with them. Due to the inevitability of conflict, it is critical to find a mechanism for resolving misunderstandings regardless of their origins. Issues of conflict in human relationships whether as groups or individuals are a very complex field of study because they are no controlled experiments possible in this area where people deal with behaviour in open systems. An understanding on the inadequacies of the techniques used for conflict resolution reveals that the traditional processes of power bargaining and mediation may themselves be an additional reason for some conflicts to be protracted, (Burton 1990). The major reason for this is because such processes usually yield temporary settlements without addressing the underlying issues. The value of evolving conflict resolution processes are lies in their effectiveness of helping with accurately costing the outcomes of change and the resistance to it. In this sense, the processes of facilitated conflict resolution are designed to cut down the delays and upheavals that occur in change and to speed up the evolutionary process toward greater fulfilment of societal need.

In the Working Paper for CCAR (1988), Burton highlighted that “conflict resolution means terminating conflict by methods that are analytical and that get to the root of the problem”. He contrasted it with mere conflict management or conflict settlement as it brings a permanent solution to the parties’ problem. Conflict resolution aims to reach the source of problems beyond resolving the immediate social problem only. It seeks to prevent the recurrence of similar issues by utilising analytical problem solving methods. The ‘theory’ of conflict resolution, “consists of theories about processes, communication, perception, and interaction” (Burton 1986).

Conflict and conflict resolution are universal phenomenon and the latter implies a capability to handle different types of conflict at numerous social levels. In the face of conflict, it is common for third parties to attempt to decrease tensions by identifying points of convergence and altering perceptions to uphold harmony and a spirit of settlement. The danger of this approach lies in the side-lining of the sources of the conflict during the parties meetings which leads to

the emergence of the disputes in future. According to Desivilya et al (2010) not having enough conflict resolution techniques not only will it take longer to resolve a dispute, but it also can result in a larger argument that could have significant impact on the relationship between the two parties.

While the resolution of disputes is important, placing emphasis only on areas of agreement and smoothing over variances can be a serious limitation to the achievement of permanent settlements. Conflict resolution is different from conflict avoidance. The nature of conflict means that the way in which a conflict is handled is determined by what is perceived to be its nature or by one's theory of conflict. Conflict analysis requires understanding the dynamics of human relationships, "whether conflictual or not, for it is human motivations and values that are involved, conditioned by the totality of the environment -- economic, political, social and ecological -- in which these relationships are enacted."

It has long been believed that conflict is caused by in the "natural aggressiveness" of humans that attributes conflict to instinct, immorality or deliberate anti-social behaviour, thus justifying its repression. It has its deficiencies as its remedies are limited to containment as postulated by (Breiding 2014). An alternative is that conflict is a universal response to frustrated needs by providing opportunities for relationship analysis to arrive at the correct definition of the problem in terms of motivations and human needs and to cost their goals and policies. Conflict resolution denotes a self-supporting and stable result by solving the problem to the long-term satisfaction of all parties. Resolution has the capacity to be a component of any system and a means of change, to harmonise competing systems and to bridge parties in relationships between different parties. Conflict resolution deals with the whole human being, encompassing personality and cultural differences, and within the entire society while considering system differences, (Harris 2010)

2.1.5 Conflict transformation v conflict resolution

Conflict transformation is different from conflict management and conflict resolution. It is a way of bringing about constructive change from conflict that goes beyond mere resolution. While conflict resolution brings about quick solutions, the lack of focus and attention on deep social-political problems usually meant lots of good words but no real change, Lederach (2003). The theory of transformation postulates that conflicts happen for a reason. It is a way

of improving on resolution which has been viewed by some as a way of covering up the changes that are really needed. Conflict transformation is based on two verifiable realities, that is, conflict is normal and also change is possible.

Transformation leads to the building of healthy relationships and communities but requires real change in our current ways of relating. It is based on an Anabaptist/Mennonite religious ethical framework which explains peace as being “embedded in justice”, hence, there can be no peace with an unjust application of the law to protect victims of gender-based violence characterised by discriminates against victims on the basis of their gender (Lederach 1955). If peace is embedded in justice then the lenient sentences being given to female perpetrators of gender-based violence are not conducive to a peaceful society. It has become clear in the process of data collection that this injustice is being taken advantage of by women who bring false lawsuits against men as they are aware that the law leans heavily on their side and will not entertain any complaint from a male partner with any seriousness at all.

Conflict transformation goes beyond the presenting problems to see the bigger picture of the conflict, itself without addressing the underlying causes and forces in the conflict. Conflict transformation is a way of looking and seeing. The ecological theory is relevant to transformation of conflicts approach as it looks beyond the presenting situation to the myriad cases of violence. Under this theory, violence is not viewed through single lenses, for example, legal or social but through multiple lenses which fosters better solutions. The rigid approach to violence as only a legal problem requiring retributive consequences limits the capacity of constructive transformation of the challenge. Countries which have adopted a rehabilitative approach such as Norway and China have reaped better outcomes than those who apply the retributive system (McGraw 2021).

Using the conflict transformation approach to gender-based violence provides a lens to see the immediate destruction which is the violence and also to see beyond this into the deeper patterns of relationship and the context in which the conflict is manifesting. Approaching the problem with these two lenses enables us to create a conceptual framework that corrects the problem with the context for a comprehensive understanding of the conflict, while also bringing a platform to address the issues and come up with necessary changes to the underlying patterns. The occurrence of violence in different forms reveals that something much deeper is at play. The issue goes beyond the perpetration of the violence to the nature and quality of the

relationship itself, the partner's expectation of each other, their sense of self-worth, their interpretation of their individual and collective identities, the power dynamics and issues of decision making in the relationship Lederach (2003). Many questions are implicit in any occurrence of violence. The trigger of the violence may be anything from an insult to infidelity, but this only causes a struggle that reveals underlying patterns and issues in the relationship.

The identification of a quick solution may give a resolution for the immediate violence but without probing the deeper significance of the occurrence in the relationship, the violence is most likely to manifest again in another form or the same form in the future. The conflict resolution theory suggests a solution to the presenting situation while conflict transformation looks also at the context of the relationship involved and aims at creating a mechanism or framework for addressing the context, structure and content of the relationship to foster positive change. It suggests that attention should not be given to violence only but the lives behind it and the dynamics of change, understanding and relationships involved. According to Lederach (2003:22), conflict "is normal and it is continuously present in human relationships...the human community and relationships are not static but ever dynamic, adapting and changing". Although conflict is not equal to violence, both do have an impact on people's lives.

Conflict brings about change personally in relationships and roles because of the changes in human society from the past years. This has resulted in previously powerless women becoming empowered in the home, workplace and society as a whole, (Dolan 2014). The crucial question to ask and answer then becomes whether or not the continued emancipation of women is creating a violent or aggressive breed of women or only exposing already existing violent women whose violence has been hidden all along. Adapting a resolution approach to gender-based violence may be effective in the short term but doesn't guarantee the eradication of violence occurring in the future. Gender-based violence and other types of domestic violence affect the individually emotionally, mentally, physically and even financially. Violence has a negative impact while properly handled conflict leads to positive results. Transformation requires intentional interventions to minimise the destructive effects of intimate partner violence and maximise its potential for the growth of the victim, the perpetrator and community at large.

PART 2: EMPIRICAL STUDIES

2.2 Introduction

According to Boote and Beile (2005), a literature review is an evaluative report of studies found in the literature related to a selected area. The review should describe, summarise, evaluate and clarify literature. It should give a theoretical basis for the research and help the researcher determine the nature of his or her own research. A limited number of works that are central to the area of research is chosen rather than collecting a large number of works that are not as closely connected to the research topic.

Boote and Beile (2005) go on to say a literature review goes beyond the search for information and includes the identification and articulation of relationships between the literature and field of research. While the form of the literature review may vary with different types of studies, the basic purposes include to provide a context for the research, justify the research, ensure the research hasn't been done before or that it is not just a replication study, show where the research fits into the existing body of knowledge. Boote and Beile (2005) continue to point out that literature review enables the researcher to learn from previous theory on the subject, illustrate how the subject has been studied previously, highlight flaws in previous research, outline gaps in previous research, show that the work is adding to the understanding and knowledge of the field as well as help refine, refocus or even change the topic.

This chapter provides a review of literature on gender-based violence against men. The main focus will be on forms of violence against men, information needs with regards to gender-based violence against men, factors affecting generation as well as accessibility of information on gender-based violence against men. The researcher using literature from other researches will be answering the areas of focus.

2.3 Forms of Gender Based Violence against Men

According to UNHCR (2003), the nature and extent of specific forms of gender-based violence vary across cultures, countries and regions. GBV may take different forms depending on the type and the stage of the humanitarian crisis. UNHCR (2003) further alludes that it can be noted

that violence against men can also differ from that against women. As societies change, patterns of violence alter and new forms emerge.

Article 2 of the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993), defined violence against women as:

"...any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering . . . including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life". Some women may escape from the violence but they still require healing for inner peace and also in their other relationships.

There is no specific definition of violence against men, neither is there a declaration on the elimination of violence against men. The Domestic Violence Act (2006: np) in Section 3 thereof defines domestic violence widely as “any unlawful act, omission or behaviour which results in death or the direct infliction of physical, sexual or mental injury to any complainant by a respondent”, including physical, emotional, verbal and psychological, economic, intimidation, harassment, stalking, derogatory cultural practices, damage to property etc.

In this study, the terms domestic violence, gender-based violence and intimate partner violence are used interchangeably. It also gives particular forms of violence that can be faced and these include but are not limited to sexual abuse, physical abuse, abuse, psychological and emotional abuse. Gray et al. (2020) state that domestic sexual violence includes all forms of unwanted sexual activity. It is considered abuse even if the victim may have previously engaged in consensual sexual activities with the perpetrator. Men and women can both fall victims to this type of abuse.

Chynoweth, Freccero and Toquet (2017) have indicated that sexual violence against men and boys is prevalent in numerous areas affected by conflict settings and also where there are occurrences of forced displacement. They also acknowledge the scarcity of “sensitised” medical and health services for adult and adolescent male sexual violence survivors as well as the numerous barriers to accessing such care Chynoweth et al (2017). They state that in the absence of sufficient capacitation of health care providers they may overlook male sexual violence survivors or inflict more emotional injury by disregarding their pain or attribute certain sexuality to them which in turn causes others to shun the assistance being provided.

Barbelet (2014) has indicated that the full scale of this crisis globally and how many have experienced sexual violence precisely is not known because this has been such a hidden issue

as men are not willing to come out in the open and talk when they are abused. Barbelet (2014) states that the Refugee Law Project attempted to find out the rate of sexual violence against men and boys amongst refugees in Uganda and they discovered that more than one in three Congolese male refugees have experienced sexual violence in their lifetime.

Dolan (2014) agrees to men facing sexual violence and then goes on to say that sexual violence against men can take a number of categories: they include anal and oral rape, genital torture, castration and forced sterilisation, gang rape, sexual slavery and being compelled or forced to rape others. While these categories describe the physical forms that the violence can take, and the corresponding physical harms, they do not capture the mental and emotional harms that are caused at the same time. They primarily involve psychological challenges of low self-esteem and depression, which in turn are intimately linked to sexual dysfunction and the destabilisation of gender and sexual identity. Dolan (2014) further mentions that to these can be added the psychosocial impacts of disrupted relationships with spouses and children, as well as stigmatisation and resultant marginalisation from community and public life. The absence in most contexts of peer support groups, let alone of larger-scale organising such as that developed by women over many years to address sexual violence, reinforces the isolation of male survivors.

Read-Hamilton (2014) suggests that due to the increased cases of violence against men, there are now calls for gender-based violence prevention and response in humanitarian settings to focus on a wider range of gendered and sexualised violence, such as sexual violence directed at men in conflict. This also shows that sexual violence against men is becoming an issue that needs to be dealt with soon before it gets out of hand. A report by National Alliance (2015) in Zimbabwe to end sexual violence says that about 14% of reported rapes involve men or boys, and that 1 in 6 reported sexual assaults is against a boy and 1 in 25 reported sexual assaults is against a man. According to National Alliance (2015), sexual violence against men is motivated by the desire to dominate and use sex as a weapon against the victim, just as with male sexual violence against women. The report states that male victims experience similar effects of sexual violence as do female victims such as shame, grief, anger and fear. Male victims may also have issues surrounding their sexual and/or gender identity after a sexual assault. Issues of reporting and talking about their experiences, challenges for all victims of sexual violence, may be especially difficult for male victims because of gender socialisation issues.

National Alliance (2015) continues to say that men and boys who have been sexually victimised have a right to a full range of recovery services such as Padare, Legal Resources Foundation, Family Impact, Contact Family among others in Zimbabwe that fully support their needs. These provide for example counselling centres and homes especially for those who may be mentally affected by the sexual violence. Rape crisis centres should make every effort to ensure that: volunteers and staff are trained on the needs and experiences of male victims; the availability of services for male victims is included in advertising and outreach; and the full range of services at the centre, including support groups, is available to male victims.

According to Human Rights Watch (2020) in the Human Rights Report 2021, in addressing sexual violence against male victims, it is important to consider sexual violence in institutionalised settings for example prisons, hospitals, boarding schools. In 2001, Human Rights Watch (2001) brought this issue into sharp relief with the publication of its 378-page report, “No Escape: Male Rape in U.S. Prisons,” in which it reported that prison rape is widespread and brutal. In order to eliminate sexual violence and to appropriately address sexual violence against male victims, it is imperative that advocates and policy-makers address sexual violence in prisons and other institutions such as the military, fraternities and mental health facilities.

According to The Zimbabwe Independent (2014), in 2013, courts around the country dealt with 2 089 cases of sexual abuse, including sodomy. Sexual abuse cases against boys are also on the increase. Of these cases, 1 975 were perpetrated against females and 114 were against males. New Zimbabwe (2014) had another case of sexual violence against men where a Masvingo woman raped a 15 year old boy after she threatened to stab the minor with a knife. According to an article by Newsday (2014), a soldier was kidnapped and repeatedly raped by a gang of women for four days before being dumped on a remote mountain range and stoned.

UNHCR (2011) states that though not to the same extent as women and girls, men and boys can be exposed to sexual violence. A mix of factors can make worse the incidence of sexual violence, including stresses created by conflict and displacement, which often trigger changes in gender roles. Recognising that men and boys may also be victims/survivors of sexual violence is therefore essential.

According to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (2007) verbal abuse occurs when someone uses language, whether spoken or written, to cause harm to a person. Verbal abuse includes, but is not limited to recalling a person's past mistakes, expressing negative expectations, expressing distrust, threatening violence against a person or her or his family members, yelling, lying, name-calling, insulting, swearing, withholding important information, unreasonably ordering around, talking unkindly about death to a person; and telling a person she or he is worthless or nothing but trouble.

Verbal abuse is the excessive use of language to undermine someone's dignity and security through insults or humiliation, in a sudden or repeated manner. Verbal abuse is an infringement on an individual's sense of security and their physical and psychological integrity, which are protected under federal and provincial charters of rights and freedoms as well as under the law. Serious verbal threats may constitute a violation of the Criminal Code.

Men normally suffer from this type of violence in silence because as Bosch (2007) indicates, it is not very easy to identify. According to Bosch (2007), physical abuse is easier to identify since one can see a bruised eye or face and this is unlike verbal abuse, which is difficult to identify or define. Laws usually do not define verbal violence or require it to be reported. He further argues that research indicates that more women are verbally abusive than men and in most cases of physical abuse of a male perpetrator, it would have been started by a woman who would have verbally abused the man. Verbal abuse can include issues that are person-related, such as put-downs (in private or in front of others), ridiculing, the use of swear-words that are especially uncomfortable for the other, saying bad things about the loved ones of the other (family, friends), threatening with other forms of violence against the victim or against somebody or something dear to them. Bosch (2007) further points out that sometimes the verbal abuse is related to the background of the victim, such as religion, culture, language, (perceived) sexual orientation or traditions. Depending on the most emotionally sensitive areas of the victim, abusers consciously target these issues in a way that is painful, humiliating and threatening to the victim.

Contrary to a functional relationship in which partners recognise each other's sensitive areas in time and take special care not to hurt each other in those areas, one who is verbally abusive will especially aim at hurting with words and tones. The Herald (2015) recorded a case of violence where a woman provoked the husband with words and eventually the husband beat

her. She verbally abused the husband and in the process demanded that he hit him. This is another type of GBV men face.

According to Mutepfa (2021), the inclusion of the domestic violence module in the 2007 Zimbabwe Demographic Health Survey (ZDHS) was in recognition of the presence of gender-based violence physical violence being part of it. Mutepfa (2021) noted that 30 percent of women jailed in Indiana for accounts of murder had previously been arrested for violent crimes. Dhwani (2014) indicates that domestic violence against men in India is not recognized by the law. The general perception is that men cannot be victims of violence due to differences in physical strength: this perception can help women avoid punishment. In recent years, there has been a spurt in the number of men who have been physically abused by their wives as argued by Dhwani (2014). Although the trauma may be the same, the methods of inflicting abuse vary, for example, since men are stronger and hit their wives, women in such cases may ask another man to assault their husbands. Stomorken 2007 states that the Indian society is not sympathetic to harassed men; being beaten up by one's wife invites mockery and jokes, and men who speak out about their woes are considered 'unmanly'. The humiliation and shame of this act going public can force them to keep silent.

Many of the incidences noted above have been reported in various newspapers in Zimbabwe. In a case of physical violence recorded by The Herald (2012), a man constantly took physical, psychological and verbal abuse from his wife of four years. Whenever they had a misunderstanding, the wife would grab the nearest thing to her and used it as a weapon. The many scars on his back were from pots, knives and other household utensils that are capable of causing grievous bodily harm bear testimony to the abuse that he had endured at the hand of his wife.

Like women, men also find it hard to get out of abusive relationships. In India, Dhwani (2014) further posits that it seems worse for the men as they not only fear being away from their children, but are also worried about a false settlement case being filed against them. Men who are accused of domestic violence get marginalised by society and friends and family turn their backs on them. In a case recorded in the Times of India (2014), a man approached the police after he was assaulted by his wife, and the cops not only ridiculed him, but said that they will call his wife and ask her to file a case against him.

According to Heise et al. (2002) men can also face family violence, that is, violence which is committed within one's family. They can also face community violence, where gender-based violence is perpetrated by an outsider, an unknown person or an unrelated person to the survivor of gender-based violence. Heise et al, (2002) also affirm that men face state violence, which is committed or condoned by individuals employed by the state, as well as emotional or psychological violence which is non-sexual verbal abuse that is insulting, degrading, demeaning; compelling the victim/survivor to engage in humiliating acts, whether in public or private; denying basic expenses for family survival. Isolating a person from friends/family, restricting movements, deprivation of liberty or obstruction/restriction of the right to free movement is also part of emotional violence.

To determine the validity of newspaper reports, court documents could validate the reports, however, even if true, the courts are ineffective. The National Alliance (2015) argues that legal responses to GBV against men remain slow and are ultimately ineffective. Cases can take more than three years to resolve, and the lack of financial support and protection services during the process leave survivors economically vulnerable, with little confidence that justice will be served. National Alliance (2015) also says that a critical gap to be addressed is the shortage of police doctors eligible to review forensic evidence and file appropriate documentation to initiate court proceedings.

2.4 Factors contributing to the silence on the male dimension of GBV

Despite a pressing need to help male victims of partner assault, gender bias is widespread. According to SAVE (2010) men who seek services are sometimes ignored, ridiculed, and even accused of the crime to which they have become unwitting victims. This may then be some of the factors that negatively affect the generation of information on GBV against men.

(i) Cultural factors

Maboreke (2009) posits that most African societies are predominantly patriarchal and as such, violence against men is not something significant because men are believed to be strong enough to defend themselves. Those men who find courage and report abuse by women are viewed as weak. Medzani (2013) supports this point as he notes that this is the reason why domestic violence is commonly studied and understood from the perspective of women victims and men

batterers. National Alliance (2015) goes on to say that there is need for society to first recognise and acknowledge that men can be vulnerable and can be raped. Both men and women are socialised to see men as powerful, assertive and in control of their bodies. It may be challenging for some to think of men being the victims of sexual crimes because it is challenging to recognise men as “victims” and still think of them as men.

(ii) Stereotyping and socialisation

According to National Alliance (2015), this socialisation can make it less likely for men to seek services and can make it less likely that appropriate services are available. Researchers who have studied violence against men, for example Mutepfa (2019) and Medzani (2013), indicate that it is because of the society men are in that makes it difficult for them to report, to be heard and eventually affecting generation of information on GBV against men. Breiding (2014) acknowledges that many theories exist of why men in particular may hesitate to report domestic violence. In addition to their own feelings of shame, one reason may be fear that they will not be believed and worry that they will be prohibited from contact with their children. Women have been supported by the law as they are seen as the weaker sex (Mutepfa 2019), therefore the fact that they can be perpetrators of violence has been overlooked. Pickup et al. (2001) refers to justifications for violence that are frequently based on gender norms, that is, social norms about the proper roles and responsibilities of men and women. These cultural and social norms socialise males to be aggressive, powerful, unemotional, and controlling, and contribute to a social acceptance of men as dominant. They note that men are expected to be strong enough to defend themselves and so when they are attacked it is more of a taboo. They cannot speak and thus there cannot be generation of information on something that seems not to be there.

(iii) Media biases

In terms of the way in which media reports on GBV, Gasura (2014) notes that the media and most action groups often look at one side of the coin when dealing with matters concerning GBV instead of handling the issue holistically. He acknowledges that GBV is mostly viewed as violence against women and the girl-child. Women can discuss openly and report issues pertaining to violence, while many men, on the other hand suffer silently.

(iv) Toxic Masculinities

In support of the arguments suggested by Maboreke (2009) and Brott (1994), Gasura (2014) points out that Zimbabwe society is patriarchal, which means households are headed by men and they are also expected to be leaders at the workplace and in society in general. According to our tradition, men should take care of and protect their families. So when a man faces abuse, he finds it very difficult to report or simply come out in the open due to societal expectations. Fear of stigma also forces men not to report cases of abuse. According to Gasura (2014), men who face abuse are ridiculed by their peers and in turn the society looks down upon them whenever they seek advice from friends or relatives. According to Medzani (2013), women have been seen as the victims for too long that the men have been forgotten they exist. He posits that women have used this sympathy against men even if GBV against men is prevalent. However because of bias by the society and the government generation of information on GBV against men seems to be negatively affected.

(v) **Fear and stigma**

Sivakumaran (2007) indicates that many men and boys are reluctant to report sexual violence because of the stigma associated with it which makes it very difficult to accurately assess its scope. This stigma is worsened by the perception that a man who is raped either is a homosexual or will become a homosexual as a result of the rape. In a country like Zimbabwe, where the President has spoken out against homosexuals, calling them worse than pigs and dogs (online), it becomes almost impossible for a man to speak out about his experiences and to seek help. Sivakumaran (2007) goes on to say that the result is that male victims of sexualised political violence suffer not just from the physical injuries inflicted on them, but also from an extreme sense of humiliation and isolation. There is an immense stigma associated with rape: the sense of shame, stigma and deep sense of humiliation that victims of sexualised assault face, whether male or female. However, men will often not even speak of the rape, preferring to talk only of other assaults that are “more acceptable” and that will not result in ostracisation from their wives, families and communities. Men seem uncomfortable and unwilling to speak about their own experiences with sexual violence, but are more open when asked if their wives are victims. Men state that women are affected differently by violence because of the physical differences of the sexes: men are much stronger than women and can withstand the violence. Men focus on their ego and therefore do not speak out. In addition, because they are prone to

discrimination (since they are considered strong and cannot be abused or can resist violence), they are afraid to speak out.

(vi) Lack of access to education and information

WHO (2005) asserts that lack of access to education, information and services increases the vulnerability of men to be victims of various forms of violence. Since most cases, stories, policies and laws pertaining GBV are mostly on women, men tend to be ignorant and have less information about GBV, about available social benefits, and their rights, including procedures to access the (social, health and legal) services when they face GBV. WHO (2005) emphasises that they are also because of this ignorance less likely to have the technical and life skills to resist various forms of violence. The lack of up-to-date and reliable data on the prevalence rates and types of gender-based violence in emergency contexts is a particularly challenging obstacle to designing appropriate and effective gender-based violence programmes. Much of the violence is hidden and goes unreported, particularly domestic violence against men and also fear the repercussions of reporting incidents, such as forms of stigmatisation that could jeopardise their future. WHO (2005) importantly declares that linked to this is a lack of rigorous monitoring and evaluation to assess the impacts of response programmes and refine them accordingly. With men not knowing what gender-based violence against them entails, they cannot report and this then affects negatively generation of that particular information.

(vii) Perceptions

According to UNFPA (2009), men do not speak so that they protect their children. Just like women, men worry that leaving their spouses will harm their children or prevent them from having access to them. Obtaining custody of children is always challenging for fathers, as is the prospect of raising them alone. This thus contributes to men not speaking when they are abused and thus negatively affecting generation of information on violence against men as it will then seem non prevalent. By being overpowered by a woman they feel that they have failed in their role as a protector and provider for the family. In a case of India, as noted above, their biggest fear is being slapped with a dowry harassment case. Not only is it hard to shake off the social stigma that comes with being charged with such an act, but the cases also tend to drag on for years and are almost always in the woman's favour.

(viii) Denial

According to UNFPA (2009) men also tend to deny that they are being violated. Men believe that they can help or change their abuser, but change can only happen if the abuser takes full responsibility for her behaviour and seeks professional treatment. UNFPA (2009) also indicates that there are religions that dictate that one stays or one's self-worth is so low that they feel the relationship is all they deserve. If men are not allowed to act when they are abused or face violence, this can affect negatively the generation of that particular information. Their not reporting or speaking out will make it seem like GBV against men is not prevalent and thus if it is not prevalent, there will not be information generated that specifically talks about that.

Spangaro et al. (2000) defines acquisition as the purchasing or getting hold of particular information needed at any particular time without any challenges or restrictions. In this regard it is the ability to attain information on gender-based violence against men by either men or organisations that deal with such issues without facing problems or difficulties.

Field et al. (2018) have indicated that globally rates of domestic violence appear to be higher in rural than urban areas. Worldwide, experiences of domestic violence are associated with high levels of symptoms of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (Devries et al. 2013). In the context of poverty, normalised violence and gender-based power disparities typical within the Southern African settings, domestic violence is perpetrated both by intimate partners as well as other family members, Seedat (2009).

2.5 The Justice System and Violence against Men

(i) Laws and polices

Gender-Based Violence and Livelihood Interventions (2010) asserts that discriminatory policies and laws contribute to constructing and maintaining gender roles and unequal power relations. The lack of an appropriate legal framework to protect people from violence makes it more difficult for men and women to resist various forms of violence or to protect themselves or their children against acts of gender-based violence. They note that records for returnees, demobilized soldiers and their families, failure to understand and adapt to the changing reality and transformed statutory and customary laws and practices may lead many to lose out to others. Such situations of powerlessness and inability to support one's livelihood may lead some into a vicious cycle of anger, violence and abuse. However, even when there is a policy

and legal framework conducive to gender and economic equality and protective of people's human rights, implementing and enforcing policies and laws requires effective formal and informal institutions at all levels national, regional and local. In some countries, legislation and policies do exist and appropriate institutions are in place but do not function adequately to provide the specific services demanded. Yet, when community leaders, institutions and the State fail to hold perpetrators accountable, the knowledge of impunity not only intensifies the subordination and powerlessness of those affected by violence, but also strengthens the perception that male violence against women is both acceptable and inevitable (Gender-Based Violence and Livelihood Interventions 2010). This point is even more valid in humanitarian settings, where the state institutions are inexistent or weak, and community social and cultural structures and networks that might prevent and respond to issues of GBV in normal times are minimal or not functioning.

2.5 Gender symmetry

Bonnet and Boutier (2015) indicate that intimate partner violence abuse has been theorised within current literature, public policy and statistics as “violence against women”. Since statistics are lacking on male victims of intimate partner violence, it is difficult to conclude that men and women are equally violent, that is, it can be mutual, and not only one way. Expansion of the definition of violence to include harassment and psychological violence may lead to a higher proportion of violent women who are responsible for the majority of less serious offences. The concept of gender symmetry posits that violence is mostly bidirectional, meaning that within couple relationships, both partners are mutually violent when using the broader definition of violence. Gender symmetry does not mean that men and women suffer intimate partner violence equally, it does point to a similar number of men and women acknowledge having engaged in some violent behaviour at least once in their lives in different survey instruments. Stark (2010, p202) an author and radical feminist, wrote “I concur with Langhinrichsen-Rohling’s general empirical claim, that female as well as male partners resort to violence in large numbers, that their motives for doing so are often similar, and that both parties are often violent.”

2.6 Causes of violence by women

According to Denson et al (2018;1), relatively little is known concerning women's aggression as compared to men's aggression and this is largely because aggression and violence are often viewed as male problems. Most studies have generally focused on women's victimization rather than their violence in relationships (Busch and Rosenberg 2004). This is despite the evidence that women are somewhat more likely than men to report using violence against romantic partners (Archer, 2000 in Busch and Rosenberg 2004:49). The arrests of women for domestic violence have increased dramatically in recent years and in California, the number of women arrested for domestic violence has nearly tripled in the past decade (Busch and Rosenberg 2004:49). The causes can range from alcohol induced aggression to romantic jealousy. The study by Elmquist et al, (2014) found that "men and women perpetrators were equally motivated by self-defence, communication difficulties, power/control, and jealousy to perpetrate violence" and that more women cited negative emotion expression and revenge as reasons for engaging in IPV than men. A review of 23 studies revealed that "self-defence, expressing anger, control, desire for the partner's attention, and retaliation" caused women to perpetrate intimate partner violence. Furthermore, being victimized by an intimate partner was consistently one of the strongest predictors of intimate partner violence perpetration for men and women alike (O'Leary and Slep, 2012). Participants in the 2004 German study cited "triggers mainly accusations of unfaithfulness, financial worries, or...mental disorders" and the men mainly reported having been struck open-handedly and scratched (Kolbe and Buttner 2020: 537).

Domestic violence is not easy to recognize because a lot of it occurs behind closed doors and also research dealing with this type of violence has also focused mainly on women as victims and men as perpetrators (Babbete 2013:173). However studies have shown that women usually use weapons and types of assault, such as psychological abuse, which do not demand physical strength. Generally, the view of men as victims of gender based violence is not studied as much it is for females. This violence usually is unrecognised because since men are not likely to report such incidents for fear of embarrassment, ridicule and the absence of proper support services. The current lack of research on male victims of gender based violence, necessitates more insight in the characteristics of this violence against them.

2.7 Summary

In the above discussion on male victims of intimate partner violence, several challenges were noted: poor statistics; the emotional impact of violence, worse for men since it is “unmanly” to be seen as victims; the wide variety of sources of violence against men – in prisons, during wars, as refugees, in relationships (male-male, male-female). Taken overall, men are victims of violence. When examining the specific instances of violence, it becomes challenging as it is not possible to compare one form of violence to another given the contextual differences. In terms of intimate partner violence, that is, a male and female relationship which is the focus of this study, women can be violent particularly when violence is broadly defined.

The **quest of** this study was to identify the challenges of men reporting incidences of intimate partner violence, how the justice system has dealt with such cases and how to improve the situation. In addition, it was aimed at understanding why women may commit acts of violence against their partners. The next chapter describes the research methodology which was designed to provide answers to these questions.

PART 3: RESEARCH METHODS

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology and design of this study and elucidates the basis for the selection and application of the particular research instruments used herein. The justification and description of the research approach, issues of population and sampling as well as the data collection and analysis are also explored in detail. The ethical considerations and the ways of enhancing the validity and reliability of the data are also dealt with.

The research sought to identify different forms of gender-based violence against men in Pumula South, examine techniques used by the justice system to handle cases of gender-based violence against men in Bulawayo, explore ways of promoting healing and recovery of victims as well as to ascertain ways in which victims can be educated on non-violence alternatives that can assist them to heal emotionally finding ways of addressing this often ignored societal challenge. The action research component sought to explore how victims of gender-based violence can report more and be equally treated in the process, how law enforcement can be improved to make it accessible and not shameful for men to seek help in the event of such predicament. The unintended results were that the research question forced the participants and interviewees to look at gender-based violence from a new perspective. This chapter defines the design and methodology of the research. It also justifies the selection and use of particular research techniques and instruments in the study.

Traditionally, gender-based violence has been viewed from the perspective of men harming women physically and emotionally. While it is a fact that injuries must be taken seriously, these must be considered simultaneously with the psychological effects which have since been discovered to be far-reaching and with more long-term devastating consequences that affect not only the victims, but also the perpetrators, children and other witnesses. The aim is to unravel challenges that surround men suffering from gender-based violence and not having enough support from the society especially when compared to their female counterparts.

3.2 Research Approach

The research approach of the study is participatory action research, which arises from the reasoning that action is the catalyst for legitimate understanding. Action research is essentially a choice of practice (Bradbury 2010). It is an approach which merges daily actions with thorough systematic investigative processes. Rapoport (1970:499) described it as a means to "contribute both to the practical concerns of people in an immediate problematic situation and to the goals of social science by joint collaboration within a mutually acceptable ethical framework". It is indispensable in peace work as it seeks to generate solutions which foster positive outcomes from the damage caused by conflicts.

The participatory action research design under a qualitative research method was applied for the investigation on the issues of violence as it allowed men to propose and take action on the matter. The interactive design allowed for the intermingling of knowledge and action. Where men are victims of gender-based violence, investigating their experiences sheds a new light on the phenomena of violence from a different perspective. Working with both men and women to reduce violence is an effective approach as it acknowledges that violence is neutral and anyone has a capacity to commit such acts. Their participation and cooperation gave unique insights and they are well positioned to correct and change their attitudes and behaviour.

This study also sought to gain an understanding on issues of violence by women and how to address it. The action research component aimed to identify how involving men can reduce underreporting and how different institutions can create conducive environments for males to obtain assistance. The action research cycle consists of planning, action and reflection (Kolb 1984; Mertler 2009). At times, it involves the fourth phase of observation and these are repeated cyclically. Tripp (2005:446) states that

“action inquiry is a generic term for any process that follows a cycle in which one improves practice by systematically oscillating between taking action in the field of practice, and inquiring into it. One plans, implements, describes, and evaluates an improving change to one’s practice, learning more about both the practice and action inquiry in the process”.

In the planning stage, one must identify issues of concern, which necessitate investigation and change. Possible strategies and interventions to be implemented are implemented in the action stage. Observation is done during and after the actions. The last stage of reflection is vital and

necessary for evaluating the results of the interventions as well the processes, actions and responses of all involved. Researchers are also participants in the research action and this collaboration and participation with the people who are experiencing the problem is crucial (Kaye 2017:5). The researcher is not an expert addressing the issue from an external perspective but acts in collaboration and partnership.

The researcher adopted an action enquiry approach which is described by Burns (cited in Cornwell 1999: 5) as

“...a self-reflective, systematic and critical approach to enquiry by participants who are at the same time members of the research community. The aim is to identify problematic situations or issues considered by the participants to be worthy of investigation in order to bring about critically informed changes in practice.”

Its essence is that it simultaneously facilitates investigation of a particular social problem while also enhancing participation and change. The emphasis is on participation and partnership with the affected communities or individuals. Reason and Bradbury (2001:1) describe it as a “*participatory democratic process*”. It is based on the understanding that there can be “no action without research, no research without action (Lewin 1946, cited in Adelman 1993). It is possible to apply action research in various different fields such as farming, education, community development and organisations for improved performance. The knowledge which is generated assists in solving practical problems within communities and eventually, to contributing to fairer and more just societies. This design is based on the assumption that knowledge generates power and that people's knowledge is central to social change. This emphasises full and active participation by powerless people, and stresses ideological and economic dimensions.

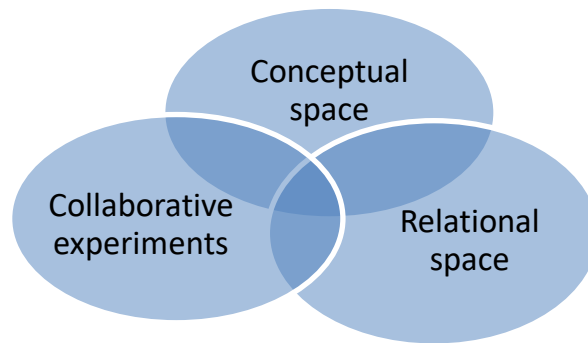


Figure 3.1: Action Research Cauldron. Source: Bradbury 2010.

In the middle of the Action Research Cauldron, depicted above, lies generative knowledge with the intended outcome of this type of research (Bradbury 2010). Contrary to conventional research, the participants are not treated as subjects to be studied but as resource persons with a valuable insight and contributions to advance for improving their situations. It is different from the banking method of education (Freire 1976) but rather focuses on its transformative power. Action research, contrary to typical research, is not fixated on mere publishing of studies: “Research that produces nothing but books will not suffice” (Lewin 1948: 202-3). It seeks to produce theoretical and practical knowledge capable of facilitating positive change. Bradbury (2010:93) refers to it as “a transformative orientation to knowledge creation in that action researchers seek to take knowledge production beyond the gate-keeping of professional knowledge makers.”

One advantage of participatory action research lies in its involvement of the researcher in the study based on the understanding that, it is not only for and by the researcher, but the participants have the opportunity to generate their own knowledge. This is because action research involves “the collaboration and participation of the people who are experiencing the problem” (Kaye 2017:5). The underlying philosophy is that of postmodernism which places emphasis on the role of power relations in relationships and seeks not only to question accepted ways of thinking but also to give a voice to the marginalised (Saunders et al, 2014).

Action research is "a systematic inquiry that is collective, collaborative, self-reflective, critical and undertaken by participants in the inquiry" (McCutcheon & Jung, 1990:148), to seek for solutions to certain problems in specific situation. The approach operates effectively as facilitating a learning enquiry and a knowledge exchange among and between the participants and the researcher. During the focus group discussions, participants were able to create a relaxed atmosphere where they identified their mistakes and acknowledged the undesirability of violence in society. In this way, the design promoted "a collective process of inquiry, in contrast to the individualistic nature of classical research methodology" (Stinger, 1996). The process was fruitful in terms of the baggage that some participants were able to offload as they were also able to freely share their truth for the first time without judgement.

3.3 Research Design

Creswell (2013) has defined the research design as "the plan or strategy researchers use to answer the research question, which is underpinned by philosophy, methodology and methods". The study was carried out using the qualitative research design which was more suitable than quantitative research because issues involving gender-based violence are personal and cannot be quantified in numbers. This made qualitative research the appropriate design for this study. To explore issues surrounding the causes of violence by women, the researcher gathered field notes by sending questionnaires. The type of questionnaires that were employed had open-ended questions where the respondent could had room to put in as much detail as they wished to. The questionnaires used were distinct from the ones utilised in quantitative research which have pre-set answers from which the Respondent is compelled to choose a response and which do not allow room for elaboration.

The questionnaires were followed up by individual interviews through unstructured open ended questions. Inherent in the interview process were the observations. These allowed the participants to respond freely to issues raised or being discussed and to raise their own issues as well. The combination of qualitative research with action research was effective for generating new knowledge and inspiring practical action. Working with men was quite easy because they appreciated the shift of focus from women for a change, hence a qualitative study allowed the researcher to derive to answers to one of the objectives, which is identifying forms

of gender-based violence that men go through especially through the use of questionnaires. These allowed participants to be open and state as much as they wished as possible.

Gender-based violence is by nature a private and personal issue which is difficult to disclose. This makes individual interviews the preferred approach of collecting information so as to create a feeling of a safe space, promote trust and establish a rapport with the participants on a personal level. Interviews allowed the researcher to have answers on how the justice system in Zimbabwe handled cases revolving around gender-based violence as well as means that victims and perpetrators can be educated on non-violent alternatives to problem solving. However, since the research involved male participants, interviews were not ideal and were minimised in favour of more focus group discussion. As stated by Davies and Hughes (2014), my aim was to emerge with deep feelings, ideas, described experiences, opinions, attitudes and perspectives from the participants.

The research espouses a phenomenological viewpoint which concerns itself with the study of experiences from the individual's perspective (Lester 1999:1-2). The qualitative methods utilised to aid the identification of the drivers of female violence and assess any areas requiring improvement from the participants' perspectives. According to Cropley (2021), the rule is that such studies are descriptive and carried out in the usual daily conditions of human existence unlike quantitative research.

The writer opted for a qualitative research methodology because of its suitability for application on a small sample. According to Hollis (1994), this method is concerned with the understanding of phenomena as opposed to the explanation thereof. Qualitative research allows for flexibility, open-ended, unstructured or semi-structured with a larger revelatory capacity and potential for free-flow of ideas and thoughts.

The small sample was efficient, convenient and can also be strategically and purposively gathered to ensure maximum attention is focused on the relevant people. The design gives latitude for the participants for the provision of detailed information beyond the questions which may not be asked but which they remember, feel is relevant and want to share about their experiences which may open further avenues for exploration. This makes it more reliable and descriptive. It is ideal for studying issues of violence because of its ability to afford listening and narrative opportunities in confidentiality, in a humane manner where there is

generally a culture of silence. It allows the research to be participatory in a manner that is considerate to the views, needs and wants of the participants.

Different methods of collecting information were used and they supplemented each other in achieving the study objectives. Interviews allowed the writer to explore violence from the participant's perspectives and to investigate the impact of gender-based violence on men. Unstructured interviews encouraged respondents to express their views freely. Focus group discussions provided the opportunity to examine the types and causes of gender-based violence against men while also affording the space for sharing knowledge on non-violence alternatives to the participants making them wounded healers. The discussions also facilitated the use of participatory action research with the participants, to devise, implement and evaluate processes and interventions to encourage opening up of male victims suffering this violence. The participant's written and anonymous narratives provided an understanding of issues that the participants were shy to share in the presence of others.

3.4 Overall Population

Women make up the majority of the population in Zimbabwe and by virtue of their numbers, violence by them has a significant impact in society and as such it became necessary to choose a specific sample of women. However, due to men's underreporting and fear of stigmatisation, not many female perpetrators were found and this necessitated the participation of men for their input and views. A total of twenty men and women completed the first questionnaire. The city has people of many cultures and participation and views from people of different backgrounds was encouraged as this led to diversity in the study.

A purposive non-probability sample was used. The convenience sampling was of men and women exposed to violence. The writer failed to proceed with the research at the Bulawayo chapter of the Zimbabwe Women's Lawyers Association (ZWLA), which was the original intention, due to some unforeseen challenges. However, the study took an interesting turn as this setback allowed the gathering of views from men aged between the ages of 18 and 49, regardless of marital status, religion or tribe who were interviewed. The participants were a diverse group that included employed respondents, self-employed ones, unemployed people, victims, survivors and perpetrators, students, graduates, illiterate people and gender activists.

While the initial focus was on obtaining information from female perpetrators of gender-based violence specifically as a specific sample, the research had to accommodate data from witnesses and victims as well. Men are also affected by gender-based violence thus their participation was important in this study. The initial sub-group of 20 people was narrowed down to 10 people who participated in the action project.

The core research sample was made up of 10 participants chosen for the positions as key resource persons in society with widespread and factual knowledge on the issues pertaining to violence by women in the city. At least 30 people participated in the whole study to allow the collection of as much relevant and useful data as possible before reaching saturation.

Such purposive sampling was utilised to acquire useful knowledge and insights from men. The initial data collection activities were limited by the issues of Covid-19 lockdown and the precautionary measures. The study was restricted to 3 groups of men due to issues of access and confidentiality. Thus, the data collected and analysed is specific to this group's experience and perspective. Feedback was solicited through post-project questionnaires. The researcher aimed to provide a safe space for the participants. The facts were subsequently then analysed by grouping them under the themes that emerged which enabled identification of patterns and themes in the data.

3.5 Sampling Method

A convenience sampling of men and women who have witnessed, experienced or perpetrated gender-based violence was used for this study. The unwillingness of people to be identified or identify themselves as perpetrators led to the widening of the research sample to encompass witnesses and victims as well. Purposeful sampling was employed to elicit valuable knowledge and insights from key resource persons in the community who were willing to participate by sharing their knowledge for peacebuilding purposes.

3.6 Data Collection Methods

This study utilised questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, observation and narratives to gather data. The use of various methods of data collection enhanced the validity of the results and enabled the study to achieve its aims.

3.6.1 Pretesting

Pretesting was done prior to the distribution of the questionnaires. It was also done before conducting interviews and focus group discussions. The researcher tested and reviewed all the questions with the help of her assistant and colleagues who reviewed and suggested some changes to some of the questions for clarity. The responses to the questions and the discussions together with the literature reviewed provided the baseline data which assisted in the planning for the action project.

3.6.2 Qualitative Questionnaire

The qualitative questionnaire was made up of open-ended questions to address the study objectives. It was distributed via email to the participants who completed and sent their responses through. The questions were made as clear as possible. Questionnaires were also handed out during the discussions for the participants to note down their responses and also to respond verbally if they desired. The written responses were handed in at the end of the discussions. The room for verbal responses allowed for clarification where necessary. This approach was adopted in light of Kelly, Harper and Landau's (2008) findings that researchers ought to use either hand-written or electronic questionnaires to prompt responses to open questions.

3.6.3 Interviews

Interviews are structured conversations (Davies 2014:106). This research involved interviewing individual participants to interrogate their views on violence by women and their experiences or knowledge on this issue. With the pretested interview guide for reference, semi-structured interviews were used with individual respondents. This study strove to create an atmosphere of free-flowing conversation. The research involved conducting of a minimum of 10 interviews. Given the flexibility of open-ended questions, they allowed for further probing and prompting of the interviewees where necessary and for the redirection of the conversation towards the specific research purpose. During the research process, the participants preferred written or oral recording as opposed to video recording.

The men shared the experiences which affected their lives and those of other men. This technique allows for the collection of behavioural facts by allowing the respondent the freedom

in a largely unstructured process of capturing the event. This further allowed respondents to report incidents meant for them, their life situation and their present circumstances, attitudes and orientation. The interviews were transcribed and analysed for themes.

3.6.4 Observation

Various modes of observation, such as participant observation, self-observation and peer observation (Burns 2015) were used in this study. Peer observation, where the assistance of uninvolved colleagues during the focus group discussions in observing the participants, and the researcher were critical for purposes of triangulation to verify personal observations and preparing field notes. This assisted in the achievement of the objectives of the study.

3.6.4.1 Participant Observation

According to DeWalt et al (1998) participant Observation (PO) is a research methodology here the researcher is immersed in the day to day activities of the participants. The objective is usually to record conduct under the widest range of possible settings and in this way, PO differs from naturalistic observation because the latter does not involve interaction between the researcher and participants. For the purpose of this study, participants were observed during focus group discussions, where by the researcher could monitor and record all necessary data relevant to the study.

3.6.5 Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions have been defined as “carefully planned series of discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment” (Krueger and Casey 2000:5). The study employed these discussions to achieve the study’s objectives which entailed the investigating types of violence suffered by men and the causes thereof.

Through this method, this study acquired the participants’ thoughts on violence in general as well as gender-based violence by women together with suggestions of possible interventions. A voice recorder was used in the discussions with the participants’ consent to capture their exact words, accompanying mood and for accurate transcription. The writer was also alert in observing non-verbal communication. During the discussions, the researcher had assistance from colleagues for note-taking purposes and also to address issues of observations and

reflexivity. Immediately after the interactions, the researcher made personal notes, of her recollections from the discussions especially the non-verbal issues. This was less distractive and allowed the writer to fully focus during the discussion.

Three focus group discussions were conducted with between 5 to 10 male participants in each session in different neutral and comfortable environments in the city. The researcher and her assistant guided the discussions to guard against biases and domination by any single participant to create and foster an atmosphere of a fully participatory interaction from all attendants. The discussions were audio recorded and notes were also taken while research assistant asked the questions. The writer opted for this method to allow for interaction with and between the participants while effectively collecting data from several people at once (Kitzinger 1995: 299).

3.6.6 Narratives and Story-Telling

In this study, data was also collected through narratives where the participants wrote down their experiences. Some participants engaged in story-telling through the tree of life technique while others pretended to be talking about films they once watched where they were uncomfortable with sharing their intimate secrets.

3.7 Data analysis methods

According to (Ncube 2006) the “Tree of Life” is an exercise based on the idea of using the tree as a metaphor to tell stories about one`s life. Participants are invited to think of a tree, its roots, trunk, branches, leaves etc. and imagine that each part of the tree represents something about their life. This technique was used in conjunction with other data analysis methods. Data obtained from qualitative research is “rich and dense” and requires the use of “winnowing” techniques to extract that which is relevant and useful to the study (Creswell 2014). The research utilised thematic analysis and the grounded theory of research for analysing the data. These are qualitative data analysis methods which involve the examination of data using a method of developing codes for effective extraction of the themes which arise in and from what would have been said (Davies and Hughes 2014).

In thematic content analysis, the first step is to identify themes that emerge from the data, for example, on the effects of violence or healing etc. Some themes may recur while some may

not. To conduct thematic analysis, the data must first be properly arranged, read through, coded, appropriately presented, and lastly, interpreted. This study considered the minority views or uncommon ideas and investigated the contradictions in the data.

In the study, the collected data was analysed in accordance with the grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967). It was employed to analyse themes and patterns and also to categorise observations. The theory has been defined as the attempt to derive theories from an analysis of the patterns, themes, and common categories discovered in observational data (Babbie 2009: 324). It encouraged resourcefulness by allowing the exploration of the numerous perspectives and attitudes of different researchers and participants. The essence of this approach is to use inductive reasoning to promote the discovery of new knowledge or theories from the data during its analysis. This study looked for similar categories to be presented through narratives. The theory may use three layers of coding and it is applicable in qualitative research because of its flexibility (Tie, Birks and Francis 2019). This theory was used to identify patterns, analyse themes and classify observations. Grounded theory is a systematic “attempt to derive theories from an analysis of the patterns, themes, and common categories discovered in observational data” (Babbie 2009: 324). Furthermore, data was analysed using Microsoft Excel where tables and graphs were used to illustrate findings from different data collection tools that were employed and bring conclusions.

3.8 Validity and reliability of the data

To ensure a high quality of data, the study used a number of methods for trustworthiness, or worthwhileness (Bradbury & Reason 2001) or the credibility thereof. According to Burns, the “trustworthiness refers to whether the data analyses, reports and interpretations constitute honest and authentic reconstruction of the research and of the knowledge that emerged in the social environment, while the value accruing to participants in undertaking the research contributes to its worthwhileness” (2015:192). Credibility, on the other hand, whether internal or external, encompasses ‘the arguments and the processes necessary for having someone trust research results’ (Greenwood & Levin 2007: 67).

- (i) The processes were repeated and the data obtained was compared to expose discrepancies of different views using triangulation (Burns 2015). The information

obtained from different data collection methods, that is, interviews, focus group discussions, observations and narratives was compared.

- (ii) The research involved the intentional selection of participants with varying views, experiences and backgrounds to ensure and enhance the representativeness of the sample under study.
- (iii) The study utilised member-checks by returning to the participants with the data for their feedback and verification the accuracy of the results. To ensure reflexivity, the findings were also cross-checked with other colleagues through peer review.
- (iv) This research endeavoured to compare the findings with similar research carried out elsewhere in comparable situations, to enable the study to ascertain the presence of any rival explanations.
- (v) Due to time limitations only one cycle of the research process was completed.

The extent of the consistency of the findings over time coupled with a precise representation of the sample population is termed reliability. It is enhanced by reviewing numerous sources of literature and taking all findings into consideration. Where research findings are capable of replication using the same tools, the research is deemed to be reliable. Validity was ensured by triangulation of the data where various literary sources were reviewed and data was collected after the employment of at least three techniques while also complying to high level of ethical standards.

3.9 Ethical considerations

The study closely adhered to the ethical clearance procedures of Durban University of Technology. Before carrying out any formal interviews or discussions, the writer read the letter of information as an introduction and explanation of the subject of the study together with the nature and purpose of the research to the potential participants, thus prioritising informed consent. A counsellor employed by the organisation was present for assistance on trauma in line with the *do no harm*, risk or disadvantage principle of data collection and reporting procedures. The participants were informed of the voluntary nature of the engagement and their freedom to withdraw at any stage. The security and confidentiality of the participants' information was prioritised. This was imperative, especially, considering the sensitive nature

and privacy of gender-based violence experiences. Overall, due consideration was given to research ethics in compliance with both the broad social science research ethics.

3.10 Anonymity and confidentiality

Throughout the data collection process, the research utilised pseudonyms to ensure anonymity. The participants were encouraged to avoid the use of their real names so as to protect their identities. This was also done to prevent any risk of civil or criminal liability and damage to their reputation and chances of employability. However, some refused to use pseudonyms while some preferred anonymity.

The consent of the participants in the interviews, focus groups, and action project was obtained in writing and in advance. The sensitive information collected from participants was used in confidentiality and only for the intended purpose of the research and no other purpose. The study did not employ coercive or deceptive methods but only involved willing volunteers. Guided by the no-harm-principle, there was no injury that befell any respondent. See - Appendixes for the letters of information and letters of consent.

3.11 Evaluation

This study involved the evaluation of the outcomes of the interventions conducted during the research. The aim of the evaluation was to ascertain the level of success of the intervention and the extent of the realisation of the aims and objectives of the study and to identify any hindrances. The study adopted randomised controlled test methods to assess any positive outcomes of the victims. There is no scale for measuring healing, so the evaluation was a subjective process mainly through observations. It was possible to assess the changes or improvements in the participants at the end of the intervention as compared to their initial condition and mind set. This method was used simultaneously with specific questions posed to the participants shortly after the intervention (post-action interviews). The basis for allowing passage of a certain period was to avoid obtaining superficial and unreliable results. However, it ought to be understood that the results of the intervention may take time to manifest or take effect given that healing is a process.

A reflective evaluation of the research process was conducted with the aim of taking note of any flaws and facilitating future improvements and lessons from the process. The research involved reflection and self-evaluation from the researcher with the assistance of peers, for objectivity, before and after the research so ascertain the effect of the exercise on the writer's perspectives.

3.12 Delimitations and limitations

The initial stage of the study was intended to involve the women in the ZWLA database in Bulawayo who has been victims of perpetrators of domestic violence. Despite having been given initial authorisation to access the database and files for victims and perpetrators of gender-based violence, the writer was later not given access. The issue of stereotyping crept in as the writer was advised that the women that they represented had been accused out of spite and had not actually perpetrated any alleged violence which appears to be the feminist approach that believes that women can never be perpetrators of domestic violence. Only in one case was there an actual admission that the woman had committed the violence having beaten up the partner and even pulled his private parts resulting in hospitalisation but also in that case the police had been dragging their feet to prosecute the woman showing the lackadaisical approach. The representative however stated that the issue was not that the police have a bias towards violence by women but there is a general relaxation or dragging of feet by the police these days probably due to the poor conditions of service.

However, they assisted the researcher by referring her to another organisation which deals with issues of men known as Padre Men's Forum. The writer also engaged a local organisation known as The Men's Conference Trust for questionnaires, interviews and discussions through a radio talk show. The writer issued out questionnaires and interviewed women in her community and engaged in data collection. Women were intended to be the majority participants of the study but with the change of circumstances men became an important part of the research.

It was very interesting to note that a number of men showed interest in the research after realising the topic. The fact that the study was conducted with a small sample means that the findings are limited by the inability of generalisation to other parts of the country. This study would have benefitted from the input of female convicts or ex-convicts of gender-based

violence on the impact of imprisonment on their healing and general outlook but the writer did not manage to have access to them.

This study was also affected by lockdown restrictions which were later removed. There were also time constraints and a general reluctance of members of society to accept the fact that women also perpetrate acts of gender-based violence. The low number of participants made the generalisation of results impracticable.

3.13 Contributions

The contribution of this study in the peacebuilding arena lies in its ability to create the awareness around GBV against men in society, from the rare male perspective. It has drawn light to an overlooked issue in society that has been affecting many. It provides insights into the experiences of violence by men will, therefore, add to the scarce literature on the subject of gender-based violence by women in the city.

3.14 Conclusion

The research approach, design and methods used in the research captured the respondents' narrations and experiences and assisted the writer to deduce sound outcomes. Although not much transformative action was undertaken due to time limitations and other challenges, the study has marked the beginning of conscientisation on the impact of violence in society whether committed by men or women. The action project was revelatory and liberating for all respondents involved as they realised the importance of embracing non-violence as a way of life despite their gender. It was observed that the design was of pertinent importance because it helped the researcher achieve all the objectives under study.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is divided into six broad parts.

The first part provides the outcomes, contents and interpretations of the focus group discussions. The second and third sections deal with the contents and interpretation of the questionnaires and interviews, respectively. The fourth and fifth sections focus on the outcomes of the narratives and observations while the last portion deals with details and results of the action research.

It offers a summarised analysis of the data findings collected from different phases of the study through qualitative methods. The data gathered through different qualitative methods was analysed, presented and interpreted using the grounded theory. According to Tie et al. (2019), this theory “sets out to discover or construct theory from data, systematically obtained and analysed using comparative analysis”. Although the theory is naturally flexible, it is not a linear process but rather quite complex. It is an appropriate methodology when there is little knowledge about a phenomenon and where the intention is to formulate a theory explaining more on the processes involved in the issue of enquiry.

The theory is distinguished by its capacity for generate of theory which is grounded in the data. It is both a method and an outcome of enquiry (Bryant and Charmaz 2007). Glaser and Holton (2004) have defined the grounded theory as ‘a set of integrated conceptual hypotheses systematically generated to produce an inductive theory about a substantive area’ and as such it is suitable for the study. Strauss and Corbin (1998) have also defined it as the ‘theory that was derived from data, systematically gathered and analysed through the research process’ where the researcher ‘begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data’.

In brief, the objectives of the research were to identify forms of gender-based violence against men in Pumula South, a location in Bulawayo and to examine techniques used by the justice system to handle cases of gender-based violence against men in the city. The study also sought to explore why women in Bulawayo engage in gender-based violence and the role played by experiences of violence at the hands of men in causing this. Through action research, the research aimed to deconstruct societal stereotypes and perceptions on the perpetration of gender-based violence and promote non-violence.

An analysis of the research findings is critical for a full comprehension of the participant's experiences and views. The precise selection of the research instruments was adopted so as to derive insights from the victims, witnesses and perpetrators of gender-based violence through their individual and collective experiences.

4.1 Focus Group Discussions

When focus group discussions are intentionally used for their group and interactive characteristics, they are the ideal technique for generating data on performed social norms rather than individual views. They allow researchers to tease out shared beliefs that are hidden and disregarded that neither the researcher nor the participants “have ready words for them” Jakobsen (2014). These discussions generate that data which reflects people's assessment of what they think can be said in front of others.

The focus group participants were comfortable with being recorded and being identified using their real names without using pseudonyms. The discussions were held at the NUST – American Space and provided opportunity for gender activists and journalists with a passion for issues relating to gender-based violence to have important conversations and discussions in a peaceful, quiet and relaxed, neutral and conducive environment. The groups provided rich input and view on the subject and responded to the guiding questions. They discussed broadly on the causes of GBV by women, they explained the challenges faced by men in the society, suggestions for improvement, etc. They gave considered insights on the topic and related issues and this part reveals some of the views given during these interactions.

To assist in the process of triangulation and also in the quest of obtaining more data on the subject of the research, different data collection methods were utilised to carry out the study on

the issues surrounding gender-based violence, in general and the perpetration of violence by women, in particular. The discussions began with a recap on the definition of gender-based violence which was necessitated by the realisation that people usually assume that they know what it is and yet they may be mistaken. The participants defined Gender-based violence as follows:

LM: Gender-based violence is any form of either fighting, it can be physical fighting or emotional abuse that happens mostly in the domestic areas in the homes

JT: Gender-based violence is any harmful act perpetrated against someone based on his or her gender

RJ: For me Gender-based Violence is basically violence that's perpetrated either by a man to a woman or vice versa in the domestic sense that they probably are in a relationship, or they are married or they are dating... I would not want to put it as that violence that is outside of the household setup as it were, I don't know maybe if I have answered

BAM: I think we can define GBV in terms of unequal power relations between two genders where if one believes that I have authority to exercise my power upon another and actually do it at the same time creating violence or having violence, so I would like to take it that way



Figure 4.1: Focus Group Discussion session

The participants were also asked whether or not they thought that the perpetration of Gender-based Violence could ever be justified and their responses were as follows:

NS: I would say... I would say it is to an extent justified if the person deems it as a form of self-defence not them being the aggressor but them defending themselves against potential harm or potential injury from the perpetrator so violence to a certain extent from where I am sitting if that person is defending themselves or if they deem it as self-defence I think its justified but not from an aggressors point of view

ND: I think maybe when someone is responding already there it means there is an initiator so if you want to talk about justifying you talk about where it beings...can we justify the violence...can you look at that violence to say I has to become violent because of this this and that but at the end of the day what does that violence solve?...anyway it is better to walk away at a certain point because you ask yourself if I become violent and then what next, what do I solve?

RNK: I think maybe because of societal perception or maybe how we grew up sometimes we are taught that to put someone in line you have to beat them so that is how it becomes...I have to beat this wife because she did so, so and so generally in the society where we grew up we don't have a way of solving things peacefully, so I have to beat her so that she does not do this or that.. it also becomes a micro thing where violence has to be justified, I must beat her so that she doesn't do so, so and so

IK : You can't really say it can be justified but nature people are violent, at times selfish, emotions circumstances which can lead to one person committing Gender-based violence

GM: I have heard some people say if my husband doesn't beat me he doesn't love me or maybe I was wrong...I once dated a certain lady and she kept saying to me that I was too soft she wants a man who is firm, maybe she wanted to be beaten

DM : Obviously you can't justify violence but culturally men were dominant over women but there are people in the past who believed that men must beat women for discipline but things changed with emerging rights but some people are still backward and that's why some still accept that their husbands beat them and to them its ok, that's why you find that but in any case any form of violence or abuse can't be acceptable but at the same time we have to consider that the foundation was bad before or in the past it seemed to be normal that women are to be beaten for discipline but gladly that generation is slowly dying away

JT : There is a perception by some women that if the husband doesn't beat her he doesn't love her....In women's circles if she does something wrong and the husband keeps quiet or doesn't beat her they don't see it as normal, she expects to be beaten or the man to be hostile, she can't feel comfortable sometimes the least she can do is she can run away for example in that story "sweet revenge" where the women ran away where the husband ignored the infidelity I did not do anything to her for her infidelity they see receiving a beating to show that the husband is still concerned about her and still loved

NN: People have been socialised to except violence, as a society our normal is violence

GM: There was a story where a wife was beaten up for serving a cold meal to the husband... traditionally as a woman, there are expectations from you failure of which you attract a beating

EK: It seems women need violence to make them submissive and this is why society even trivialises these incidences of violence especially where there are no physical injuries. One of the participants was left by a lady because of being too soft and was not a man, she said she doesn't need that kind of man who is too soft

When asked on the causes of perpetration of violence by women, the participants gave a number of causes for this violence.

RNK: there have been shifting sands beneath the pillars of marriage in the sense that the world we are living in has brought in new definition of roles between man and women and we are failing to take that shift in line with our cultural setting...when a person gets married, they have expectations of how they will relate, society also has its own definitions of how the couple should relate, there is a contradiction between the societal expectations eg on submission versus those of men

JT: You know right now we get into a debate and you want the person to keep quiet, we don't understand each other, we don't want to keep quiet, and then I'll talk, it's the same

MC: So I was looking at this right...violence is not only physical but also psychologic and with women physically sometimes you realise that physically we do not have the energy to fight a man and because of frustration and accumulating anger most of the times with women you end up using psychological violence and you know that if you tell your man maybe it's your husband that you are not a man enough that's violence and it may be triggered by accumulated anger, or its frustration and you know that I can't beat my husband and if I am to beat up this person they will beat me...sometimes they do it unknowingly they think they are being defensive don't know that they are being violent they just think let me tell him this so that he can feel pain... let me just say this so that he can also see that I am able to react

BAM: For me one of the reason why women become violent is because of the societal background in the sense that if you look these days closes the police have what you call the VFU, the Victim Friendly Unit... it's a known fact that you ask those police station how many men walk into the police station to report violence women probably the numbers are so low so women now know understand that if I beat up this my boyfriend or assault him the chances of the partner reporting them are low vis a vee one slap on the woman she rushes to the police station and 15 guys with guns will come and pick me up as if I'm an armed robber...it's a defence mechanism, they now have a way to channel their anger without the victim of the violence walking into the police station or even reporting to the family that I have been beaten because if I tell a friend instead of helping me they will go all over town telling on them

BAM: Society has moulded the situation to give women the advantage even if they are the aggressors

ST: In one incident, the guy went and reported and the police did nothing, then it happened again and again and it just keeps on being the same thing over and over again...when he gets to the police they just say there is a counselling service at such and such a place and you should go there

EK: If you tell your family, the family will ask you "so were you beaten by the wife but in the bedroom is everything ok?" It's a way of saying that the reason she was beating you is that you are weak in bed as if you were stronger on the other side she would not have been you your wife disrespects you because you are clueless in bed

JT: ...and also women are getting away with it...

NS: I actually just wanted to make a comparison on GBV looking at the perspectives of Zimbabwean...its actually like whereby you end up adjusting getting used to it and then you end up thinking its normal and it comes to a point where, even when people are now fighting they will be like leave my what what, leave I'm ok with it of which that's wrong...To me personally it's all about where we grew up, our cultural background. Coz we can't compare us to the old generation to them it was ok it was normal but as we grew up and understand our rights things started to change and now we look at our rights but its ok but it now infringes someone else's rights

EN: We have got men who stay in abuse relationships cos they are afraid of starting over for example a beautiful wife, good sex, may be the wife gives him a good social standing, validation...sometime it's also church pressure, you may be afraid of losing your position or being seen as a failure in the church and prefer to keep the image...generally people fear change and sometimes they do a cost benefit analysis and if staying and enduring the abuse has more benefits than leaving they will stay...but there are some people who won't care what people say while others want to maintain an image...People also try to justify that for example she was angry, she found messages, or you forgot to pay for something or said something inappropriately and you forgive...People are always looking for reasons to justify violence

KS: If you go to the police station they start calling each other to gather for your story the police officers start calling each other to gather and hear your story and then you end up seeing that its useless or you are told to go and bring your wife so you end up leaving it go and bring that wife of yours go and get her for yourself the one who beat you up so the advantage is with the women

JT: It's like the law is on the side of women are much more protected than men, not all women are physically weaker than men you can't say women are weak there are some we stronger and can fight but the issue is one of overprotection by the law reporting is taken as if it's a shame, women provoke and also go and report men just feel I can't report the case there are some people that cant report their case they feel it's a taboo, I can't do that you are not a man at the same time women look as if they have got all the power the law is protecting the they think they have all the power they will provoke she will say touch me and see for yourself

LM: You know when you grow up in an environment where violence is an everyday thing, you find it normal you cannot live without its that's why I was saying that you know with Zimbabweans you can do anything you can beat them then they will just be quiet anything I remember back in the day when people used to protest over fuel prices, but now we are at \$1.60/litre and no one is saying anything...I think us getting used to that thing it makes us accept ah no you know what you can say that it is us who approve this violence thing, no one can just wake up and say I'm going to maybe beat that person they have to first tell themselves that there is a possibility for that to happen so let me put that possibility to .life to life and then it happens

NT Ok ... I think at a home setup as I will allude to the point that was made by the 2 guys at home men suffer in silence they are abused by ladies but they are afraid to what to go and report those cases due to the stereotypes or the social society's views that it's the man who beats the women so to correct the home but when the man is the one who is beaten it becomes something else...cases of gender-based violence are there at homes and most of the times they are perpetrated by women because if you see that the physical or emotional abuse that the women can insult the husband and men will just keep quiet and you see that in such cases where the guy suffers in silence and one day he will commit suicide , some of the suicide cases are emanating from that violence the man will keep it to himself so he will decide no for me to get rid of this let me commit suicide or desert this family because he's afraid that if I reports to his family they will say that I'm weak they will say I'm not man enough so it's better for me to take this decision and maybe that decision will be fatalistic

DM: I think it's due to socialisation, take for example there is a guy once who was dating a certain lady in Makokoba then this guy was late to go and see her the lady small bodied and said to the big guy "hey you don't get too familiar with me, is this the time to come you have been saying you are on the way you are coming", so the socialisation aspect it plays a big role on the child and you will see the lady will become violent because the lady would have taken it from the society there, so if you check most of the ladies that come from the western areas, they will stand for their case unlike those from the eastern suburbs most of them are soft, so the majority is from the west where there is hard situation where they face the real aspects of life, so it makes them to be hard they don't even see men as anything because they have been hardened by suffering, in society where she grew up is treated like a guy, is treated like a man you see

RNK: Economic factors can also be triggers like the absence of food in the home which means the man is not providing, the man is emotionally abused and may not beat the wife but starts escaping from the home, you feel you are not a man, and the failure to provide basis which spills into bed

EN: Domestic violence is all to do with personality clashes, some people refuse to be treated in a certain way or set boundaries or standards of each other, personality will say how far can I let this person continue, some victims of violence stay but some move out of it, a certain man left everything for the wife with the clothes on his back...when people stay and endure that's how you perpetuate violence and as the victim you can actually make a cycle of it in the family

GM: Women based on where they come from there is a deliberate advice from the support structure they become so emotional, women are much more emotional and do things which are more dangerous and not easily to detect, usually by the time society realises it will be too late

RNK: I can say there have been shifting sands beneath the pillars of marriage in the sense that the world we are living in has brought in new definition of roles between man and women and we are failing to take that shift in line with our cultural setting ...when a person gets married, they have expectations of how they will relate, society also has its own definitions of how the couple should relate, there is a contradiction between the societal expectations for example on submission versus those of men...People do change but they are not good at accepting change, people can develop feelings for other people, then women start attacking the manhood of the man after being dumped like saying a penis is small and it affects men psychologically

EM: People don't establish in the initial stages what they would do if certain things happen for example if the man stops working that violence are all to do with

The participants in all the discussions were in agreement that women are capable of carrying out violence. They correctly understood the question to include not only physical violence but also other types of violence.

EM: Yes, women are not only capable but they do commit violence...especially if you don't respond to what she is saying she will ask you so you can't hear what I'm saying to you...women can be proper destructive they can cut off their nose to spite their faces, they are doing it every day, but we just in a patriarchal society where people don't say it...

LM : There was a certain lady contacted me to give me the scoop on her husband saying that he hooks up with different ladies, the man has an NGO and that she has caught him cheating on her with different women and I contacted the husband because I had to get the other side of the story and when I called the man asking about the issue, he said my wife beats me that's why I cheat and the more she beats me the more I cheat, you can write the story I no longer want her, and he blamed the wife...

Field et al. (2018) have indicated that globally rates of domestic violence appear to be higher in rural than urban areas. Worldwide, experiences of domestic violence are associated with high levels of symptoms of anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (Devries et al. 2013). In the context of poverty, normalised violence and gender-based power disparities typical within the Southern African settings, domestic violence is perpetrated both by intimate partners as well and other family members, Seedat (2009).

DM: In homes there is a lot of trouble, especially if you are a man who fails to provide for the family or come late at home, but men have problem or normalising the way women treat them

When asked on the issue of whether or not women in Bulawayo are violent, the participants unanimously conceded that this was indeed the case. However, they were in also in agreement that the city is the most peaceful in the country although the situation differs from one household to another.

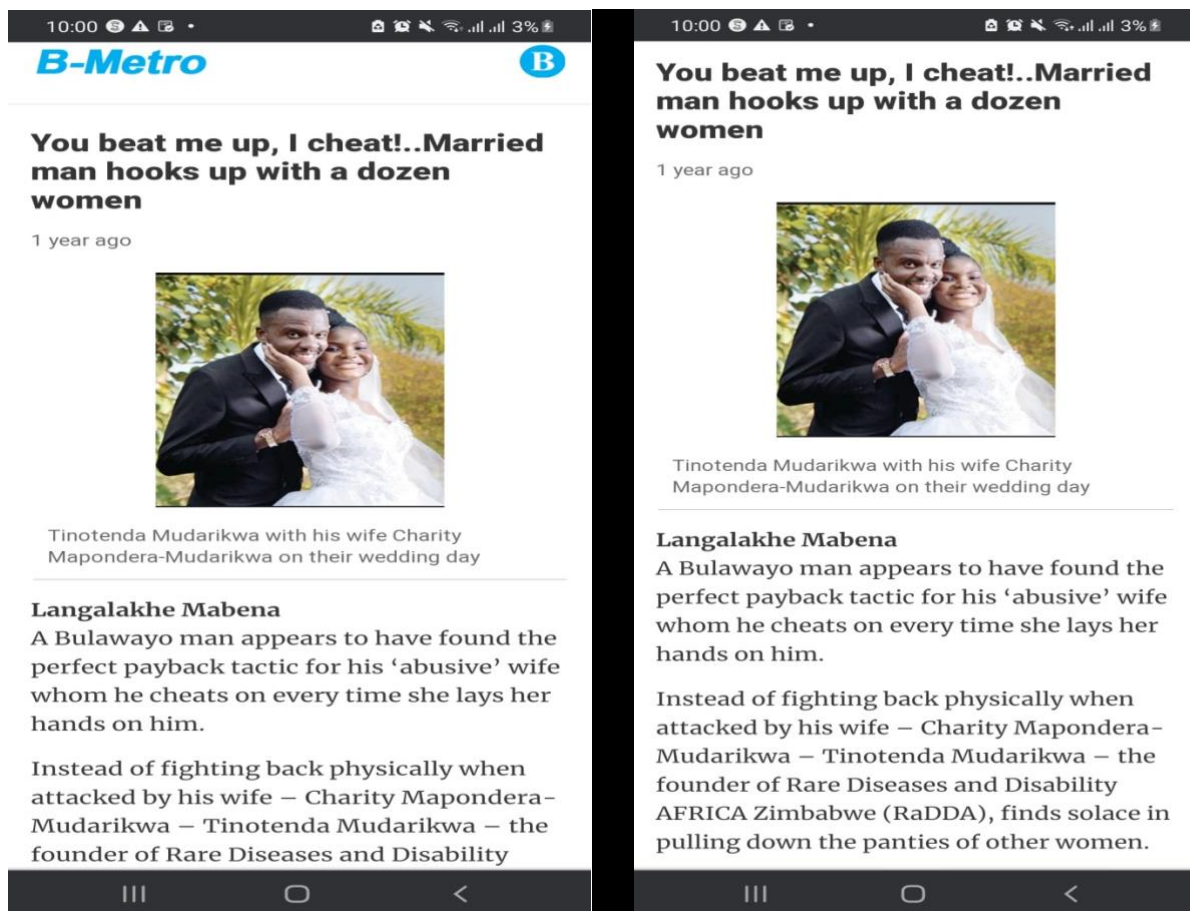


Figure 4.2 Newspaper article

NS : Yes, women in Bulawayo are violent...

MC: My surname is Chingono... I was born here and bred here in Bulawayo so I'm Shona by birth and surname but most of the things I have learnt the Ndebele way so at school I remember I would usually joke I'll be like they say Ndebele women are violent yes I am violent provoke me and see what I will do. I would joke but if you really want to be honest we are violent... Yah I remember the day before yesterday I was walking with my friend in town and we met a woman who was blocking the way with her hand on her waist, my friend just said "so where do you want us to pass", and I was like but can you not just say excuse me can I pass...I think it is in our language I don't know maybe it's the way we were brought up we really can't communicate properly, if I talk to a Ndebele person its ok but if I talk to another person they will ask are we fighting or not, if you get a fellow Ndebele man its ok but if I go to the working industry they will be like can't you communicate in a way that's right so I think it is in us but we do not notice the violence, I don't know... I don't know what you think...

IK : Yes, it's that social aspect and contextual aspect

NN: I think women in Bulawayo are violent, I usually report peace order...you will find men going to report abuse by the wife the man will say my wife abused me but I love her...my wife abuses me ... them reports .. I love my wife.. I'm suffering because of this wife it really shows that most of the Bulawayo women are violent based on those cases

KS: As a journalist who always covers civil issues, I have seen that there is an increase in the number of men seeking peace or protection orders they think it's better to do so than going to the police because they will say ahh you are a man, this is common go and seek a protection order...they don't want the women to go to prison

RNK: Suffering results in GBV through compensatory behaviour, you feel I'm nothing and want to do something to compensate.

EK: Its more than about economy because the rich the poor etc. all have issues, people's reactions are different because of their personalities so even in similar circumstances, it is just that different people react differently

RJ: It means the Ndebele women are taking the adage *komfazi otshaya indoda* literally

DM: Us as people we are approving, we are actually consenting we are acknowledging that yes this is it what it is , so for something to be live it has to happen so if we say *komfazi otshaya indoda* and the wife beats the man and we say no but this is what is happening it will spread from this one to this one to this one

JT: I have a friend who was complaining and saying *ahh* Ndebele women are violent and I asked why I can't even sleep at home I have to run away and its now difficult I can't even go back because I have a little baby and when you get there its always *dididididi*

KS: Not quite but at times they do it not knowing that its violent but there is portion of women who can be retaliating, it depends also with one's support structure peer pressure friends telling you to do this etc violence is common in the younger generation of women than the older more experienced ones, peer pressure

MNS I have seen that when women are the breadwinners in the relationship they would want to assert the certain control over the man while the man is also trying to be the man in the relationship, where women provide for you they take away those things in the event of argument

JT : A situation happened where the brother/cousin the wife faked a beating after having been caught in adultery after leaving the children alone for the whole day and she was believed

NN: Women emancipation is now being abused by women and even when they report they are quickly attended unlike men, even where they have not been abused. They are now abusing that protection, that's why they want to withdraw most matters after realising the seriousness of the allegations

JT: Many women always think that the law is always on their side, eg in maintenance matters they don't want to settle matters but are at times humbles as the law can sometimes be just for everyone, especially on exorbitant maintenance claims

RNK: Generally there is now too much of individualism women are now located in the informal sector the me, me spirit they are now economically empowered and do not beg men as they have their own money

GM: Beating is a means of control like in African movies women want to control men through violence... people agreed to be together so there is no need to fight *discipline*

EN: Over the years, people and circumstances change is inevitable people should find a way of accepting each other with the changes that come with time...

MNS: The increased connectedness of society brought about by technology and social media, but in the past couples would not be too much in touch with each other throughout the day, 8 am how was your journey to work, 10am what are you eating, 1pm have you had lunch, 3pm I miss you, 5pm he is on the way home and when he gets home they have nothing to talk about end up saying lets watch Netflix...but in the past it was not like this, even if something like an accident happened at home while the man is at work, he would only learn of it when he got home in the evening

The participants noted that violence may be physical, verbal, emotional or psychological. The majority were in agreement that women perpetuate mostly non-physical types of violence. One participant stated that some women are stronger than men and actually fight with men and beat them. Another indicated that every man has suffered violence at the hands of women which ranges from slapping, insults, pulling the steering wheel while driving etc.

MNS: A woman slapped a man and took the beer bottle from him, broke it and started chasing him, he ran away and did not know when to return home or if he was safe, she started stalking him until she realised where he was now staying and she followed him inside when there was the guy he was staying with and another lady...and you can imagine what happened after that started violence, another woman started planting a phone in the husband's car to hear his conversations in the car

NS : ...women as perpetrators come in different forms she might not beat you but she may poke your ego, if your wife bolts at you, there are triggers what makes a woman abuse a man and vice versa its starts from how we were brought up, if you grew up when your mother was talking bad to your father, the background is important

EN: ...for example, slapping, while driving or pull your ear or tag at the steering wheel especially if you don't respond to what she women can be proper destructive

MNS: Hiding your wallet, or hide car keys, lock you outside, its damaging but men have a general self-armour, they ignore or don't pay attention to it or normalise it...and women say hurtful things that occurred many years ago and repeat them years later which means that they really mean them

RJ : I feel that women's violence is more of the mental and not physical that's why we are having men suicide increase cases, women can tell you something that will break you and even when you share with others they laugh, being told things that they can't handle emotionally women are being perpetrators more than physically

KS: Women's violence is more subtle, they use mental strength than physical strength, that's why you see even bouncers killing themselves because of women, men are laughed at when they try to open up and say they have depression

BAM: Women are mainly perpetrators of emotional violence and this is deadly

JT: Some women perform spells on the men to kill their self-esteem and control them, women are much more emotional and do things that were more dangerous and usually it is seen when it is too late

ST: The failure to provide by men is a major issue or sometimes they may not leave the bar until late to avoid noise with the woman but men make a mistake of normalising the way women treat them, as men they don't tell anyone about the challenges at home, some may take out their anger at the workplace or on the next person

EK: Sometimes men can just fear to commit a crime so they keep quiet and not respond to women

RJ: Men don't report because they are ridiculed at the police station

ND: If you can't provide for the family as a man, you are in trouble

BAM: We must find ways of tackling the violence that men go through, speak to the women on how you don't like the treatment they have given you

MNS: There is that joke where the man pretended to be deaf and dumb and by the time the woman graduated with sign language, the man pretended to be blind...

4.1.1 Themes on challenges pertaining to arresting violence by women

- i) General normalisation of violence in society
- ii) Wrong perceptions on the effectiveness of violence for communication eral
- iii) Underreporting and bottling up by men
- iv) Need for societal validation
- v) General trivialisation of violence against men
- vi) Destructive and negative police attitudes

EN: There are some conversations people are not having at the initial stages not practical and realistic e.g. what's going to happen if I stop working etc. people don't discuss the worst case scenario out of fear which brings about *indaba yokubalisela* or a sense of entitlement (vindictiveness) when things go sideways etc vindictiveness especially when people do things for other people...

NN: Instead of leaving each other, people choose violence

- ST :** Women are not willing to find solutions but blame men for not providing...
- RJ :** Women are scary
- MNS:** Women are complicated
- JT :** There is a guy who has forgiven his wife for 5 or 6 times for cheating on him, it sounds strange, even after catching her red-handed,

In response to the question of whether, the city of Bulawayo generally a city of violence judging from the name, the participants were agreed that it is a peaceful city.

NM: No, but violence is everywhere, some people will accept ill-treatment but some will not, we cannot single out the city but it is actually peaceful that the other cities in the country... in terms of households it differs according to how people relate with each other

4.1.2 Cultural perspectives

One participant referred to the old adage, *isigogo siqoqwa sisemanzi* which is interpreted to mean that you train up a child in the way you want it to go. The importance of this perspective lies in the issue of socialisation and upbringing and the role that these play in the violence of adults. The environment where a child is brought up plays a major role in their view and response to violence.

EN: The issue of *eyomndeni kayingenwa* (literally meaning you don't interfere with private family issues)...Gender-based Violence or intimate partner issues in the community are not to be interfered with...In the community neighbourhood and people will fight and people will say we are used to them fighting, it becomes difficult for people to intervene the community is encouraged to offer support, *eyomndeni ayingenwa*, next day they post or enjoy themselves after having fought the night before, in the past that was the situation, this is also why people do not talk about what they see even if they see someone with another person's wife or girlfriend

One participant experienced stalking as he would constantly be called by the wife after she had been informed by people of his whereabouts. He viewed the same restless people with nothing to do whether acting whether requested or feeling obliged to report.

4.1.3 FDG - Overall emerging themes

The following is a list of the emerging themes resulting from the focus group discussions:-

- Patriarchal society foundations
- Power struggle control\change discipline
- Connectedness

- General trivialisation of violence
- Normalisation/tolerance of violence
- Societal pressure expectations
- Socialisation – *isigogo sigqwa sisemanzi*; peer pressure
- Lack of/poor communication candid conversations
- Avoidance
- Negative/destructive police attitudes
- Personality clashes
- Women’s over-emancipation, over empowerment
- Biased perceptions female aggression, infidelity, revenge
- Endurance - need for validation, misdirected aggression, justifications
- Cultural perspectives – discipline, *eyomndeni kayingenwa*, cultural expectations
- Absence of non-violent conflict resolution skills
- Change management



Figure 4.1 Focus Group Discussion session

4.2 Interviews

The interviewees refused to be recorded and also opted to remain anonymous. The unstructured interviews produced much useful and unanticipated information. Some parts of the interview responses are given in this section and the responses are followed by examination of how they relate to the central themes of the study. The findings grasped from the interviews are assessed with the outcomes from other methods in the concluding portion of this part.

The interviews began with a question of the participant's your thoughts on gender-based violence and flowed from there. The interviewees were female and mostly shared insights on violence against women. One interviewee shared that "there are so many women out there" experiencing this type of abuse and that there are at least 6 which she knew personally.

A different perspective was given by one interviewee who stated that:

"There are also *amadoda* (men)...not enough is done for *amadoda* (men). Not every man is strong and burly. Others are gentle and timid. Women can be *amagandanga* (terrorists) at times, tjo. Ask the diasporans especially in the UK, Australia, and US and some African countries. *Uzakhala inyembezi tototo* (you will cry tears, drop, drop, drop)...where the men may not help at home and the wife works multiple jobs and he splashes money home to look and feel important and then the fights start."

One interviewee suggested that people should intervene where they see situations of gender-based violence. She stated that, "love is so simple...we just complicate things (this you can quote me). We also do not know what true love is."

The issue of upbringing was also highlighted in relation to the tolerance levels for abuse. The socialisation of children to normalise violence or their emotional neglect was identified as the main cause for them to grow into adults that endure violence and abuse. One lady commented as follows:-

"I have zero tolerance for abuse...I was told that I am loved, lovable and enough. I do not need another person to complete me...*ngiphelele* (I'm complete). They merely add on to what is there. So if people saw themselves as whole, and had support structures and positive role models and coaches, they would be better individuals and hopefully better partners, parents, etc."

Most interviewees were not willing to acknowledge the perpetration of gender-based violence by women as a reality. One lady stated that:-

"I do not think that women become perpetrators themselves, however their children may. Kids raised in such setups may be so good or they may be so timid or they may be violent. I think it depends on the support the victims/survivors and witnesses get. Witnesses are also the silent victims...."

They believed that women are weak that's why the law should continue being soft on them and they should receive lenient sentences. One stated that she believed that the issue of violence against men is a real issue that must be addressed because men have emotions and they also have vulnerabilities. She further suggested that there should be stiffer penalties imposed on offenders to reduce violence against men.

During the interviews, one participant stated that it is possible to achieve a non-violent society and summed up possible solutions to gender-based violence as follows:-

“Yes, I do believe that we will get to that point...you and I just need to play our part and speak out and stand up for those who cannot....Raise awareness...Don't normalise the abnormal...Ensure that skilled coaches and counsellors and psychologists are available....Use the law...train the first responders or points of contact....Training religious leaders and police and teachers on signs, response, how to raise awareness, etc...make stiffer penalties....Don't shame the survivor, or say benzeni (is it ever justified???)”

4.2.1 Analysis

There was no evidence during the discussions or interviews that it is the suffering of gender-based violence by women which causes them to become perpetrators at all. Contrary to the writer's assumption that victims of abuse are turned into abusers because of their experiences, various other reasons were referred to explain the occurrence of this violence instead including the desire by women to control men, the failure to accept change, economic factors, and personality clashes among others.

Two extremes emerged during the interviews. The first one was held by women who were interviewed who do not believe that women can be perpetrators of gender-based violence. These participants believed that where women are reported for having committed violence, the men will be acting out of spite but could not ignore the fact that women can also be violent. One such participant admitted having come across a recent case in Inyathi where the woman had pulled the male partner's private parts and also admitted that the police appear not to be taking much action regarding this matter despite the seriousness of the man's injuries. She then justified the police actions by arguing that it was not because it was a female perpetrator but generally due to the lack of commitment by the whole police force to their work which is caused by the tough economic situation in the country. The other extreme is held by men who were I interviewed and one of them actually stated that *“I actually think it's a silly question to ask if women do commit violence because they do”*

4.3 Questionnaires

The purpose of the initial questionnaires was to collect background information on the subject matter from research participants. Although many questionnaires were sent out, a few respondents provided detailed responses and many potential respondents did not respond at all. As a result, the information provided below shows responses derived from 7 participants who responded with the most detail to the questionnaires. The respondents opted for anonymity and the insights obtained from their responses provided the baseline data and together with the literature review results, underpinned the whole study. The initial results are assessed thematically in this part and disclosing important results for tackling the research question. The results are discussed below under the themes of *prevalence of violence, biased societal perceptions and stereotyping, creating awareness and violence as a cause of violence*.

4.3.1 Violence as a cause of violence

Question: Would you take revenge on the perpetrator if you had the chance? If so, why?

Participant 1: No, I just believe it is wrong to show such disrespect to someone you claim to love.

Participant 2: Yes, the reason is to let her or him learn that its bad and it's not a game that he can play with and you should stand on your ground protection for is always there .

Participant 4: I forgave my husband and I would not revenge because at the time we both did not know that there are other ways we can solve our problems besides fighting

Participant 7: No, I would not I have forgiven him and moved on with my life...I now live a new life I have done away with the abusive man and I am stress free

Question: How did the violence affect you, your life in general and others around you?

Participant 1: I was young by that moment and it was very painful by that time my uncle was the only one at home so when I had rush near my vagina I was tested and he was arrested and I made sure he suffers for his action so I never liked him a bit and I stood on the ground to tell my mother because I lost virginity that moment and it was painful part to experience and I told my mother with full courage.

Participant 2: I became withdrawn from society. Stopped posting my products and running the shop altogether. I would not leave the house without his approval. It led to my relationships even with family to be affected and to be none existent.

Participant 3 commented that: It often results in trauma and other disorders related to distress

Participant 4: It makes me very sad and angry and it affects my children because they will be afraid and also sad for me

Participant 7: I felt I was a slave to someone, he owned me not free with myself can't even do my own errands ... I was always bitter and innocent people when they talk to me I would shout at them and even beat them for no reason

Question: Have you ever committed acts of violence on your spouse or partner?

Participant 1: No I have not. Physically I am not strong enough to do so and I believe it is just wrong to live in fear of your spouse.

Participant 2: No.:

Participant 3: No

Participant 4: I was very angry and I slapped him and poked him on the head with my finger but he beat me up very badly and was kicking me all over the body even on the head and my nose was bleeding. I almost went to report to the police but I thought he would be arrested and not be able to go to work

Participant 5: Yes, I have experienced violence many times and one day I defended myself, my husband was hitting me and I saw that he was going to kill me if I did not do anything so I hit him very hard on the head with a pot and he had to have stitches

Participant 7: Yes, because he used to abuse me then I also retaliate shouting at him

Theme analysis

The questionnaires revealed that some female respondents have perpetrated violence against their partners and other people out of anger, self-defence or frustration. Despite these admissions, the study did not conclusively show any significant connection between the experience of gender-based violence and its perpetration by women against men. One interviewee stated as a result of the violence she would begin shouting at or beating innocent people as a result of misdirected aggression. Most interviewees commented that they would not seek or take revenge on the perpetrator showing that their experiences had not caused them to become violent at all.

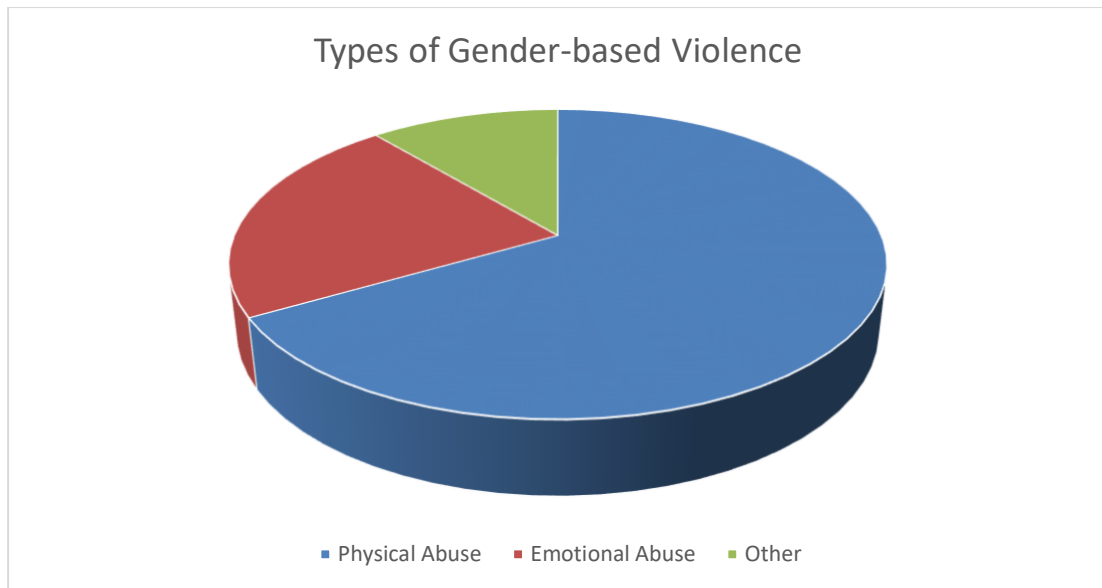


Figure 4.3 **Types of Gender-based Violence**

Physical abuse was the most prevalent form of abuse mentioned by respondents while emotional and other types of abuse constituted a small number of cases.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Creating awareness

Question: Do you think violence against men is a real issue that must be addressed? Why or why not?

Participant 4: Yes. Men have emotions, men have vulnerabilities and men need these safe spaces to express these emotions.

Participant 7: Yes it is real issue it must be addressed men are scared to come out open that his wife or his girlfriend is abusing him so they become victims in silence

Theme analysis

The participants acknowledged the need for increasing awareness on issues of violence. Some agreed that violence against men is a real issue that must be addressed because men are suffering in silence. It is critical to raise awareness on issues of gender-based violence in general and especially, as against men. Some participants defined this violence narrowly as violence only by a man against a woman which is inaccurate and need correction. It was also clear that men are victims of these abuses and there is need for this to be addressed so that the affected can obtain assistance.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Causes of Gender Biases Violence of violence

Question: Have you ever been a victim of violence?

Participant 1: Yes, I have been a victim of domestic violence

Participant 2: Yes

Participant 3: Never

Participant 4: Yes

Participant 5: Yes

Participant 7: Yes, I was emotionally abused

Question: If so, how did it happen?

Participant 1: It started right after we got married he would get violent and angry at little things like I cooked poorly or I have not greeted him after work. He would start off breaking things in the house to then being physical with me.

Participant 2: I was sexually abused by my uncle and it was one of the worst times I faced when I was young

Participant 3: Using what I have seen, the causes of such violence are multifaceted, can be caused by mounting mental (health) pressures exerted on someone, who in turn proffer violence as a solution.

Participant 4: I have experienced violence many times and one day I defended myself, my husband was hitting me and I saw that he was going to kill me if I did not do anything so I hit him very hard on the head with a pot and he had to have stitches

Participant 7: In a relationship he would want me to be indoors not talk to people or friends or visiting family

Question: What do you think about gender-based violence?

Participant 1: I think GBV is most of the times ignored in our societies because of the way the system was developed in a patriarchal society. One can never raise their voice against men, as women tend to be in the care of men. Women move from being in the custody of their fathers to being into the custody of their husbands. Without a man a woman usually has no status in society hence to keep their important status they never air out any problems the face.

Participant 2: Gender-based violence is violence directed against a person because of their gender. Both women and men experience gender-based violence but the majority of victims are women and girls and happens physically, socially and emotionally also sexually and this is a serious situation world that people are dealing with

Participant 3: It is terrible, and must be stopped at all costs. It is an instance of violence (physical /financial/ emotional) is perpetrated by one individual in a marriage (or other union) set up

Participant 4: Gender-based violence to me is the violence that happens in the home especially against women

Participant 5: It is a very bad thing that is happening in our society but it continues to happen

Participant 6: When a woman is physical or sexual emotional abused without even doing bad to some get beaten, shouted for nothing

Question: What happened when you experienced violence and what do you think were the causes of it?

Participant 1: The causes are generally unclear as my husband is a narcissist so everything was always my fault and I also believed it. He would restrict my social media presents and go through my phone and all social media handles. If any man would have communicated with me then it was an issue, but the problem is I run a shop and advertise on social media and my clients get in touch. He could not differentiate that

Participant 3: When my husband comes home late or doesn't come we fight when he comes because I will be asking him where he was and I will be angry because he will be very drunk and I think he will be with other women

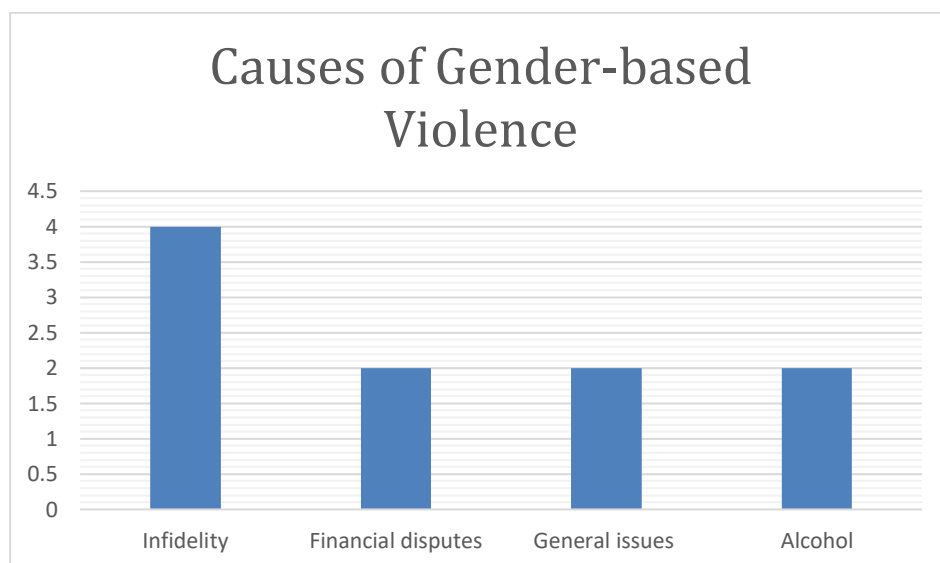
Participant 4: Most women will be angry that the man doesn't bring money home, or has a small house or does not support the family that is why they become violent:

Participant 7: Being abused in previous relationship or marriage also no counselling and bitterness will force them to abuse people or men

Theme analysis

The questionnaires indicated that gender-based violence is prevalent as nearly all the participants had experienced some form of violence or another, for example sexual violence and physical violence. Only one stated that they had never experienced such violence. Only a few respondents admitted having become violent as a result of their experiences and one stated, who has been sexually abused as a child, which she would want to revenge if given the chance now that she is older.

Figure 4.4 Causes of Gender-based Violence



Most respondents were in agreement that many issues were caused by infidelity, financial disputes, alcohol and general issues also had an impact in causing GBV in homes.

4.3.4 Theme 4 Biased societal perceptions and stereotyping

Question - What is your view on women who perpetrate violence on others? E.g. children, men?

Participant 1: Most times it is a defence mechanism, I believe violence runs in a cycle. Most times people who display it have also suffered from it and it is a form of dealing with it. Most people do not know how to deal with it or heal hence they impose the same evil on others.

Participant 2: A woman is a person who cannot allow such things to happen but if she does such things I consider her an evil person because she should have love for those people not to abuse them

Participant 3: They should be re-socialised

Participant 4: Women who do violence must be helped with their problems so that they find a solution, I think violence is a cry for help

Participant 7: Being bully to people is not nice and people are always in fear and suffering I think they must be punished severe

Theme analysis

The respondents agreed that perpetrators of violence must be punished severely and that violence by women is unacceptable. There is need for this to be addressed so that the affected can obtain assistance.

Physical abuse was the most prevalent form of abuse mentioned by respondents while emotional and other types of abuse constituted a small number of cases.

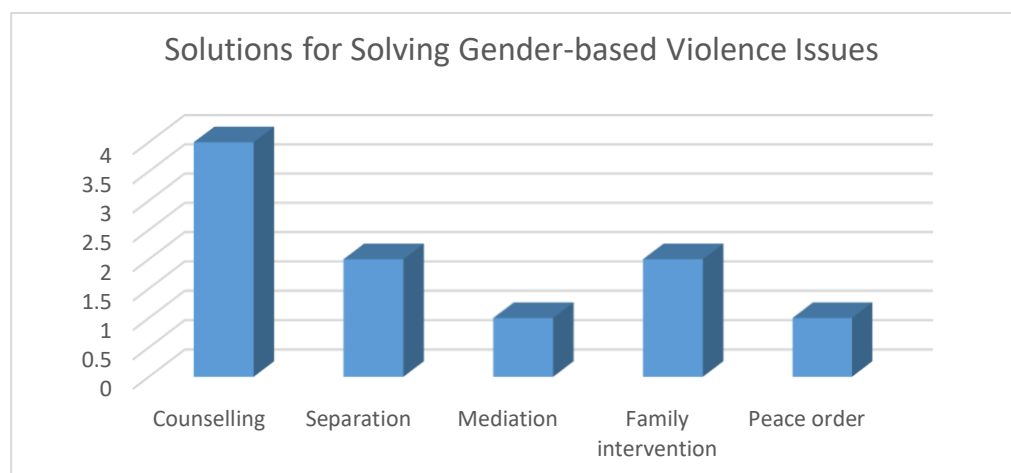


Figure 4.5 Solutions Employed by the Justice system to counter effects of Gender-based Violence

Most respondents stated that better understanding and communication are required to solve conflicts in homes. Many of them noted that counselling is the common way of solving effects of gender-based violence within families. Separation and family intervention are also used to bring peace in homes where there are problems of violence. Peace orders or protection orders are also used but not very common in solving domestic issues as they are used mostly by men. Mediation is not a widely used tool for conflict resolution.

4.3.9 Participant Figures

Type of data collection method	Number of participants	Female	Male
Interviews	5	5	0
Questionnaires	20	9	11
Narratives and Story telling	3	3	-
Observation	10	6	4
Focus Group Discussions	15	2	13

Table 4.1 Participant's Figures

4.4 Narratives and story telling

Narratives were used by the writer with some participants who preferred to write down their experiences as opposed to responding orally to the interview questions mostly due to time constraints. However, some opted for narratives as they were uncomfortable with sharing their intimate issues with a stranger face to face which was understandable. There appeared to be a general feeling of not wanting to be judged for any response amongst those who chose to use written narratives. Some appeared to justify their violence, for example, one participant wrote as follows:

“People fight because they still care about each other but cannot express it well because when they don't care, they don't fight, they just do their own thing.”

It was easy to read their experiences as they were not detailed but the difficulty arose when there was need to for clarification on anything they had written. Also it is much simpler to read emotions when face to face than from a written account. Another participant wrote:-

“At first things were good but when they changed after I lost my job we became like strangers and being treated roughly by my wife after everything I had done was painful but I stayed for some time wishing that maybe that she will become the sweet person I knew before until I received divorce papers”

Story telling was the least used method of information gathering in the study as it was carried out during the initial stages of the study when it quite difficult to gather many people together due to the restrictions that were prevailing at the time.

4.5 Observation

The method of observation permeated through most of the data collection methods except for the questionnaires and the narratives. It was important for the writer to observe her own thoughts and biases especially to guard against approaching the different data collection techniques with preconceived notions on the subject. It was also critical to observe the participants in the different methods. During the interviews, observations revealed that the respondents were sad when narrating their experiences. The body language of the few participants that participated in the interviews exercise showed relief after learning that they could use fake names which shows that they felt the issue of the abuse was private and did not want to be known as victims or perpetrators. There appeared to be a lot of regret and pain especially among victims of sexual and physical violence. The observations during the focus group discussions revealed that the participants were passionate and knowledgeable about gender based violence issues and were quite relieved and enthusiastic to dissect the issue from an uncommon angle. In the action research component the observations were mostly obtained through attentive listening to the voice changes, tones and emotions of the callers and participants in the podcasts as they could not be seen face to face. The writer observed a range of emotions from anger, to pain, despair, frustration, exasperation during the discussions as well as sighs of relief when a participant spoke to an expert and received a satisfactory or helpful answer to their question or issue.

4.6 Action research discussion and planning

Following the FDGs some participants gathered to map a way forward in the next phase of the action research which was intended to promote conversation and dialogue on issues affecting men. The meeting led by Makhosi N. Sibanda, a media practitioner and one of the founder of The Men's Conference Trust in Bulawayo, started with a recap of the suggestions from the discussions that helped give direction for the future and assisted in building trust as most of the participants were already familiar with each other. Following brief introductions, the major themes that emerged from the discussions were shared together with the conclusions from the literature review. The insights gleaned from the meeting brought about diverse perspectives and enhanced the total discoveries of this research. Two main themes kept recurring and these are the need for raising more awareness on the issue of violence against men and the need for change in societal attitudes. The project was also motivated by the desire to deconstruct stereotypes around issues of domestic violence as a whole.

Ray : I think...I don't know how we could change the view of society as a whole, half the time it doesn't start as physical but there are people who wish they could say guys this has been happening at home but they have been enduring for so long you end up finding that the person starts to blame themselves or victimise themselves...when we were growing up and learning we were told that Zimbabwe is mostly rural, there is a lot of gender-based violence in the rural areas, we need to target those grassroots...they are the fabrics of society...there was once a social experiment they told the children let's play husband and wife but not the man beating up the wife, so that tells you what they see in the rural areas....

The action project was birthed from a collaboration between the writer and the founders of the Men' Conference Podcast where men discuss on issues of concern to them. The parties had met previously while the founders were working on the registration of the Deed of Trust and were assisted by the writer. The podcasts provided a platform for engagement of men on different societal issues including those of gender-based violence and because the founders were men, the response was very positive and the writer was able to obtain important causative factors and solutions from it.

The particular intervention for the study, therefore, was a result of the need to reduce violence against men while also promoting dialogue on numerous issues affecting them. The men's conference podcasts were begun as a kind of peace-building "let's talk about it campaign". The aim was to move away from the use of violence as a means of communication by men, women and children. The discussions revealed a need for a shift from the narrative "*I beat her/him*

because s/he does not listen to me” to one where people begin asking questions such as, “Am I communicating clearly and effectively?” and “Am I listening properly to understand”? Generally, there is need to avoid imposition of issues on others but rather adopting the approach of accommodating other people’s perspectives before or without resorting to violence. One participant commented as follows:-

Rutendo As for me, I would say I think we need to adopt the mentality of talking, listening and responding for the sake of progress...

In addition to promoting discourse, the importance of self-awareness and self-observation cannot be overemphasised. One must be aware of what provokes or what angers them and also what causes them to react violently. While self-defence may be important, prevention of the violence in the first place may be more effective. It was revealed that equipping members of society on non-violent conflict resolution is critical. It is clear that the solutions to gender-based violence are multifaceted and require the unlearning of what has been learned in the past and must involve all members of the society. One participant stated it as follows:-

Chingo’no: I was thinking that issue of the society being taught, the Ndebele say a *isigogo sigoqwa sisemanzi* (a hide must be folded when it is still wet), if a boy is raised always being told that you are a man, you should be strong you are a man you should not cry, you are a man should not be beaten by a girl, the day he is beaten he won’t know who am I going to report to when he was told he shouldn’t cry and as I was saying before it accumulates, you bottle it up and the day you explode, you might kill yourself, you don’t know the worst thing that you can do... so I think it is important for the society to unlearn what we have learned before children must be taught when they are young... if this happens find someone to talk to and adults must be taught that if a child comes and says I have this issue don’t say be strong they sit down with the child and advise him I don’t support you beating up a boy or a girl and also advise the girl child, I don’t appreciate you beating a boy...that doesn’t mean you are right...you don’t have to solve matters using violence the society has to unlearn what has been learned and learn a new thing so that if it starts from the grassroots going up we help each other both the young and the old...

It is a fact that women are the majority in society, 52, 25% (ZIMSTAT 2022) and any actions, including violence by them, affect all aspects of life. Women are the pillars of families and ultimately societies and their violence whether against children, men or each other should be addressed for the realisation of better societies and communities. There is need to arrive at a position where violence is shunned for what it is and not whom does it if it is to be eradicated or effectively addressed. While it is impossible to force men to report more, it is possible create conducive environment for such reporting. It is possible to “re-imagine our communities” and to raise a generation of man that do not accept violation simply because they are expected to

be “strong” males. The notion that men don’t cry or feel pain is damaging and can lead to depression, suicides etc.

The participants were in agreement that given the fact that much has already been done on women’s issues, the involvement of men in dialogue would present a positive shift of focus and possibly yield better outcomes. Currently, the bias lies in favour of women to the detriment of society as a whole because men are left exposed and have been increasingly resorting to depression, substance abuse and suicides.

Although it is not possible to eliminate violence by women in one study or one cycle of action research, the action project is a worthwhile start to creating lasting solutions to gender-based violence as a whole in our societies. For a long time, issues affecting men have been ignored and viewed as trivial because of the societal expectations of men to be strong which has devastating effects in the long run. It was seen that this starts from childhood where boys are taught to be tough and to man up instead of feeling pain or expressing their emotions. The action initiative is steadily addressing the issues of toxic masculinities and encouraging males to open up and express their feelings without this being seen as a form of weakness. The aim is to create a new mantra that says *“I am a man and I cry because I’m human”*.

4.7 The Action Research

The action research project was carried out with the help of Makhosi. The focus group discussions suggested the need for conversations around issues affecting men. This led to the registration of an organisation called “the men’s conference” which deals with a variety of men’s issues such as male infertility, lobola, suicides, polygamy and gender-based violence etc. According to one of the founders, the podcast came about as a result of the need for:

“...an outlet! So it was born out of the desire to create alternative spaces for expression by facilitating some of the most important conversations mostly to do with mental health, wellness and wellbeing. We are actively taking part in the fight against stigma when it comes to mental illness and depression. Men need to know that they don’t have to suffer in silence”.

Initially, the podcasts were done on a podcast channel known as Anchor as shown in the picture below. This was ideal for the limited resources available, it was also practical and could be listened to anytime on the go. Due the positive response to the podcasts, the programme now has air coverage on a radio station known as Skyz FM every week on Mondays. One of the founders indicated that,

“We benefit so much from these discussions because we come face to face with some deep issues and some really funny stories. Life is all about relationships. Even the most elusive recluse has to deal with people. We have hurt people, we have been hurt and the cycle goes on. But we can all at least try to do better. At least try to break the cycle of abuse.”



Figure 4.6 Podcast Flyer



Figure 4.7 Men’s conference broadcast flyer

What is clear from the same is that men’s issues generally had been ignored or side-lined and yet men do need and seek safe spaces where they can have conversations on their challenges. It is noted that some women did not appreciate it when men’s issues were discussed, as they would call or send messages and castigate the show, they have grown accustomed to enjoying the bias that has accrued to them over the years. The initiative is worthwhile because it is encouraging conversations that were previously considered as taboo and it is also doing away with the bottling up of issues by the male gender which was previously the norm.

Through the platform one participant in an interview concerning the podcast revealed that the aim is to,

“...challenge ourselves to confront topics we are not comfortable with. Perhaps that way we can face our demons, overcome some fears and educate each other on dealing with phobias and other societal issues like Capitalism, Politics, Fashion, Marital Affairs, Addiction, Alcohol and Drug Abuse, Religion, Spirituality, Witchcraft, Sexuality, Toxic Masculinity, Misogyny, Paedophilia, Gender-based Violence, Homophobia, Tribalism and so on)”.

Scarce resources and funding: The study revealed that one of the major reasons why men’s issues are not considered or adequately addressed is the scarcity of resources. Most donor-funding is directed at addressing issues pertaining to women and civic society organisations tend to gravitate and focus their attention on issues that will attract funding. Without funding, not much meaningful progress can be made because some issues require professional attention from qualified counsellors, psychologists or doctors while other practical interventions beyond going conversations may also need resources. For instance, while it is commendable that the program is now being aired on radio, there are some sensitive things that one cannot say on air or in public. The most listened to podcast was on erectile dysfunction. The overall impact of the initiative requires some time for the results to be clear to see but the important thing is that action is now being taken on creating platforms for men to interact and seek and obtain help.

4.8 Overall themes/challenges and suggested Solutions

Below is a table of themes which emerged from the data collected and some of the solutions which were suggested by some participants to address the problem of the perpetration of violence by women. The solutions suggested were quite comprehensive and a brief analysis of the results were useful in giving some thoughts that can be possibly shared with other stakeholders such as the police and the courts as well as other members of the society for peace-building and better communities.

<u>THEMES</u>	<u>SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS</u>
Negative police attitudes	Training and capacity building of police, restructuring
Societal attitudes, bias, stereotypes	Deconstructing stereotypes and wrong perceptions
Normalisation of violence	Harsh sentences against offenders proper, stop bias
Trivialisation of violence against men, tolerance, wrong perceptions	Correction/punishing wrong attitudes, speaking out/self-expression
Raising awareness	Sufficient resource allocation, use of social media and balanced reporting on GBV issues

Cultural perspectives	Non-violence, unlearning retrogressive practices, reviving/capacitating traditional institutions like chiefs, headmen etc.
Poor/lack of communication, avoidance, bottling up	Self-expression, having candid conversations
Misdirected aggression	Encouragement of open communication
Refusal to accept change	Adaptability skills, acceptance of change
Women's overprotection, over-empowerment and arrogance	Vindictiveness, impunity, taking advantage
Control issues, power struggles	Love for each other, fairness
Toxic masculinities	Balancing scales between girls and boys, fair reporting

Table 4.2 – Themes/Suggested solutions

4.9 CONCLUSION

From the questionnaires, the study revealed that victims of sexual and physical abused by their intimate partners are more likely to develop mental, emotional and physical health problems such as traumatic stress, injury, depression infectious diseases such as HIV, other sexually transmitted illnesses and even death, compared to those not affected by gender-based violence. This is because there appears to be a lot of tolerance of abuse. It also became clear that issues of gender-based violence are more serious and more prevalent that what is assumed. One participant noted that with adequate resources, if thorough research was to be done on the perpetration of violence against men, it would be discovered that men have suffered and continue to suffer immense violence at the hands of women on a wide scale. The only difference is that men have learnt to adjust and live with the violence and it has become normal to them.

CHAPTER 5:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This thesis sought to investigate issues pertaining to the perpetration of violence by women including the causes and the types of violence which they perpetrate. The essence of the study was to understand why women in Bulawayo become violent and how or if at all violence against women also a cause of violence by them.

The framing of the research was initially to assess gender-based violence holistically. However, events on the ground led to changes in the original road map. Societal and personal perceptions on violence enabled the researcher and the participants to proceed with an awareness of how these affect their views of GBV when perpetrated by women as opposed to men. The common perception is that women are not violent. Another perception was that violence by women is condoned even before all the facts are known and members of society rush to exonerate and defend the woman against any blame. It does not appear that there is objectivity when it comes to issues of women's perpetration of violence.

The study revealed that violence by women in fact does exist and the participants noted that it must be addressed in the same manner as violence against women. There were suggestions that programmes on gender-based violence must not be biased against men but rather take cognisance of this fact and aim at eliminating violence from people as a whole and not one gender while condoning it of the other. The undesirability of violence against men was appreciated when the violence was against a close person as opposed to an unknown person. The research was able to examine the ways in which issues of violence by women can be addressed or brought to light without drawing attention from the high levels of violence against them as they are proportionally different. The study examined the steps or measures already in place to address violence by women and arrived at the conclusion that they were negligible at the moment, except for the Domestic Violence Act, which doesn't distinguish gender in defining domestic violence. However, this was also discovered to be lip service as the application of the Act is discriminatory on the basis of one's gender.

The study was insightful and this concluding chapter is primarily made up of reviews of the different components of the research such as the literature, the aim and objectives as well as a review of the hypothesis and a brief discussion of whether it remained relevant or not. The outcomes of the literature review and action research are then synthesised as answers to the research question. The conclusion provides future recommendations for interventions on gender-based violence.

5.2 Review of the study aim and objectives

The primary aim of this research was to understand how, if at all, violence against women causes them to become violent. The increase in men seeking protection orders from the courts against women and suicides highlight the prevalence of violence by women. This study examines strategies for effectively contributing to peacebuilding and seeks to understand how peaceful societies can be achieved where violence is not condoned and how men/women... The aims were explored by focusing on the following foremost intents:

Objective 1: The first objective of identifying the forms of GBV against men in Pumula South was realised from the insights gained from the focus group discussions. The gathering of male journalists and gender activists from different organisations within the city made the discussions brought about productive discussions and ideas for interventions on addressing violence by women against their spouses or intimate partners. During collection of data, forms of GBV against men that were learnt of were verbal, physical and emotional abuse. While men are being abused, a few of them can freely come out and discuss with other people due to a number of reasons.

Objective 2: The objective of examining the handling cases of Gender-based Violence against men by the justice system in Bulawayo was achieved through the insights from the participants and the revelations that men are not given proper assistance by law enforcement officers. It was revealed that instead of being assisted, men are mocked and ridiculed. The study revealed that they face hostile resistance at police stations and are usually turned away from police stations and sent to seek counselling services and peace orders or protection orders. This is quite different from what transpires when men are the offenders as they are dealt with harshly by the law. The leniency of the justice system on women has led to their impunity and arrogance as they are getting away with violence. This objective provided data sets that were analysed

and the findings, have helped the action team to include these issues as subjects for discussion in its broadcast and encourage engagement to facilitate improvement in the relevant institutions.

Objective 3: The third objective of exploring the causes of gender-based violence in Bulawayo by women was reached through the use of the various qualitative methods and especially the discussions and que which revealed a huge number of possible causes and triggers of gender-based violence by women. The exposition on the types of violence by women was insightful in revealing some causes ranging from revenge, vindictiveness, control issues to personality clashes and provocation.

Objective 4: The fourth and final objective of deconstructing societal stereotypes and perceptions on the perpetration of gender-based violence and promote non-violence. During focus group discussions, suggestions of means and places where men who suffer Gender Based Violence can go to for assistance and means of controlling potential violent acts at home were discussed.

Aim of the study: The aim of utilising action research to deconstruct societal stereotypes and perceptions on perpetration of Gender Based Violence and promotion of non-violence acts was achieved by the creation of platforms for engaging men in dialogue over issues that affect them. The dialogue using the podcast and radio has been effective in providing an important space for discussions between men and for men. The creating of spaces for dialogues is significant as it affords victims the benefit of an avenue for releasing bottled up emotions in a way that is not harmful to anyone as it is done in an environment of non-provocation. It also allows for the expression of silenced narratives in the confidential conducive atmosphere which is void of the judgement and ridicule meted out in other places.

5.3 Concluding review of literature

Jakobsen (2014), points to Conflict Tactics Scale surveys where women and men report analogous statistics of physically violent actions committed by their heterosexual partners. This sex parity, whereby male and female partners are equally violent to one another, is interpreted as "gender symmetry" and is thought to be irrefutable indication that partner violence against women is unrelated to gender (Ferraro 2013). As a result, sex-symmetry surveys disregard

theories of gender. However, according to Anderson (2009), when one assumes that violence against women is equal to gender-based violence without considering its relation to specific gender theories this leads to the failure to scrutinise the gender-violence nexus in light of theory (Anderson 2009).

Stark (2010: 209) advocates for the asking of correct questions to get correct answers. He states that instead of asking who uses violence investigations on the gender-violence nexus must ascertain how “violence functions in relationships to preserve and extend gender inequalities”. This approach is in line with the conflict transformation theory as it seeks to interpret the meaning of the violence as opposed to merely analysing the violence.

The literature revealed that further extensive research is needed to examine the experiences of violence by men. More research is also required on the effects of this violence on the children and other witnesses and this will be useful by detailing its overall impact in society. A further review of police operations as well as judicial actions followed by engagement of the members of the police force and judicial system if needed. This further research will assist to highlight the seriousness of this violence regardless of whether it is a man or a woman who is the victim. It is recommended that donors and sponsors of interventions channel some resources towards the boy child and men’s issues to promote more research in this area.

Future initiatives in line with this study have the potential to yield useful results when more stakeholders are engaged in the research, dialogue as well as practically and hopefully contribute to a positively peaceful society. Such findings would have the potential to positively influence the effectiveness of future interventions. Although the outcomes of this research are not conclusive, they are important as it gathered a group of committed and passionate participants with different experiences and backgrounds which yielded the assembling of valuable and thought-provoking information.

Feminist theory notions of the perpetration of violence being the sole prerogative of men were not indicated in this study as it was revealed that women can be aggressors and perpetrators, just as men are. They were also disproved in so far as the causes of gender-based violence are concerned. In light of the occurrence of incidences of violence by women, the important starting point was the acknowledgement that women are not only victims but can also be perpetrators of violence against men and others. More so, the causes of violence by women

may not necessarily be the same as that of men hence necessitating investigation. In light of the reality and prevalence of women's violence, there is need for the development of further robust conceptualizations of spousal violence. The acknowledgement of other victims of gender-based violence such as partners in same-sex relationships necessarily leads to a reconceptualization of the term (McHugh and Frieze 2006: 122). The feminist principal thinking that only women are victims has been disproved by occurrences and turn out to be irrelevant necessitating more wide-ranging constructions of the definitions and interpretations of such violence.

Gender-based violence is a multifaceted and pervasive social ill existing in different societies across the world. The term gender is wider in scope than women and there is a need for a wider interpretation which exceeds the traditional causes such as masculinities, the dynamics of violence, changes in society. The transformation and advancement of feminist theories is required in this regard to take note of the complexities of GBV, which it is not necessarily in black and white (male v female) at all times. Limited information is available on issues concerning the perpetration of gender-based violence by women in Zimbabwe.

Most information on battered women is found in the legal context where the concept is applied to cases where women injure or kill their spouses after long periods of subjection to violence. An example of such as case is that of S v Sweswe HB 184/18, where a woman who had been subjected to prolonged periods of violence by her husband stabbed him to death and was sentenced to 18 years in prison.

5.4 Review of the hypothesis

The hypothesis of the study was that the violence suffered by women causes them to become perpetrators of domestic violence against their spouses. This was not supported by the findings of this research from which the conclusion was drawn that while many women may not be physical violent there are many who are so regardless of the suffering of violence personally. The study revealed that Ndebele women in general in their manner of speech are of a violent disposition which is often misinterpreted and this leads to violence. Furthermore, the study revealed that while women may be weaker than men physically most of the time, they engage in other harmful forms of violence such as verbal, psychological and emotional abuse which

men by virtue of their upbringing are not trained to handle and this leads to desertion of families, suicides, depression and resorting to alcohol and drug abuse as a way of escape.

5.5 Action research review

Although much action is required to fully address the prevalence of violence by women, the dialogue started by the action project is a good starting point. The programme has shifted men's issues from the background to the middle ground and with time, may bring them to the forefront. While positive discrimination to correct past imbalances is appreciable, there is need to guard against over-protection and over-empowerment of women which is proving to be counterproductive. Attaining a balance is crucial so that we do not spend more years in future re-empowering men again in a bid to recover from the effects of such measures. A platform where men can freely discuss about GBV at home can help to ease depression and anger issues can be handled in a professional way. Furthermore, it is helpful to have programs that encourage both men and women on other means of solving conflicts which do not trigger emotions and violence.

5.6 Reflections on the study

The main findings from the study indicated that males are quite often victims of gender based violence by females. This is in line with the findings of Mphatheni and Mlamla (2022) who acknowledge that while women and girls are the common victims of gender-based violence, it cannot be denied that males are also targets. They further indicate that it is a travesty that males who experience GBV obtain a smaller amount of attention than females and their cases continue to be ignored. Indeed, the need for safe spaces for men is a valid and real necessity. The study findings do validate other such studies that reveal that when men are given space to discuss their challenges, they become more open to changing their own negative attitudes towards women such as patriarchy and cultural norms of demeaning women otherwise, they resist change and cling more strongly to faulty attitudes of superiority.

Their study found that male victims of GBV are not accorded sufficient support and while society is swift to censure and openly criticise male perpetrators of GBV, this is not done to females who victimize and abuse men and boys Mphatheni and Mlamla (2022). They recommended review of the GBV regulatory framework to make it gender neutral as well as

support for male victims of GBV as they also undergo anxiety and trauma to the same magnitude which females do.

However, its findings confirm the findings of other studies. For example, some participants in the study revealed that women engage in more indirect forms of violence as opposed to direct physical violence. This was confirmed in the study by Denson et al (2018) who stated that “women tend to engage in more indirect forms of aggression (e.g., spreading rumours) than other types of aggression”.

The study did not go into much detail regarding why women become violent. The reason for this was that much of the literature review was primarily aimed at identifying sources that documented violence against men and utilise the same in comparison and information gathering. The majority of the limited research in existence focuses primarily on the violence against men in conflict as opposed to violence in the domestic setup. As such despite the abundance of literature on female violence, it was not the primary focus of the literature review. In light of the scarcity of such information the study aimed contribute to new knowledge in this regard.

The most important finding of this study was the need for space for men to voice their concerns, that looking at both genders from a human, not a gendered perspective, allows for greater listening to each other and understanding each other, central to making a marriage work well and achieve peace. Indeed, this was after all the main purpose of undertaking this research and relates directly to the peace theories of conflict transformation and conflict resolution on which this study is founded.

5.7 Analysis of the study

The study was originally intended to understand violence from the female perpetrators as against men. However despite having been given permission to access the records of the women that had been assisted at the Bulawayo branch of ZWLA, when the writer attended there to begin going over the records, gathering data, she was informed that there are no cases of women who had perpetrated violence per se and the only ones that did were being spited by their partners but were innocent. The writer was referred to Padare Men’s Forum but it was

operating from Harare. This essentially meant that the said organisation was in a different location from that of the study and also not easily accessible to the writer.

Fortunately, the writer met up with the founders of the Men's Conference who were intending to register their organisation to deal with men's issues and began working with them on the action research. This change led to the shift of the research from focusing on the experiences of women by women to that of the experiences of men at the hand of women. Although the shift did affect the information gathering and original framework of the study, it did not drastically negatively affect the study as the main objectives of ascertaining the causes and the types of violence by women were ultimately realised using a different approach.

The twist of circumstances led to the hearing of mostly male voices on the issue of gender based violence instead of female voices, and that also led to an important finding, the need for male voices to be heard and for spaces to be created for them. The challenge of information on gender based violence against men led the writer to rely on anecdotal data like newspapers as it was difficult to locate statistics on female violence against men. Furthermore, another challenge regarding violence against men is that it is not only intimate partner violence, but also violence in fights, in wars, in prisons, etc. It was not the intention of the study to negate or belittle the prevalent violence against women which is a very serious problem but instead the research attempted to find investigate and find cases of female violence against men given the under-reporting nature of the problem.

5.8 Recommended future actions

(i) Holistic police capacity building

There was emphasis of the need for training and capacitation of the police force to enable them to handle gender based violence reports without discrimination on the basis of the complainant's gender. One participant suggested that the police should be schooled regularly, for example, once a week during their sport's days where they can discuss, be taught and equipped on the reality and impact of such violence especially on men in light of the frustrations, accumulated anger and consequent increase in the number of suicides of most men.

MKS: Me myself I think we need to within the police we need a day or a course, where they sit down I know they have sports, I know that every Wednesday they play sports, is it Thursday or Friday? when they have their road run, we want them to have a day even for 2 or 3 years, they have halls, where they can just talk about GBV so that men are treated better by the police, sometimes it is not that people don't want to report but they face that resistance so they need to talk about these things

The need for holistic capacity building is necessitated by the fact that there has already been training of the police to deal with female victims of such violence. This, however, remains incomplete as it does not create space to cater for male victims of Gender-based violence and yet women are the majority in terms of numbers in the country and even in the city of Bulawayo. The situation is so critical that one participant indicated that even the male police officers also need help in this regard as he revealed that one of his friends who was an officer would often run away from home due to abuse

MKS: It reminds me of this other friend of mine, a police officer his wife and mom would come looking for him, look he was also a police officer but he was being troubled at home...

There is need to change and improve police station procedures and practices for handling reports of SGBV from both men and women. The presence of victim friendly units (VFU) is an understanding of the concern on increased cases of violence against women and children (sexual and domestic). Concerned with treating victims appropriately, with the requisite privacy, safety and confidentiality and as a priority, it stipulates that every victim of domestic violence has a right to report to any police station in the country. This includes males and females and the definition of "every victim" is non-discriminatory and the weaknesses in this system may be detrimental. Laws alone are not sufficient to prevent GBV and time and experience has proved that an investment in the time and effort to change attitudes and behaviours is more effective. Action based approaches would be more effective than armchair approaches.

(ii) Conflict resolution education

The study revealed that people have been programmed to react violently before thinking of non-violent responses upon provocation. Most people are intelligent mentally but have a low emotional quotient.

NN: I think that if we say we have a situation and then we talk it out but if we don't understand each other let there be a mediator and we fail to understand each other with the mediator let's take a break and try again tomorrow so I would take it that way.

Promoting non-violent means of conflict resolution remains important as many fatalities and injuries can be avoided if only people learnt to respond or assess situations differently. Conflict is not equal to violence and should not be allowed to escalate. Anger management skills are critical and a missing component of our societal upbringing. Most men indicated that they did bottle up issues because of the socialisation that men are strong while women are taught that as a woman you must not speak your mind or speak up (culturally). However, the damage comes when one then explodes.

The use of violence in different settings for example in discipline creates the impression that it is effective when it is not and actually causes more harm than good. The importance of unlearning was stated even for such things as raising one's voice because of disagreement. Raising one's voice makes a person believe they will be heard more but this is not always true, what is more important is to improve the quality of the argument. The way forward may not be clear but as long as people are willing to engage in difficult and uncomfortable conversations especially men, it may be easy to create a peaceful society after all. As long as men are not ridiculed but treated equally and attended to with fairness and conversations on the undesirability of violence.

(iii) Holistic community involvement - participants shared their views on the importance of community involvement from leaders and the media.

ST: Me... I think... I stay in Pumula there are community leaders Once in a while every Wednesday they address such issues they can everyone, be it the man or the woman or children they have made that there be social workers I think even at schools they used to teach guidance and counselling so if they put g and c they do it like once in a week etc. from primary level boys be taught that they do not beat up girls and girls don't bear up the girls

EK: Raising awareness particularly on those issues its ok for a man to cry its ok for a man to come asking for help rather than bottling things up and for us to be taught and also if a man comes saying I have been beaten up try that counselling the counselling aspect , various publicity captains raising awareness through various media, social media

LM: I think as journalists we need to encourage and practice fair and balanced reporting, media has so much been used so that you think gender-based violence is always a man beating a woman but we need to remove that bias..

(iv) Grassroots level approach - the involvement of traditional courts can be an important component of change.

BAM We are mostly focusing on police yet we have those court the traditional courts which are headed by the chiefs those people also be trained I think it can be established, those people are trained and I was saying or make a follow up to that point even in the rural areas , chiefs can be used as voices to speak out to raise awareness to say it is alright for am n to report a case to the village head, because at the moment it is like men have no rights to report so chiefs as people with authority, use village heads or headmen it will the mind set will start to change because it is coming from the chief cascading to the grassroots...victim mentality in these GBV so when I got report a case against my wife it won't sound well they will say how are you being abused by the weaker sex

(v) Formation of organisations addressing men's issues

EN: Also we can form our men's organisation for men's rights, so that they understand...so that it can start from the ground going up and establish *institutions* that will pursue this agenda will come in handy address these issues and create a platform for men to come forth and air out these issues, emerging issues, raise aware ness that these things are happening...

MKS: We have thought of a helpline, a Whatsapp line, but we need resources, for example for experts and qualified people like counsellors, psychologists etc. ideas are there but lack support financially, some women attack the initiative or platform for being one-sided just because we are focusing on men, e.g. none of us here know where the men's clinic is... nothing is free for men unlike for women, everything pertaining to men is expensive... Padare platform, suggestions have been made to engage men sharing a meal or something, but lack of resources is the biggest hindrance... Minister of Gender should think broadly, gender is not only about women empowerment....

(vi) Remodelling our school system

MKS: Gender is broad...resources should be used to discuss the issue extensively just like I remember when the HIV scourge came to the country we remodelled our education system and now even a young child can tell you about HIV, I remember one day when I got home and I was telling my aunt about HIV/AIDS as a little child coming from school and she ended up saying, this one will bring us the HIV but it was because we were taught about it a lot at school...if we put the same focus on GBV I can tell you in the next 20 years you can have a child telling you beating up a girl is wrong

(vii) Stringent law enforcement

MC: Is it because the law enforcement is weak? the nation as a whole is just damaged... it is important to have a harsh type of law, look at China, the crime rate is very low because the laws are harsh...if it is possible that law to be exposed...some people were abused when they grow up...harsher sentences...law enforcement should be that harsh, if we are willing we should see how china is running their country ...

(viii) Better communication

BAM: Starting from us men, we need to check the personality of women and their communication...check or reserve the speech of men or women understand each other and know how to relate to each other

(ix) Unbiased and proper media coverage

RKN: Journalists should write stories that are accommodative and create the full picture, resist form biased narratives...more dialogue and awareness is needed on the prevalence of violence by women and the types of violence they commit as people usually assume that violence is only physical. for the unlearning of the perceptions that only men commit violence against women

MKS: Maybe the marriage officers should monitor the marriages and give them a probation period...expectations of marriage are different from reality...there should also be restoration of the broken down structures of society now things are different unlike before in the past where there used to be aunties and uncles etc.

MC: At times verbal violence and emotional violence can be deadlier than physical violence. This is the reason why men commit suicide more than women to escape from emotional torture

5.9 Contributions

This action research study contributed the following outputs:-

1. An article summarising the research findings
2. An action project designed around information gathered from literature and initial qualitative data analysis
3. A presentation of non-violent alternatives.

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APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What do you think about gender-based violence?
2. Have you ever experienced it? How did it happen?
.....
3. Have you ever committed acts of violence on your spouse or partner? If so, why?
.....
4. What happened after the incident?
.....
.....
5. How did it affect you, your life in general and others around you?
.....
.....
6. Would you take revenge if you had the chance?
.....
.....
7. Can you say you have healed from the violence?
.....
.....
8. How do you feel about your perpetrator?
.....
.....
9. How are you coping with what happened to you?
.....
.....
10. Did you receive any counselling or talk to people about it?
.....
.....
11. How do you think you can heal from the violence?
.....
.....

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE GUIDE

1. What do you view as being gender-based violence?
.....
.....

2. Do you think violence is ever justified or useful?
.....
.....

3. Have you ever experienced gender-based violence or inflicted it on another?
.....
.....

4. How did you feel when you experienced or committed such violence?
.....
.....

5. How did you get through the pain or experience?
.....
.....

6. Did the pain change you and the way you see life and people in any way? If so, how?
.....
.....

What does healing mean to you?
.....
.....

7. What would it take for you to heal? Is it possible?
.....
.....

8. Do you feel you have healed?
.....
.....

9. Have you forgiven the person? Would you take revenge if you had the chance?
.....
.....

APPENDIX 3: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS - GUIDE

1. Do you want the discussion to be recorded?
.....
2. Do you want to use your real names or not?
.....
3. How do you define gender-based violence?
.....
.....
4. Do you think violence is ever justified?
.....
.....
5. Have you ever experienced gender-based violence or inflicted it on another?
.....
.....
6. Do you know any person who has experienced GBV or inflicted it on another? whether male or female?
.....
.....
7. In your view, are women capable of carrying out GBV?
.....
.....
8. What do you think are the causes of violence by men? And by women?
.....
.....
9. In your view, is there violence by women in Bulawayo?
.....
.....
10. In your view, does the suffering of violence by women cause them to become violent themselves
.....
11. Is Bulawayo a city of violent women? Komfaz' otshaya indoda?

.....
.....
12. Is Bulawayo a city of violence generally – from the name?

.....
.....
13. Is violence by women against men a worthwhile issue seeking redress?

.....
14. What can be done to address violence by women – what action can be taken to address this challenge?



APPENDIX 4: Letter of Information

Title of the Research Study: “Victims as perpetrators of gender-based violence in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe”

Principal researcher: Nozipho Matumbu, *LLBS Hons (UZ)*

Supervisor: Dr. Sylvia Kaye, *PhD*

My name is Nozipho Matumbu I am a Master’s candidate at Durban University of Technology (DUT) in Peace Studies. I am conducting a study on: “*Victims as perpetrators of gender-based violence in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe*”. This study is part of the requirements for the completion of my Master’s degree at DUT. This study is entirely funded by DUT therefore you are not expected to pay any financial contribution or to benefit in monetary terms from this study.

Any costs for transport will be reimbursed and you will also receive meals during any discussion or interviews. In the event that physical meetings or discussions are not possible, you will be provided with data bundles or Wifi for virtual meeting or discussion. For any interview or physical meetings, the budget of the study covers your provision with sanitization facilities, masks, subjected to temperature checks and social distancing and any other regulations will be strictly followed.

You are one of the potential participants that have been previously assisted by ZWLA in connection with gender-based violence in Bulawayo. You are, therefore, purposely chosen and requested to voluntarily participate in this study. I will ask you questions related to the effects of gender-based violence on women and issues that cause women to engage in such violence in Bulawayo.

If you choose to be part of the study you will:

1. Be required to have an interview with me as a key informant or;
2. You may be part of a group of participants in focus group discussion.

This is a very low risk study and there are no discomforts to you expected. You should participate voluntarily. You have the right to withdraw from the inquiry at any time and for any reason without any adverse effects. There is no remuneration for you and no form of inducement will be offered for participation in this study. But, snacks will be provided to you. You are not allowed to cover any costs of my study.

The storage of data software will be done in encrypted flash cards. The physical documents will be kept in locked and safe steel cabinets. Only the researcher and the editor, (for the purposes of editing the thesis), shall have access to the data. Any other person may be required to sign a non-disclosure agreement of to access the contents of the material and subject to the consent of the participants. Other authorised personnel and the educational institution if necessary will also have access to the data. The physical documents will be destroyed using a shredder while the soft copies will be permanently deleted from the flash disks.

Your anonymity and confidentiality will be guaranteed through the use of acronyms. Access to data will be limited to study personal and information collected will be locked in a safe place and destroyed after five years. You will be told about the concepts of anonymity and confidentiality that will be applied to this study and if participants would like to be named, then they will be named as agreed.

Should there be any study related injury, the psychologist and counsellors at the organization will assist the researcher in remedying to the situation.

Please contact me on 0772525782 or my supervisor Professor S. Kaye on +27 31 373 5609 or the Institutional Research Ethics administrator on +27 31 373 2375. Complaints can be reported to Dr. Linda Zikhona Liganiso, Director, Research and Postgraduate Support. Contact number is +27 31 373 2577.

Thanking you for your cooperation

Nozipho Matumbu

(Researcher)

APPENDIX 5: Consent Form

Statement of Agreement for your participation in the Research Study:

- I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Nozipho Matumbu, about the nature, conduct, benefits and risks of this study.
- I have also received, read and understood the above written information (Participant Letter of Information) regarding the study.
- I am aware that the results of the study, including personal details regarding my sex, age, date of birth, initials and diagnosis will be anonymously processed into a study report.
- In view of the requirements of research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.
- I may, at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent of participation in the study.
- I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to take part in the study.
- I understand that significant new findings developed during this research that may relate to participation will be made available to me.

Full Name of Participant	Date	Time	Signature / Right Thumbprint
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I, Nozipho Matumbu, herewith confirm that the above participant has been fully informed about the nature, conduct and risks of the above study.

Full Name of Researcher	Date	Signature
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Full Name of Witness (If applicable)	Date	Signature
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Full Name of Legal Guardian (If applicable)

Date

Signature



APPENDIX 6: Consent form (Ndebele)

Incwadi Yegunya

Isitatimende sokuvumelana ukuba yingxenywe yocwaningo:

- Ngiyavuma ukuthi ngazisiwe umcwaningi uNozipho Matumbu, ngenqubo, ukuziphatha inzuzo nobungozi bezifundo zocwaningo – Inombolo Yesikhungo Socwaningo: 031 373 2375,
- Incwadi Yokwazisa ngoLwazi oluqondene noCwaningo ngiyinikiwe, ngayifunda ngayiqonda.
- Ngiyazi ukuthi imiphumela yocwaningo, neminingwane eqondene nobulili bami, iminyaka, usuku lokuzalwa nakhokonke okuqondene name kuzobayimfihlo okuzoba yingxenywe yocwaningo.
- Ngenxa yezidingo zocwaningo, ngiyavuma ukuthi ulwazi olutholakale kulolucwaningo ingasetshenziswa icutshungulwe umcwaningi.
- Ngingakwazi ukuhoxa nokuhoxisa igunya lami ekuhlanganyeleni kulolucwaningo ngaphandle kwemibandela noma inini.
- Ngibe nethuba elanele ukubuza imibuzo (ngakho ngokukhululekile) ngiyavuma ngizimisele ukuba yingxenywe kulolucwaningo.
- Ngiyakuqonda ukuthi okumqoka okuzotholakala kulolucwaningo okuqondene nokuhlanganyela kwami ngiykwaziswa ngakho.

Amagama Omhlanganyeli

Usuku

Isikhathi

Sayina/ Ginqa Isithupha

Mina, Nozipho Matumbu ngiyavuma ukuthi lomhlanganyeli ongenhla wazisiwe ngocwaningo, ukuziphatha nobungozi bocwaningo.

Igama Lomcwaningi

Usuku

Sayina

Amagama kaFakazi
(Uma ekhona)

Usuku

Sayina

Amagama Omzali/mphathi)
(Uma ekhona

Usuku

Sayina

APPENDIX 7: Letter of permission

1st July 2021

Mrs Sethulo Ncube

Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association

BULAWAYO

Dear Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO RESEARCH NOZIPHO MATUMBU
STUDENT NUMBER 22064679

My name is Nozipho Matumbu, I am a legal practitioner and a member of your reputable organisation. As a student I kindly request permission to:-

1. To access the database for the list of names and contact details of clients who have been victims of GBV or who have perpetrated this type of violence on others.
2. Permission to contact the clients requesting for their participation in interviews whether face to face or virtually and if they so desire, at the garden offices or offices, should they feel this is a safe space for them.
3. Permission to access any file with the client's consent so as to protect the attorney-client privilege.

My topic has been approved and I therefore request for a current letter specifically stating the permission that has been given to me.

Yours faithfully.....NOZIPHO MATUMBU