

**IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE POLICY
FRAMEWORK IN MANKWENG TOWNSHIP**

by

Matshidiso Caroline Ngwepe

Submitted in the Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT

in

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

in the

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT AND LAW

at the

University of Limpopo

Supervisor: Dr. X Thusi

Co-supervisor: Dr MM Selepe

2024

Abstract

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) remains a pervasive and complex issue in South Africa, particularly affecting women and girls. This study delves into the heart of this problem by focusing on Mankweng Township, an area marked by diverse cultural influences and socioeconomic challenges. Drawing upon a combination of interviews, questionnaires, and focus group discussions, this research provides a comprehensive examination of GBV, its root causes, and the experiences of its victims and survivors.

The findings illuminate a nuanced picture of GBV, transcending conventional narratives. While the study confirms the predominant role of men as perpetrators, it also recognizes that not all men adhere to violent behaviours. Men, women, and members of the LGBTQ+ community in Mankweng Township face varying degrees of violence and discrimination, thus challenging stereotypical perceptions. Traditional customs and cultural norms are revealed as powerful factors perpetuating GBV. The practice of lobola, emphasizing ownership of women, and the subjugation of women in relationships are particularly highlighted. However, the study also uncovers potential solutions within cultural and religious frameworks, where churches can serve as safe spaces for dialogue and support.

Importantly, the research spotlights the often-overlooked experiences of the LGBTQ+ community, who face a disproportionately high risk of GBV. The fear of judgment and discrimination stifles their ability to seek help and report incidents. This underscores the need for a more inclusive approach to GBV prevention and intervention programs. The study's recommendations underscore the importance of awareness programs, better resource distribution, and cultural re-evaluation. In particular, it emphasizes the need to involve men and boys actively in GBV prevention efforts, challenging harmful gender norms and behaviours. The legislative framework, as explored in this study, provides a robust foundation for addressing GBV. However, the study also highlights the critical importance of effective implementation and enforcement of these laws.

In conclusion, this research bridges gaps in understanding GBV, offering a multifaceted view of the issue in Mankweng Township. It calls for a more inclusive approach to GBV interventions, involving all genders and orientations. By implementing the recommendations outlined herein, Mankweng Township can take significant strides toward reducing GBV and creating a safer, more equitable

community for all its residents. This study serves as a crucial foundation for future research and actions aimed at eradicating GBV in this region and beyond.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to my Almighty God for His unwavering presence and guidance throughout this challenging yet rewarding journey. Your grace sustained me.

I extend my deepest appreciation to my supervisor, Dr. Xolani Thusi, and co-supervisor, Dr. Martinus Selepe, who provided invaluable guidance and support, especially during the transition after the dismissal of my first supervisor. Your unwavering commitment to my success has been a constant source of inspiration.

Special thanks are due to Prof. Mokgalong for your instrumental role in ensuring that I had the resources and support needed to carry out this research effectively. Your belief in this study's importance bolstered my determination.

To the participants of this study, who generously shared their experiences and insights, I offer my sincere thanks. Your willingness to contribute to this research is deeply appreciated, and this study would not have been possible without your invaluable input.

Lastly, I extend my gratitude to my friends, Debra Kabini and Gugu Mary Magagula, for providing emotional support during the challenging moments of this research. Your understanding of the significance of this study to me has been a source of strength.

Dedication

I dedicate this study to my brother, Thabang Ngwepe, whose unwavering belief in me has been a guiding light, even on the darkest of days when self-doubt threatened to overshadow my path. Your faith in my abilities has been a constant source of motivation, and I am forever grateful for your steadfast support.

Declaration

I declare that the "Implementation of Gender-Based Violence Policy Framework in Mankweng Township" hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree Master of Public Administration and Management has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

Surname and Initials (Title)

Date: 09/04/2024

Ngwepe MC (Ms)

ABBREVIATIONS

GBV-GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

SONA- STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS

SAPS- SOUTH AFRICAN POLICE SERVICE

VAW- VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

PTSD- POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

ESD- EMPOWERMENT SELF-DEFENCE

PEPUDA- PROMOTION EQUALITY AND PREVENTION OF UNFAIR
DISCRIMINATION ACT

PSET- POST-SCHOOL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

NPF- NATIONAL POLICY FRAMEWORK

DHET- DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING

DVA- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT

TREC- TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Abstract..... | ii |
| Acknowledgements..... | iv |
| Dedication..... | iv |
| Declaration..... | v |
| ABBREVIATIONS | vi |
| CHAPTER ONE..... | 1 |
| OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY | 1 |
| 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND..... | 1 |
| 1.1. STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM | 3 |
| 1.2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES..... | 4 |
| 1.2.1 Aim of the Study | 4 |
| 1.2.2 Objectives of the Study..... | 4 |
| 1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS..... | 4 |
| 1.4. DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS | 5 |
| CHAPTER TWO | 7 |
| LITERATURE REVIEW..... | 7 |
| 2. INTRODUCTION | 7 |
| 2.1 Understanding Gender-Based Violence in South Africa During Covid-19 Pandemic | 7 |
| 2.2 What are Gender-Based Violence Effects | 10 |
| 2.2.1 Self-Destructive Behaviour and Self-Hate | 11 |
| 2.2.2 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)..... | 12 |
| 2.2.3 Sexually Transmitted Infections and Unwanted Pregnancies | 12 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 2.3 The Background and Extent of Gender-Based Violence Cases in South Africa | 13 |
| 2.4. Theoretical Literature | 15 |
| 2.4.1 Theories Surrounding GBV | 15 |
| 2.5 REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL LITERATURE | 19 |
| 2.5.1 General Legislative and Policy Context of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in South Africa | 19 |
| 2.5.2 The Elements of the GBV Policy Framework..... | 22 |
| 2.6 Background of Rape Culture and Gender-Based Violence in South Africa..... | 24 |
| 2.7 The Underlying Causes of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in South Africa | 26 |
| 2.7.1 Inequality Between Sexes | 26 |
| 2.7.2 Cultural Practices | 27 |
| 2.7.3 The rationale behind the implementation of the GBV public policy frameworks..... | 28 |
| 2.7.4 The Impact of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) on Individuals and the Community | 30 |
| 2.7.5 Interventions implemented to address (GBV) in Mankweng Township | 32 |
| CHAPTER THREE..... | 35 |
| RESEARCH METHODOLOGY..... | 35 |
| 3. INTRODUCTION | 35 |
| 3.1 Research Approach/Design | 36 |
| 3.1.1. Qualitative Desk Study Approach | 36 |
| 3.1.2 Qualitative Depth and Exploration | 36 |
| 3.2 Target Population and Study's Location..... | 37 |
| 3.3 Sampling..... | 38 |
| 3.4 Data Collection | 39 |
| 3.4.1 Utilizing Semi-Structured Interviews | 39 |

| | |
|---|----|
| 3.4.2 Exploring Counter-Narratives | 40 |
| 3.4.3 Aim for Specific Information | 40 |
| 3.4.4 Eliciting Storytelling Responses..... | 40 |
| 3.4.5 Tools Used for Collecting Data | 41 |
| 3.4.6 Data Collection and Privacy..... | 43 |
| 3.4.7 Language Diversity | 43 |
| 3.5 Data Analysis..... | 44 |
| 3.5.1 The Rationale for Thematic Analysis | 46 |
| 3.5.2 Audio-Recorded Interviews and Confidentiality | 46 |
| 3.5.3 Comprehensive Data Collection | 47 |
| 3.5.4 Compilation and Analysis..... | 47 |
| 3.6 Reliability and Validity | 48 |
| 3.6.1 Consistency in Questionnaire Responses | 48 |
| 3.6.2 Unified Agreement in One-on-One Interviews | 48 |
| 3.6.3 Ensuring Data Collection Integrity | 49 |
| 3.6.4 Content Validity and Supervisory Approval | 49 |
| 3.7 Trustworthiness of the Study | 50 |
| 3.7.1 Credibility..... | 50 |
| 3.7.2 Dependability..... | 50 |
| 3.7.3 Transferability | 51 |
| 3.7.4 Confirmability..... | 51 |
| 3.8 Ethical Consideration..... | 51 |
| 3.8.1 Legal Authorization | 52 |
| 3.8.2 Informed Consent with Gatekeeper Permission | 52 |
| 3.8.3 Anonymity | 53 |
| 3.8.4 Voluntary Participation | 53 |

| | |
|--|----|
| 3.9 Measure to be Followed to Ensure the Well-Being of Participants | 54 |
| 3.10 Conclusion..... | 55 |
| CHAPTER FOUR | 57 |
| DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, AND DISCUSSION | 57 |
| 4. INTRODUCTION | 57 |
| 4.1 Participants..... | 57 |
| 4.2 Procedures | 61 |
| 4.3 Data Presentation and Interpretation..... | 61 |
| 4.3.1 Theme 1: Staying in an Abusive Relationship for a Long Time | 64 |
| 4.3.2 Theme 2: The Failure of GBV Policy Framework in Mankweng Township... | 70 |
| 4.3.3 Theme 3: The Most Prevalent Types of GBV in Mankweng Township..... | 74 |
| 4.3.4 Theme 4: How to Prevent GBV in Mankweng Township..... | 78 |
| 4.4 The Semi-Formal Focus-Group's Findings and Discussions | 84 |
| 4.4.1 Formation of Focus Groups..... | 85 |
| 4.4.2 Describing Gender-Based Violence (Mixed Responses)..... | 88 |
| 4.5 Conclusion..... | 89 |
| CHAPTER FIVE..... | 90 |
| SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION..... | 90 |
| 5. INTRODUCTION | 90 |
| 5.1 Research Objectives' Achievement | 90 |
| 5.2 The Summary of Findings..... | 92 |
| 5.2.1 Men's Responses | 92 |
| 5.2.2 Women's Responses..... | 93 |
| 5.2.3 Effects of GBV on Women..... | 95 |
| 5.2.4 LGBTQ+ Members' Responses..... | 96 |
| 5.3 The Study's Research Gap and the Direction for Future Research | 97 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| 5.4 Recommendations..... | 98 |
| 5.4.1 Awareness of Gender-Based Violence Programs..... | 99 |
| 5.4.2 Better Distribution of Resources for Gender-Based Violence Issues..... | 99 |
| 5.4.3 Rethinking Cultural and Religious Influences to Promote Gender Equality and Reduce Violence | 100 |
| 5.4.4 New Gender-Based Violence Policy Frameworks that Cater for All Genders Male, Female, and LGBTQ+ People | 100 |
| 5.4.5 Prioritize Urgent Response to Gender-Based Violence Victims and Survivors | 100 |
| 5.4.6 Increase Support Services and Access to Justice for Victims and Survivors of GBV..... | 101 |
| 5.5 Limitations of the Study | 101 |
| 5.6 Deductions of the Study | 102 |
| 5.7 Suggestions..... | 104 |
| 5.8 Conclusion..... | 106 |
| 5.9 Final Remarks | 107 |
| 5.9.1. Government Accountability..... | 107 |
| 5.9.2. Gender Equality as a Foundation | 108 |
| 5.9.3. Inclusivity in Research..... | 108 |
| 5.9.4. Intersectionality Matters..... | 108 |
| 5.9.5. Policy Framework Overhaul..... | 108 |
| Reference List..... | 109 |
| APPENDIX A: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AND ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS GUIDELINE | 125 |
| APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM | 127 |
| APPENDIX C: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE..... | 129 |

APPENDIX D & E: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHIC COMMITTEE (TREC)
CERTIFICATE AND GATEKEEPER'S PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH
APPROVAL LETTER 133
Disclaimer.....133

CHAPTER ONE

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) encompasses various forms of violence targeting individuals based on their gender, including domestic violence, physical violence, economic violence, sexual violence, emotional violence, femicide, and others. In South Africa, GBV predominantly affects women and children, leading to an urgent call for action from the government and relevant organizations to address the increasing incidences of gender-based violence against women (Enaifoghe et al., 2021).

Limpopo Province is one of the regions in South Africa severely impacted by GBV, prompting the implementation of legal and policy intervention strategies such as the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) and its Amendment Act and the Domestic Violence and its Amendment Act (Managa et al., 2022). However, despite these policy frameworks, GBV continues to persist in the Mankweng township of Limpopo Province, necessitating a critical investigation into the reasons behind their failure to effectively combat GBV as intended (Phasha, 2021).

The South African constitution, specifically the Bill of Rights, emphasizes the protection of the right to life, which is considered non-derogable and highly valued. However, the cases of GBV in South Africa, as highlighted in Chapter Two of this study, show that many women lose their lives due to the stigma and impact of GBV. The deadly consequences encompass different outcomes, such as homicide, suicide, maternal mortality, and deaths related to AIDS (Sabri and Granger, 2018).

The 2012 Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act was implemented as a public policy to improve the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation. However, studies have indicated that GBV, including sexual, physical, mental, and economic harm, has evolved into various criminal offenses such as intimidations of violence, coercion, manipulation, intimate partner violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation, and so-called honour crimes that the Act aimed to prevent (Wanjiru, 2021).

In recent years, there has been an increasing concern about GBV against women and children, which has been exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic, leading to a shadow pandemic with deadly consequences for victims (Mongare et al., 2018). The 2011 Protection from Harassment Act aimed to provide effective solutions against harassment, but did not significantly impact GBV levels, indicating the need for alternative solutions to address the underlying harassment cases that contribute to the increase in GBV (Dzinavane, 2016).

The Covid-19 pandemic further worsened the impact of GBV in South Africa, with restrictions aimed at controlling the virus that created barriers for women and children to seek help and access services. This has also affected the capacity of gender-based violence services to provide support and the effectiveness of policy and practice responses to GBV (John et al., 2020; Mantler et al., 2022; Ndlovu et al., 2022).

Scholars such as Enaifoghe et al. (2021) and Graaff (2021) have extensively discussed the pervasive nature of GBV in South Africa, highlighting the country's exceptionally high rates of violence and gender-based violence compared to other nations. Various interventions, including legislative changes and women-focused reactive initiatives, have been implemented to address the increasing cases of GBV in the country (Dzinavane, 2016).

Despite South Africa being a democratic country with a commitment to human rights, GBV continues to persist. GBV is recognized as a human rights abuse, but societies, communities, and individuals often feel helpless in the face of GBV, even if they have experienced it first-hand or witnessed it within their families and localities (Thobejane, 2019). Public policies that forbid violence against women and enhance survivors' ability to access dedicated facilities, such as Women's Police Stations, have the potential to encourage manners among men that condemn violence against women (Cordova & Kras, 2021). However, patriarchal norms and societal expectations often discourage women from reporting assaults or violations involving their spouses or family members, further perpetuating the cycle of violence.

It is crucial to understand the drivers of GBV or intimate partner violence (IPV) as experienced by women and perpetuated by men to develop effective prevention programs (Gibbs et al., 2020). Additionally, it is essential to consider both generic factors, such as quality of life and well-being, and condition-specific aspects related to

symptoms resulting from human rights abuses when examining the impact of GBV (Rahman et al., 2021). Overall, this research study provides a comprehensive background to the issue of GBV in Mankweng Township, South Africa, highlighting the shortcomings of existing policy frameworks and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. It also emphasizes the need for alternative solutions and a deeper understanding of the drivers of GBV.

1.1. STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a global epidemic that continues to affect numerous victims and potential victims. Despite extensive research and numerous attempts by scholars to devise effective measures to combat GBV, it remains a challenging concept to fully comprehend and address. This study aims to focus on the implementation of a policy framework that will help fight against GBV, specifically in Mankweng Township.

The urgent need for effective measures cannot be overstated, as a safe and secure future for all individuals, children, women, and men alike, depends on addressing GBV comprehensively. While it is essential that the government plays an active role, it is equally important to educate the public about gender-based violence in various settings. All individuals, including victims, survivors, perpetrators, potential victims, and potential perpetrators, have a role to play in the fight against GBV. In fact, even President Ramaphosa acknowledged the importance of public participation in his 2020 State of the Nation Address (SONA), highlighting the necessity of a united and well-informed nation working together with the government to address these serious issues.

The prevalence of GBV in Mankweng is particularly concerning, given that the township has a significant population of young women and girls, some of whom attend the local University of Limpopo. The increasing number of incidents of gender bias, especially among young people, is a pressing issue that requires immediate attention. Despite the existence of public policies, it is disheartening to observe that these measures have not had a significant impact on curbing the rise of gender-based violence.

To gain a deeper understanding of why GBV is prevalent in South Africa, particularly in Mankweng Township, and why previous interventions have not been successful, this

qualitative study aims to investigate the implementation of a policy framework. Failure to address this issue promptly will only lead to a further increase in GBV incidents. According to Amnesty International (2021), during the first week of COVID19 lockdown in 2020, the South African Police Service (SAPS) received approximately 2,300 calls for help related to gender-based violence. Given the various definitions of GBV and the previous failures of policy interventions, this study aims to explore the implementation of a policy framework to increase the probability of a successful fight against gender-based violence.

1.2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1 Aim of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the implementation of a policy framework to tackle gender-based violence in Mankweng Township, South Africa.

1.2.2 Objectives of the Study

This study intends to pursue the following objectives in order to achieve its goal:

- Examine the root causes of gender-based violence in South Africa.
- Explore the reasons behind the failure of implemented public policy frameworks in effectively addressing gender-based violence.
- Identify the impacts of gender-based violence on individuals and the community.
- To propose interventions to address gender-based violence in South Africa.

1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Good research questions are crucial for unravelling the mysteries of nature and gaining insight into a problem (Ratan et al., 2019). Therefore, this study seeks to address the following research questions:

- What are the underlying causes of gender-based violence in South Africa?
- Why have the public policy frameworks implemented been ineffective in addressing gender-based violence?
- What are the impacts of gender-based violence on individuals and the community?
- What interventions can be implemented to address gender-based violence in South Africa?

1.4. DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

This study is supported by the following keywords and concepts related to the research problem:

- **Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**

Gender-based violence (GBV) refers to any act of violence, threats, coercion, or deprivation of liberty enacted on individuals, primarily women, that is likely to cause physical, social, or psychological harm (Cruz & Klinger, 2016). It encompasses various forms of violence, including domestic violence, intimate partner violence, physical violence, sexual harassment, and workplace violence (Dzinavane, 2016). GBV is a widely recognized concept that highlights the use of violence as a weapon against individuals who are perceived to have a weaker biological makeup structure, predominantly perpetrated by men.

- **Policy**

Policy refers to a deliberate course or strategic action chosen from available alternatives, considering the prevailing conditions, to guide and shape present and future decisions (Webster, 2022). In the context of this research study, policy encompasses a set of principles, guidelines, and measures that are formulated and

implemented to address and combat gender-based violence. It involves the development of specific strategies, protocols, and regulations aimed at preventing, responding to, and eradicating gender-based violence in the province.

- **Policy framework**

A policy framework, within the context of this study, is a systematic and coherent structure designed to organize policy documentation into categorized groupings. It serves as a guiding framework that outlines a set of principles, objectives, and long-term goals, providing a foundation for the formulation of rules, guidelines, and regulations (Manzoor, 2017). The policy framework plays a vital role in directing and shaping the planning and development of the organization or entity responsible for addressing gender-based violence in Limpopo province. It provides an overall strategic direction and serves as a roadmap for effective policy implementation and decision-making processes aimed at combating and preventing gender-based violence.

- **Violence**

In this study's context, violence refers to the deliberate use of physical force or power with the intention of causing harm or instilling fear in others. It encompasses a wide range of harmful actions that can have severe and far-reaching consequences, including physical injuries, loss of life, psychological trauma, delayed personal development, and deprivation (Brankovic, 2019).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the literature on the overview of Gender-Based Violence as a concept. While some may still seek clarity on the definition of GBV, it is evident that this concept has gained significant recognition and attention (Sherman et al., 2021). GBV stands as one of the most extensively studied topics globally, with numerous scholars offering diverse definitions throughout its history.

However, due to the evolving nature of GBV and its multifaceted dimensions, a comprehensive and contextual understanding is essential. This chapter delves into the existing literature, drawing from various scholarly perspectives, to shed light on the complexities of GBV (Graaff, 2021). By examining the diverse definitions put forth by different scholars, this study aims to establish a solid foundation for further exploration and analysis of the GBV policy framework in Mankweng Township. By delving into the theoretical underpinnings and scholarly discourse surrounding GBV, this chapter lays the groundwork for subsequent chapters, which will delve into the implementation of a gender-based violence policy framework in Mankweng Township.

2.1 Understanding Gender-Based Violence in South Africa During Covid-19 Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought about a multitude of complications that have exacerbated the issue of Gender-Based Violence (GBV). Gender-Based Violence is an umbrella term encompassing any harm inflicted upon individuals against their will, stemming from power imbalances rooted in gender roles (Wirtz et al., 2018). South Africa faces significant challenges related to violence, as noted by Graaff (2017), who highlighted how violence is more often perceived as an acceptable response for men but not for women. During the lockdown period in South Africa, various sources,

including the national Gender-Based Violence Call Centre (GBVCC), the South African Police Service (SAPS), and civil society (Nduna & Tshona, 2021), reported an increased risk of gender-based domestic violence against women.

Khanlou et al. (2021) emphasized that health emergencies, based on past epidemic experiences, tend to exacerbate pre-existing gender inequalities. In 2013, the World Health Organization (WHO) recognized Gender-Based Violence as a significant public health hazard and violation of human rights (Sinko & Saint Arnault, 2019). Although men do experience gender-based violence, albeit less frequently, according to unofficial statistics, this study will primarily focus on women and girls due to their higher vulnerability as targets of GBV compared to men. Dzinavane (2016) previously highlighted that numerous GBV cases go unreported and are deeply entrenched in a culture of silence, making it exceedingly difficult to gather the necessary data and information to ascertain the magnitude and long-term impact of GBV. This culture of silence stems from a lack of trust in the legal system, which prevents women and children from seeking justice for the violation of their rights. Women in South Africa live in constant fear for their lives, regardless of the time of day, with the haunting question "AM I NEXT?" lingering in their minds.

In South Africa, the term Gender-Based Violence is sometimes used interchangeably with violence against women (VAW) and frequently encompasses sexual violence, domestic violence, and femicide (Buiten & Naidoo, 2020). Graaff (2021) also acknowledged South Africa as a country heavily affected by violence against women and gender-based violence more broadly. However, the opportunities to address Gender-Based Violence were limited during the nationwide lockdown (Ndlovu, Mulondo and Tsoka-Gwegweni, 2022). Furthermore, it has been observed that the Covid-19 pandemic has fundamentally altered the way individuals live.

While there is limited evidence about the impact of the pandemic on the experiences of women and children at home in South Africa during the Covid-19 lockdown, there is emerging evidence regarding its effects on their livelihoods (Mahlangu et al., 2022). Women found themselves dreading being confined with their spouses or partners during the pandemic, while society expected them to be safest at home with their loved

ones. Domestic violence, unfortunately, reigned supreme during the Covid-19 pandemic, as women and children had nowhere to escape (Mshwewe, 2020). According to Graaff (2021) the world has become an increasingly dangerous place, leaving women unsure about whom to trust, and children are particularly vulnerable to sexual assault from their stepfathers and uncles.

Numerous interventions in the form of policy framework such as (the Domestic Violence Act, the Protection from Harassment Act etc) have been proposed to understand gender-based violence, as researchers strive to develop effective approaches to address the increase in gender-based violence cases in Mankweng Township. However, it is evident that existing measures have not had the desired effect, highlighting the need for new, more impactful strategies. Casey et al., (2018) propose that ending GBV requires an increasingly institutionalized component of a global effort, involving the engagement of men and boys as participants and stakeholders in gender-based violence prevention initiatives. Unfortunately, many GBV prevention measures have primarily focused on survivors, victims, and potential victims, neglecting the important role of addressing perpetrators and potential future perpetrators.

In addition to gender, experiences of harsh parenting during childhood and a history of physical or sexual abuse by adults can also contribute to the experience of gender-based violence (Cotter & Savage, 2019). Addressing GBV requires comprehensive action, recognizing that a life free of violence is a fundamental human right (Khanlou et al., 2021). It is clear that the prevalence of GBV has significantly impacted the way of living, where acts of kindness and respect, such as being a gentleman, should be the norm rather than an exception.

Applin et al., (2022) emphasize the need for researchers studying GBV to address the persistent habit of ignoring power structures that influence the victimization of women by violence in research, humanitarian policy, and program development. Black transgender women in Mankweng Township are disproportionately affected by violence, leading to poor mental health outcomes (Sherman et al., 2021), meaning that in Mankweng Township, transgender women are among the most targeted groups for

gender-based violence. Wirtz et al. (2018) highlight the limited knowledge and understanding among healthcare providers regarding the experiences of transgender patients with GBV, often attributed to transgender women's fear of judgment, which hinders them from coming forward and seeking help.

Moreover, there is a lack of understanding regarding the health effects within the transgender and gender-diverse communities. Gamareal et al. (2020) emphasize the urgent need to address and understand the stigma attached to transgender women of colour in relationships and the specific dangers they face, especially considering the heightened risks of GBV during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to Zea et al. (2021), transgender women, compared to other LGBTQ-plus groups, are significantly more likely to have experienced severe beatings, stabbings, and sexual assaults. Sherman et al. (2021) highlights that transgender women survivors often seek support to cope with the mental effects of violence perpetrated against them, noting that the effects of poly-victimization may differ in presentation, duration, and severity among transgender individuals. Consequently, Gamarel et al. (2022) stress the importance of addressing the stigma associated with transgender women in GBV prevention policies and programs, aiming to build community strength and resilience in Mankweng Township.

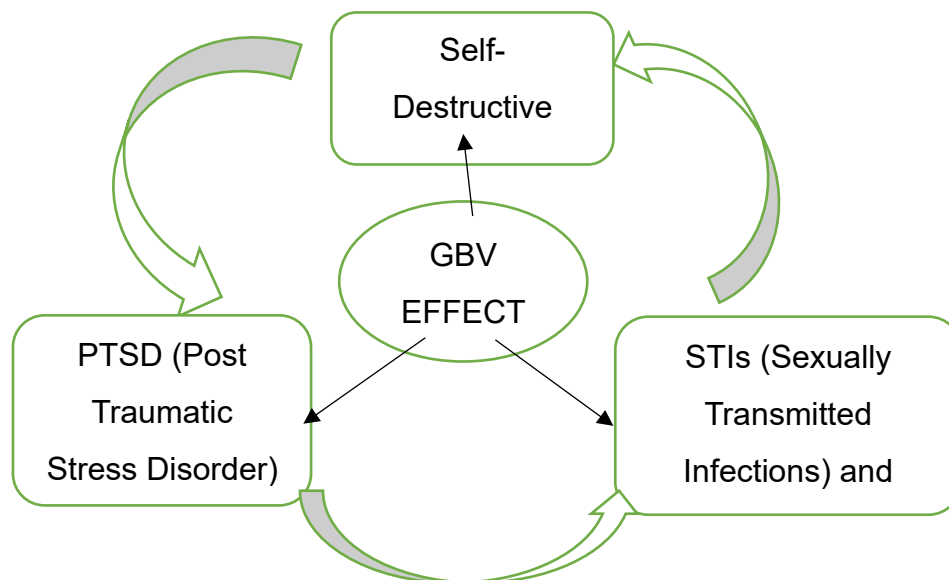
Gender-Based Violence is a significant issue in South Africa, and Mankweng Township is not immune to its impact. The implementation of a gender-based violence policy framework in the township should consider the specific challenges faced by the community, including the experiences of women, transgender women, and marginalized groups. By addressing the culture of silence, engaging the community, and promoting inclusivity, the policy framework can contribute to the prevention and reduction of gender-based violence in Mankweng Township.

2.2 What are Gender-Based Violence Effects

The Gender-Based Violence concept remains theoretically ambiguous, emphasising violence against women and children which encompasses severe health and

economic consequences that forms an obstacle to equality, development, and peace (Eggers del Campo and Steinert, 2020). Gender-Based Violence has many bitter aftermaths that it would take forever to address them all, hence this study will focus on effects that have the most disastrous consequences for the individuals involved.

Figure A: The circle of effects caused by gender-based violence.



Source: From the researcher with literature from Graaff (2021).

2.2.1 Self-Destructive Behaviour and Self-Hate

One of the most devastating effects of GBV is self-hate. Survivors of GBV often experience lifelong repercussions and may even contemplate suicide due to the traumatic experiences they have endured (Wanjiru, 2021). They may engage in self-criticism, finding countless reasons to hate themselves and embarking on a self-destructive path. Turnell et al., (2019) describe self-hate as feelings of inadequacy, incompetence, and worthlessness resulting from a failure to meet certain societal standards and values. It involves attributing undesirable and defective qualities to oneself and enduring dysfunctional and destructive self-evaluation. Self-hate is often accompanied by depression, as survivors ponder why such a horrendous ordeal happened to them.

2.2.2 Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is a psychiatric disorder that arises from direct or indirect exposure to traumatic events (Schuster & Dwyer, 2020). Healthcare providers, including nurses, who care for vulnerable patients, are at risk of developing PTSD due to their exposure to traumatic situations. Gender-Based Violence, particularly sexual assault, has a greater emotional impact on women compared to men (Cotter & Savage, 2019). Survivors of sexual assault often experience higher levels of PTSD, struggling with interpersonal relationships and finding it difficult to appreciate life (said Shakespeare-Finch & Armstrong, 2010, as cited in Sinko and Saint Arnault, 2019). GBV survivors with PTSD may exhibit extreme paranoia, perceiving potential dangers everywhere.

2.2.3 Sexually Transmitted Infections and Unwanted Pregnancies

Sexual violence against women leads to various consequences, including unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), which can result in isolation and depression among survivors (Enaifoghe et al., 2021). Many GBV victims, especially those who are trafficked into sex work, face a higher risk of STIs. As they are forced into non-consensual sexual encounters, they lack the agency to use condoms or access contraceptive methods, increasing their vulnerability. Roberts et al. (2018) highlight the association between GBV and multiple HIV risk factors among female sex workers, as many were coerced into this profession rather than willingly choosing it.

The effects of GBV are profound and wide-ranging, causing immense suffering for individuals impacted by this form of violence. By understanding and addressing these effects, we can work towards preventing and mitigating the consequences of gender-based violence.

2.3 The Background and Extent of Gender-Based Violence Cases in South Africa

South Africa, often referred to as the 'Rape Capital of the World,' faces alarming rates of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) compared to its neighbouring countries. In 2017 and 2018, the South African Police Service (SAPS) recorded nearly 3,000 women who were killed reported by World Economic Forum 2019 earning the country this unfortunate title (Enaifoghe et al., 2021). The constant headlines about GBV in South Africa overshadow discussions on gender equality, indicating that the issue continues to persist (Graaff, 2017). Hardly a day goes by without reports of women or girls being brutally murdered after experiencing sexual assault, GBV dominates discussions in South African society reported News24 (2022).

Despite various definitions provided by the government and organizations, GBV in practice is often limited to violence against women (VAW), particularly sexual and domestic violence (Graaff, 2021). However, there are instances, such as the case of Yonela Boli, a male student at the Fort Hare campus in 2020, proving men also experience violence perpetrated by women (Buiten & Naidoo, 2020). Understanding the prominent factors contributing to intimate partner violence (IPV) in specific locations is crucial for developing effective interventions that align with local contexts (Gibbs et al., 2020).

The year 2019 marked a significant increase in GBV cases, making it one of the worst years for GBV in South Africa. Estimates from the World Health Organization indicate that a significant proportion of women experience at least one act of physical or sexual violence from their intimate partners during their lifetime (Eggers del Campo and Steinert, 2020). However, many of the GBV cases in 2019 did not result from intimate partner violence. For example, the rape and murder of Uyinene Mrwetyana, a 19-year-old female student at Cape Town University, by a post office employee, brought attention to the life-threatening nature of GBV and its violation of human rights (Wanjiru, 2021).

Tragically, these incidents continued in quick succession. Shortly after Uyinene's case, Jesse Hesse, an 18-year-old theology student, and her grandfather were killed, followed by the brutal murder of Precious Ramabulana, a 21-year-old female student at Capricorn TVET college, after being raped (Buiten & Naidoo, 2020). The #AMINEXT movement gained momentum on social media platforms, shedding light on these heart-wrenching deaths. Despite the outcry and awareness campaigns, GBV cases in South Africa continued to rise instead of abating (Diraditsile, 2018).

South Africa, known as the 'Rainbow Nation,' was meant to symbolize diversity and warmth, not a state infused with violence. However, during the first week of the global lockdown in 2020, GBV statistics skyrocketed, with 2,320 complaints reported (Enaifoghe et al., 2021). News outlets reported numerous disturbing GBV cases simultaneously. For example, a 42-year-old woman was allegedly stabbed and left in an outside room in Eersterust, Gauteng. In Mossel Bay, a 25-year-old woman named Naledi Phangindawo was stabbed to death after being attacked with a knife and an axe. Tshegofatso Pule, an eight-months pregnant woman, was stabbed and hanged on a tree in Roodepoort. Alecia Kortjie and her daughter Raynecia were found dead in a Belhar house, and another woman's body was discovered dumped under a tree in Dobsonville Extension 3 (Maphanga, 2020).

Limpopo, listed as one of the South African provinces where GBV is prevalent, witnesses a culture of silence among women who fear reprisals from law enforcement when exposing their loved ones' wrongdoings (Thobejane, 2019). In 2021, the struggle against GBV persisted, with a six-year-old girl raped and killed in Limpopo, and a 15-year-old girl stabbed to death, her body dumped in the bushes (McCain, 2021).

In 2022, the horror continued with the murder of Sedika Lekhobo, a 14-year-old girl found dead at the Vryburg Cemetery in North-West. Namhla Mtwana was shot nine times after attempting to leave her abusive boyfriend of 17 years, highlighting the case as one of GBV and femicide (News24, 2022). The daughter of former EFF secretary-general Godrich Gardee was found murdered with visible head wounds, and two grade 12 pupils were hacked to death in Mpumalanga (Nkanjeni, 2022). Additionally, a group of eight women were gang-raped while shooting a music video in Gauteng, and

another group of women faced a similar ordeal at a funeral parlour in Limpopo (Nkanjeni, 2022).

These are just a few of the headline-making GBV cases in 2022, highlighting the pervasiveness of the issue. Many other cases, less viral but equally distressing, go unreported by the media.

2.4. Theoretical Literature

The theoretical literature is a vital factor in this study as it offers a comprehensive overview of existing knowledge and research on the impact of GBV in South Africa. This section aims to explore and analyse relevant academic studies, reports, and publications to gain insight into the underlying factors that contribute to the phenomena of gender-based violence and its consequences for women in the country. This theoretical literature seeks to provide a conceptual lens through which the development, implementation, and evaluation of this policy framework can be explored (Kivunja, 2018). Drawing from relevant theories and models, this study aims to identify key factors, processes, and mechanisms that can contribute to the successful execution of a policy agenda tailored to combat gender-based violence within the unique sociocultural context of Mankweng Township.

2.4.1 Theories Surrounding GBV

The study adopted the Social Learning Theory which relates to people who acquire violent behaviours as observation and experience. Second, the study adopted the Learned Helplessness Theory, which suggests that individuals who have been exposed to prolonged aversive stimuli may develop a sense of helplessness and exhibit characteristics such as low self-esteem, renunciation, and a perception of loss of control.

In addition to the Social Learning Theory and Learned Helplessness Theory, this study incorporates one additional theoretical framework: Gender Role. This theoretical

literature explores key concepts and theories surrounding policy implementation, providing valuable information on the development, implementation, and effectiveness of policy frameworks specifically tailored to combat gender-based violence in the unique context of Mankweng Township. By delving into the theoretical underpinnings, this study aims to shed light on the complexities and potential strategies to enhance policy effectiveness, ultimately fostering a safer and more inclusive environment for all residents.

- **Social Learning Theory**

Social learning theory, one of the major theories regarding gender-based violence, suggests that people learn behaviours through observation and experience. According to Mongare, Obonyo, and Parsitau (2018), social learning theory posits that people acquire violent behaviours as coping mechanisms by observing and learning from their environment. The theory emphasizes that individuals can adopt both negative and positive behaviours through observation, learning, and reinforcement. Wight et al. (2022) further support this theory by proposing that individuals are motivated to adopt behaviours demonstrated by credible role models, and when they witness the benefits of such behaviours, they are likely to engage in them, thereby reinforcing these behaviours for future generations.

In the context of gender-based violence, Graaff (2017) suggests that exposure to violence during childhood or witnessing violence can shape later violent behaviour of an individual. The study argues that interventions such as psychotherapy can be effective in minimizing future use of violence by individuals. Early childhood experiences play a crucial role in shaping an individual's behaviour, attitudes, and relationships. Children learn from their environment and the people around them, particularly their parents or guardians. If they are exposed to violence and abuse from an early age, they may internalize these behaviours as normal and acceptable (Wanjiru, 2021). Therefore, it is essential to address the influence of social learning in the context of prevention and intervention of gender-based violence.

Additionally, Albert Bandura's social learning theory, introduced in 1971, highlights how individuals acquire aggressive behaviours through learning (Obrenovic, 2021). Wanjiru (2021) explains that witnessing abuse and violence can overwhelm children, leading to the normalization of such behaviours. For instance, if a boy raised up in a family where his dad consistently abuses his mom without facing consequences, he may perceive this as the appropriate way to treat women. The study emphasizes that children absorb both positive and negative behaviour projected in front of them and are influenced by significant individuals in their lives, such as peers, parents, and teachers (Graaff, 2017).

- **Learned Helplessness Theory**

In addition to social learning theory, the learned helplessness theory provides insight into the behaviours and characteristics of battered women. Learned helplessness theory suggests that people who have been exposed to prolonged aversive stimuli may develop a sense of helplessness and exhibit characteristics such as low self-esteem, renunciation, and a perception of loss of control (Wanjiru, 2021). Sabine and Adrienne further hypothesize that gender-based violence, reflecting and strengthening gender inequalities, contributes to the prevalence of learned helplessness among women (Cruz & Klinger, 2016).

Lenore Walker's study on women who remain in abusive relationships supports the notion that learned helplessness plays a role in their decision making. Women exposed to frequent abuse may feel stripped of their will to leave due to fear of judgment from others and the loss of control over their situations (Wanjiru, 2021). This theory highlights how negative patriarchal elements, reinforced by cultural norms and traditions, further limit women's decision-making powers and perpetuate gender-based violence (Cherry, 2021).

It is crucial to understand that learned helplessness is a complex phenomenon, and women's reasons for staying in abusive relationships can vary. Fear of retaliation, financial dependence, and hope for change are some factors that contribute to their

helplessness (Ackerman, 2019). The static model of learned helplessness is contradicted by the dynamic nature of women's reactions to violence over time. Initially shocked and surprised, victims can continue to stay in abusive relationships, believing that it will never happen again or hoping for their partner to change (Wanjiru, 2021).

Considering the multifaceted nature of gender-based violence, addressing its various aspects is essential. Mahlori et al. (2018) emphasize that exploring the health aspects of gender-based violence can reveal the psychological and physical implications for both victims and perpetrators. By understanding the pathological implications, it becomes easier to address the challenges posed by gender-based violence.

Lastly, social learning theory provides insight into how individuals learn behaviours through observation and reinforcement. Childhood experiences, role models, and social interactions play an important role in shaping behaviours, including those related to violence. The learned helplessness theory sheds light on the characteristics and decision-making processes of battered women, highlighting the complex factors that contribute to their helplessness. By considering these theories, interventions and prevention strategies can be developed to effectively address gender-based violence.

- **Gender Role Theory**

Gender role theory, as posited by Rua et al. (2020), examines how societal expectations of behaviour for men and women influence judgments and behaviours. It argues that women may experience enhanced role incongruity when they face social pressure to conform to traditional gender roles. These expectations are often based on stereotypes and assumptions about women's biological makeup and physical strength, which render them more vulnerable to violence (Dzinavane, 2016). However, it is important to challenge these stereotypes and recognize that they do not reflect the true capabilities of women.

Traditional cultural norms and gender stereotypes have historically confined women to family roles and domestic duties, reinforcing the belief that women are primarily suited for housework and caretaking (Qing, 2020). Gender roles have been used as a tool to

control and limit women's agency, while men are given greater freedom and authority as the presumed heads of households (Graaff, 2017). Society has often discouraged women from pursuing certain occupations or positions of leadership, perpetuating gender biases and inequality (Zhang et al., 2020; Aley and Hahn, 2020).

2.5 REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

2.5.1 General Legislative and Policy Context of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in South Africa

The Constitution of South Africa, designated as Act No. 108 of 1996, serves as the bedrock of legal principles explicitly forbidding GBV in all its forms (The Constitution, 1996). In Chapter 2 of the South African Constitution, also known as the Bill of Rights, fundamental principles of equality and human dignity for all individuals are enshrined.

2.5.1.1 The South African Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996)

The South African Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996) stands as the paramount legal authority in the country, outlining the fundamental rights and entitlements of all residents. Notably, within the context of violence, specific constitutional provisions hold significant weight:

- **Section 9:** This section ensures equal protection for all individuals, explicitly prohibiting unfair discrimination based on various grounds such as race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language, or birth.
- **Section 10:** Each person is entitled to human dignity, with the right to have their dignity respected and safeguarded.
- **Section 12(1):** Every individual possesses the right to freedom and security of person, encompassing protection from any form of violence originating from public or private sources.

- **Section 12(2):** Each person has the right to bodily and psychological integrity, including security and control over their body, as well as protection against medical experimentation without informed consent.

2.5.1.2 The Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act (Act No. 4 of 2000)

Commonly referred to as PEPUDA, this Act explicitly prohibits discrimination based on sex, gender, or sexual orientation. It recognizes GBV as a form of prohibited discrimination. PEPUDA's provisions extend beyond the workplace, imposing an obligation on all Post-School Education and Training (PSET) establishments to uphold equality.

2.5.1.3 The Employment Equity Act (Act No. 55 of 1998)

This Act mandates that no employee should face unfair treatment or discriminatory practices in employment policies or practices. Employers are required to take necessary measures to reduce biased prejudice within the workplace.

2.5.1.4 The Code of Good Practice on the Handling of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace (2008)

This Act emphasizes the importance of providing appropriate skills, training, and resources to individuals supporting complainants. It underscores the need for a work environment that respects employee dignity, takes complaints seriously, and safeguards against reprisals. Failure to address incidents of sexual harassment, if known, may lead to employers being held vicariously liable by the courts (Rass, 2020).

Post-school education and training institutions have a responsibility not only as workplaces but also as educational organizations to foster a positive learning environment and protect students from harm caused by individuals associated with the

institution. Therefore, these institutions must maintain the rights to liberty and safety of the individual, which includes freedom from all forms of violence, considering the civil and criminal laws derived from the requirements in the Bill of Rights.

2.5.1.5 The Amendment of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters, Act No. 32 of 2007)

The Amendment of the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) (Act No. 32 of 2007) is the primary legislation addressing sexual violence against adults and children. It provides comprehensive definitions for various sexual offences, ranging from indecent exposure to rape. The Act acknowledges the significance of power dynamics in determining consent in rape cases. Under certain circumstances, it recognizes that quid pro quo harassment, where resources or opportunities are withheld unless sexual favours are granted, can be considered sexual assault.

The Act establishes a helpful structure for effective implementation, including an Inter-Sectoral Committee, a National Policy Framework (NPF) for the Management of Sexual Offences, and the development of national instructions, directives, and training courses for professionals involved in handling sexual offences. Importantly, the NPF assigns specific duties to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) regarding sexual offences (enforcement).

2.5.1.6 The Protection from Harassment Act (Act No. 17 of 2011)

The Act addresses provocation and menacing behaviours that infringe upon statutory terms of discretion and individual dignity. This Act offers an accessible civil solution to shield individuals from actions that may not constitute a criminal offence but still violate their rights. It aims to address harassing conduct by obtaining a court order that prohibits the harasser from continuing their actions. Violation of a protection order is considered an offence punishable by fine or imprisonment. The Act also incorporates provisions to address digital forms of harassment.

2.5.1.7 South Africa's Domestic Violence Act (Act No. 116 of 1998)

The South African Domestic Violence Act (DVA), designated as Act No. 116 of 1998, comprehensively addresses various forms of family violence, including intimate partner violence. According to Rapanyane (2021), the preamble of the Act recognizes domestic violence as a societal problem. The Act covers relationships such as engagements, dating or customary relationships, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, encompassing romantic, intimate, or sexual relationships of any duration.

It also recognizes domestic relationships between individuals who share a residence without a romantic or sexual relationship. This extends the Act's protection to housemates and students living in residential settings.

Domestic violence, as defined by the Act, includes harassment, physical, sexual, emotional, and verbal abuse, stalking, intimidation, and controlling behaviour, among other forms of abuse.

This legislative framework establishes the legal foundation for addressing gender-based violence in South Africa. It reflects the country's commitment to upholding the principles of equality, dignity, and human rights for all its residents. While these laws are critical, the effectiveness of their implementation and enforcement remains a subject of ongoing research and advocacy, as explored in this study.

2.5.2 The Elements of the GBV Policy Framework

2.5.2.1 Socioeconomic Factors

The policy framework should prioritize economic empowerment programs for women, including skills training, access to employment opportunities, and support for entrepreneurship (Rass, 2020). By addressing poverty and inequality, the policy can reduce women's vulnerability to GBV. It should also aim to address job insecurity and

promote fair labour practices to alleviate economic stressors that can contribute to violence within households.

2.5.2.2 Cultural and Social Norms

The policy framework should include comprehensive gender-sensitive education programs in schools and communities. These programs should challenge patriarchal beliefs and stereotypes, promoting gender equality, mutual respect, and consent.

Engaging with traditional and community leaders is crucial to change cultural norms. The policy should encourage dialogues and collaborations with local stakeholders to promote positive cultural practices and challenge harmful norms that perpetuate GBV (Graaff, 2021).

2.5.2.3 Institutional factors

Strengthening the legal framework is vital. The policy should ensure effective enforcement of existing laws against GBV and work toward closing any legal gaps. This includes increasing conviction rates and providing adequate resources for law enforcement agencies and the judiciary. The policy framework should prioritize the establishment and enhancement of support services for GBV survivors. This includes increasing the number of accessible and well-equipped shelters, providing trauma-informed counselling, legal assistance, and medical assistance (Montle, 2020). It should additionally address the detailed needs of marginalized groups, such as women with disabilities.

2.5.2.4. Community Factors

The policy framework should promote community engagement and awareness programs to challenge social acceptance and silence surrounding GBV (Msweli, 2020). This can involve conducting community dialogues, workshops, and campaigns to educate and mobilize community members against GBV. It should foster

partnerships between government institutions, civil society organizations, and local community groups to ensure effective implementation and sustainability of interventions. Community organizations should be empowered to provide support services and preventive initiatives.

2.5.2.5 Intersectionality

The policy framework should adopt an intersectional approach that recognizes the unique experiences and vulnerabilities of various marginalized groups, such as women living in poverty or with disabilities. It should ensure that interventions are tailored to address their specific needs and challenges (Nduna and Tshona, 2021).

Collaboration with intersectional organizations and activists can help inform policy decisions, improve service provision, and ensure the inclusion of diverse voices in the policy implementation process. By addressing these underlying factors through the implementation of a comprehensive policy framework, there is the potential for significant progress in reducing GBV in Mankweng Township. However, according to Phasha (2021) it is important to acknowledge that the success of the policy will depend on sufficient resources, political commitment, and ongoing evaluation and adaptation based on local context and needs.

2.6 Background of Rape Culture and Gender-Based Violence in South Africa

Rape culture is deeply entrenched in South Africa, making it the most predominant form of gender-based violence (GBV) in the country. Women and girls continue to be subjected to sexual assault from individuals who are supposed to protect them, such as their husbands, boyfriends, fathers, brothers, and uncles. The widespread nature of this violence has created an environment in which women and girls no longer feel safe and the odds are stacked against them. A rape survivor shared her experience, stating that "police do not take gender-based violence victims seriously enough when they file cases" (Amnesty International, 2021). These sentiments are supported by the

South African Minister of Justice and Constitutional Development, Ronald Lamola, who admitted on the radio in June 2020 that the system has inherent flaws that frequently fail victims of GBV.

In response to the alarming increase in cases of GBV, hashtag movement campaigns were launched throughout South Africa in the hope of gaining momentum to combat sexual abuse (Sinko & Saint-Arnault, 2019). Unfortunately, these campaigns did not achieve the desired results, as rape and murder against women continue to plague the country. Extensive evidence suggests that victimization by GBV has direct and indirect effects on health and well-being, with intricate connections to multiple complex social determinants of health (Wirtz et al., 2018). During the past two decades, various programs and strategies have been developed to engage men and boys in the prevention of violence, either through gender-specific programming or as part of community education and mobilization efforts (Casey et al., 2018).

Although the terms "gender-based violence" and "violence against women" (VAW) are sometimes used interchangeably, Buiten and Naidoo (2020) highlight the need to understand the specific characteristics that make violence gender-based. It is not enough to simply recognize that gender matters; there must be a comprehensive understanding of how and why it matters (Applin et al., 2022). Graaff (2021) also emphasizes that many organizations still maintain a narrow understanding of VAW when discussing gender-based violence in practice.

The prevalence of gender-based violence in South Africa is deeply entrenched, with even prominent figures being implicated in such acts (Brankovic, 2019). A notable example is former president Jacob Zuma, who faced rape charges in the Johannesburg High Court on December 6, 2005, while serving as deputy president. However, on 8 May 2006, the charges were dismissed, with the assertion that the sexual act in question was consensual, purportedly due to the victim's choice of revealing clothing (TimesLive, 2017).

Fatima Tendani conducted a study specifically focused on Jacob Zuma's rape trial and supported the notion that the former president used cultural beliefs to justify his actions and hide behind political conspiracies in an attempt to discredit the victim (Mathivha, 2016). This highlights how the legal system itself can contribute to the perpetuation of violence against victims of GBV. Dzinavane (2016) acknowledges that women and girls lack confidence in the criminal justice system due to a lack of compassion, knowledge, and recognition of GBV as a crucial development issue requiring immediate attention. As a result, their resolve weakens, even if they must find the courage to report violence to the police or healthcare professionals, as they are often not taken seriously.

Based on the available literature, it becomes evident that Mankweng Township is not immune to the widespread problem of gender-based violence (GBV) in South Africa. The existence of rape culture, systemic deficiencies within the criminal justice system, and a limited understanding of violence against women (VAW) all contribute to the continuous cycle of violence against women and girls in this area. Therefore, it is crucial to establish and enforce a comprehensive policy framework that addresses GBV, fosters gender equality, and fosters a safer community environment in Mankweng Township.

2.7 The Underlying Causes of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in South Africa

South Africa has been recognized as a hotspot for gender-based violence (GBV), and despite the implementation of public policies to tackle GBV, statistics remain alarmingly high (Graaff, 2017).

2.7.1 Inequality Between Sexes

Gender equality is fundamental for sustainable development, and any discussion of gender-based violence (GBV) would be incomplete without considering its deep connection to gender inequality. The profound economic and gender inequalities in

South Africa have various repercussions, such as the involvement of women in petty crime, commercial sex work, and drug-related activities to support themselves and their children (World Health Organisation, 2019). Gender inequality permeates the economic, social, and cultural fabric of society, leading to limited opportunities and recognition for women and girls (Amnesty International, 2021). GBV is rooted in discriminatory gender norms and laws, which perpetuate gender inequality and reinforce impunity for perpetrators (Castaneda Carney et al., 2020).

Despite legislative measures like the 1998 Domestic Violence Act, effectively addressing GBV remains a challenge due to the protection provided to discriminatory gender norms (Van Hout and Chimbga, 2020). President Cyril Ramaphosa's authorization to release eligible inmates in 2020 raised concerns, as it was estimated that a significant proportion of these inmates could be GBV offenders (CSA, 1998) (Van Hout and Chimbga, 2020). Achieving gender equality necessitates the equal treatment of women and men, addressing discrimination based on both race and sex (Chapman, 2020). GBV is fuelled by dominance, power, and the abuse of authority, exacerbating existing gendered structural inequalities and power imbalances (Javed et al., 2021). Gender inequality may have originated from traditional beliefs in male superiority, which confined women to certain roles and subjected them to control and outdated practices like battering and corporal punishment, violating the fundamental principles of human rights (Wanjiru, 2021).

2.7.2 Cultural Practices

South African society still adheres to outdated customs and norms, despite the progress of the modern era. Apartheid has influenced the nature of South African society, perpetuating violence between generations. Cultural practices and masculinity contractually contribute to patriarchy, with men seeking power over women (Mshweshwe, 2020). These practices have been normalized and perpetrators have historically gone unpunished (Sabri & Granger, 2018). Culturally, men have occupied positions of power, relegating women to subordinate roles (Graaff, 2017). Consequently, women have become dependent on men and often tolerate abuse

instead of leaving toxic relationships. Historical restrictions prevented women from speaking out against their husbands or leaving abusive relationships, leading to forced marriages and a denial of their rights, including education (Nduna & Tshona, 2021).

Traditional customs such as lobola, ukuthwala, and dowry payments have sustained gender inequality and violated the right to freedom and security in South Africa. Lobola, traditionally seen as a way of thanking the bride's family, has been exploited for financial gain, reducing women to commodities (Chisango et al., 2022). Women subjected to lobola are often trapped in abusive relationships and face immense pressure to fulfil gender roles. Dowry, prevalent in many Asian countries, contributes to gender-based violence by promoting child marriage and denying education to young girls (Werft, 2017). Dowry gifts can become a means of extortion, leading to violence against women who do not meet expectations (Khanal & Sen, 2020). Ukuthwala, a dangerous traditional marriage custom, involves the abduction of young girls and contributes to sexual assault, human trafficking, and other forms of violence (Roberts et al., 2021). Poverty and patriarchal attitudes have driven parents, particularly fathers, to sell their daughters.

2.7.3 The rationale behind the implementation of the GBV public policy frameworks

Despite the implementation of public policy frameworks to address gender-based violence (GBV), there have been significant challenges in achieving their intended impact. This section explores some of the reasons why these policy frameworks have been ineffective, focusing on the Mankweng township.

According to Mamabolo (2022), the 1998 Domestic Violence Act has failed to adequately address GBV in the Mankweng township for several reasons: First, men raised in families with strong patriarchal structures are more likely to resort to violence and sexually assault women, driven by a sense of superiority over women. This deeply ingrained belief in male dominance perpetuates a culture of violence against women. Second, sociocultural factors influence the normalization of violence against women in

Mankweng. Women are often violated because they are perceived as inferior and are instructed to be submissive, heading to a social acceptance of domestic violence. Third, the psychological impact of these crimes affects both the victims and the community, creating a cycle of violence and trauma. Lastly, economic factors, such as women being forced to exchange sexual favours for material gains, make them exposed to sexual assault and other forms of aggression.

The structural variations between men and women, both physically and socially, result in women being disproportionately affected by gender-based violence, making it difficult for them to combat the pervasive influence of masculinity (Graaff, 2017). These factors contribute to the failure of the Domestic Violence Act in addressing GBV effectively.

Mshweshwe (2020) explains that the historical acceptance of domestic violence in Mankweng, combined with the lack of protective policies, has disproportionately affected women. In patriarchal societies, violence against women is often accepted as common practice, deeply rooted in beliefs of male dominance, gender roles, and power dynamics. Despite the implementation of policies over the years, cultural and patriarchal norms have persisted, hindering the effectiveness of these policy frameworks.

Similarly, the 2011 Protection from Harassment Act and the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Act have also been deemed ineffective in Mankweng. Incidents of violence and crime among children, including carrying weapons to school, fighting, stabbings, drug use, and increased teenage pregnancies resulting from rape and threats on school grounds, continue to be alarming (Mamabolo, 2022). This highlights the failure of these policies to create a safe environment for children and address the root causes of GBV.

Substance abuse has also been identified as a driver of GBV in the Mankweng township (Phasha, 2021). Instances of drugging women's drinks to facilitate sexual assault have become a disturbing trend, taking advantage of their intoxicated state to

conceal the perpetrators' motives (Schuster & Dwyer, 2020). To address risky sexual behaviour and reduce GBV, Makeleni (2021) suggests that governments and policymakers should conduct more rigorous evaluations of youth development programs.

In general, the failure of the public policy frameworks implemented in Mankweng to effectively address GBV can be attributed to a combination of factors, including deep patriarchal beliefs, sociocultural acceptance of violence against women, the psychological impact on victims and the community, and the presence of substance abuse. These challenges require a comprehensive approach that goes beyond policy implementation to address deeply rooted societal norms, attitudes, and behaviours that perpetuate GBV (Mkhonto, 2022).

2.7.4 The Impact of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) on Individuals and the Community

GBV has been recognized as a universal problem (Dzinavane, 2016), emphasizing the importance of understanding its drivers and outcomes before implementing interpositions to eradicate GBV. The ramifications of violence can vary for women and girls, with some experiencing temporary effects while others face permanent consequences.

Studies such as (Graaff, 2017; Mshwewe, 2020; and Enaifoghe et al. 2021) have highlighted the disproportionate impact of GBV on women and girls, revealing that survivors of gang rape may undergo multiple surgeries that can result in the loss of their ability to have children in the future (Cordova and Kras, 2021). Furthermore, participation in unprotected sexual acts during instances of GBV increases the risk of contracting Sexually Transmitted Diseases/Infections (STD/I) (Graaff, 2017).

GBV significantly disrupts the education of young girls, as they often lose valuable time attending court proceedings and seeking justice. Shame associated with GBV often

leads to school dropouts, jeopardizing their educational opportunities and future prospects. Consequently, their future ambitions are undermined (Werft, 2017).

Unwanted pregnancies are prevalent among survivors of GBV, leading to mentally ill mothers who may struggle to provide appropriate care to their children. Additionally, in some cases, young girls are forced into marriages with their rapists to protect their family's honour. For example, Sherry Johnson was forced to marry her rapist, who was nine years her senior, at the age of 11. Her family chose to avoid legal complications by forcing her into marriage, thus disregarding her rights and well-being (Werft, 2017). The inability to cope with or adapt to such traumatic experiences often forces many women and girls to attempt suicide.

The psychological impact of GBV frequently manifests itself as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression, with survivors questioning their self-worth and feeling irreparably broken. PTSD is an anxiety disorder that develops after a terrifying ordeal or event involving serious physical harm or threat (Kheswa & Hoho, 2014). To cope with their pain, victims can turn to substance abuse, such as drugs and alcohol, temporarily numbing their emotions. However, this coping mechanism aggravates the harm inflicted on their bodies. PTSD can easily be triggered, particularly when survivors encounter situations that remind them of their traumatic experiences. The severity of PTSD is amplified when physical abuse is involved, as acts such as being kicked, beaten, punched, and raped elicit an intense fear for one's life (Dzinavane, 2016).

The impacts of GBV extend beyond individual victims, negatively affecting the entire community. The prevalence of GBV fosters a climate of fear, perpetuating cycles of violence, and hindering social and economic development (Rass, 2020). Addressing these profound consequences of gender violence requires comprehensive interventions that prioritize the well-being of survivors and victims of gender-based violence.

2.7.5 Interventions implemented to address (GBV) in Mankweng Township

Recognizing the invasive nature of gender-based violence in educational contexts, from schools to universities, is crucial (Mahlori et al., 2016). However, many interventions designed to reduce GBV rates have often neglected to include perpetrators in their focus, instead prioritizing victims and potential victims. This oversight fails to address the root cause of the problem, namely men who perpetrate violence (Graaff, 2021). While it is important to prioritize support for women and girls as the most frequent targets of violence, it is equally imperative not to overlook the perpetrators, as doing so only worsens the problem instead of resolving it.

A successful approach to addressing GBV can begin with victim support. Society's tendency to blame the victim, focusing on aspects such as their attire, level of intoxication, or walking alone at night, further silences victims and perpetuates the problem (Applin et al., 2022). This mindset serves to justify perpetrators' behaviour rather than holding them accountable. Providing survivors of GBV with victim support offers them a safe space to process their emotions, experiences, and trauma, empowering them to seek counselling services (Graaff, 2017).

GBV victims require comprehensive support, as the process of charging perpetrators can be psychologically and physically damaging. GBV cases often involve lengthy and emotionally draining proceedings (Graaff, 2017). Here, therapy plays a crucial role. Counselling is essential to ensure that GBV victims do not feel alone, as it offers the necessary support throughout their healing journey, allowing them to express their frustrations and trauma (Dzinavane, 2016).

Suppressing one's feelings, whether acknowledged or not, can be detrimental to one's health. Talking about your experiences and seeking counselling can help GBV victims cope with their trauma more effectively than relying solely on medications. Sharing experiences helps build resilience against fear, allowing survivors to no longer live in constant fear, even in the presence of their perpetrators. Counselling has the power to

empower individuals in their healing process (Liebling et al., 2020). However, it should be noted that there is a shortage of counselling services available specifically for those who have experienced torture or trauma.

Although violence should not be responded to with violence, it is important for women to learn self-defence as a means to protect themselves. Empowering women with self-defence skills is crucial, as the law may not always be immediately accessible when needed the most. Recent empirical evaluations have shown that empowerment self-defence (ESD) classes reduce women's risk of sexual assault and increase their self-confidence (Hollander, 2018). By equipping women with the means to defend themselves, they are given agency and the ability to protect their own well-being.

The policy framework implemented in Mankweng Township to address gender-based violence (GBV) has centred around the adoption of the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998. This Act aims to recognize domestic violence as a criminal offense and combat its pervasive nature. However, despite these efforts, domestic violence remains a persistent and even growing issue (Rass, 2020). To address the need for stronger protection measures, Protsenko (2020) proposes that the government should consider amending the Domestic Violence Act (Act 116 of 1998) to provide enhanced protection for victims in violent domestic relationships. Additionally, plans are underway to revise the Sexual Offences Act to broaden the coverage of sex offenders required to be listed in the National Register for Sex Offenders. Moreover, the government intends to introduce legislation to tighten bail and sentencing conditions in cases involving GBV (Mkhonto, 2022). These proposed amendments and new laws demonstrate a commitment to tackling the challenges posed by GBV and improving the safeguarding of victims within Mankweng Township, Limpopo Province, South Africa.

Social networks also play an important role in the fight against GBV. Gender-based violence campaigns gain traction when shared on social media platforms, bringing awareness to the harmful nature of violence against women and girls. Without active social media participation, many people in South Africa and around the world would remain unaware of the prevalence and severity of GBV. Social networks serve as a platform to amplify voices and foster solidarity, particularly in issues that require public

attention. Movements like #MeToo have gained momentum through the democratic structures of the Internet, facilitating protest organizations and awareness (Krah, 2021).

The implementation of comprehensive interventions that address both victim support and perpetrator accountability, along with the integration of counselling services, self-defence training, and the power of social media, is crucial in effectively combating gender-based violence in South Africa.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3. INTRODUCTION

This chapter delves into the research methodology meticulously crafted to probe into the intricacies of the gender-based violence (GBV) policy framework's implementation within Mankweng Township. The methodology's purpose is to not only accumulate pertinent data but also to illuminate the efficiency of interventions targeting GBV. Within this chapter, the researcher delineates the chosen measures for each variable, illuminating the roadmap for identifying the sample population and devising optimal strategies to engage study participants (Graaff, 2017). Moreover, a well-considered plan was formed to outline the approach to interpreting the data analysis before unveiling the findings to the readers.

Recognizing the pivotal role of addressing GBV in Mankweng Township, it became paramount to seek insights from a comprehensive spectrum of voices. These voices encompassed students, educators, and community members residing within the vicinity. This diverse array of individuals collectively harboured invaluable knowledge rooted in personal experiences and observations of violence against women (Dzinavane, 2016). The researcher ensured that the research methodology was meticulously crafted to encompass the perspectives of both the staff and student body, which constitutes a substantial proportion of the University of Limpopo and the broader community residing in Mankweng Township. By assimilating these multifaceted viewpoints, the study aspired to construct a more holistic comprehension of the intricacies of the GBV policy framework's implementation.

Through a comprehensive research methodology, this study endeavours to unravel the nuances that contribute to the observed challenges in implementing GBV policy within Mankweng Township, ultimately fostering the groundwork for insightful recommendations and potential solutions.

3.1 Research Approach/Design

This study adopts a qualitative research approach that aligns with the research topic's specific context and limitations. Given the sensitive nature of the subject matter and the aim to delve deeply into individual perspectives, a qualitative approach is most appropriate (Graaff, 2017). The research focuses on conducting a single case study within Mankweng Township in South Africa, warranting an intensive exploration of a smaller sample size to uncover nuanced insights.

3.1.1. Qualitative Desk Study Approach

Given the ethical considerations and the sensitivity of the topic regarding gender-based violence (GBV), the utilization of experimental research and quantitative surveys was deemed inappropriate for this study. Consequently, a qualitative research approach was adopted, emphasizing a desk study technique that leveraged secondary data sources. This involved a thorough examination and analysis of existing literature, reports, and policy documents (Abutabenjeh and Jaradat, 2018). This qualitative desk study serves as a foundational step in informing the development of interview guides and focus group discussion protocols, ensuring their precise alignment with the research objectives.

3.1.2 Qualitative Depth and Exploration

The primary goal of this study is to understand participants' perspectives and honour their subjective experiences, rather than merely quantifying isolated aspects of their encounters (Graaff, 2017). The complex nature of the research topic necessitates an approach that allows for profound exploration and the capture of intricate narratives. By adopting a qualitative approach, this research design empowers researchers to unearth the multifaceted layers of participants' viewpoints, thereby fostering a profound

comprehension of the GBV policy framework's implementation in Mankweng Township.

- **Case-Study Focus**

The choice to employ a case study approach derives from both pragmatic considerations and the research's sensitivity. This approach allows for a concentrated examination of a specific case as an individual entity, rather than attempting to generalize findings across a broader population (Graaff, 2017). Mankweng Township was meticulously selected as the pivotal case due to the high incidence of GBV within the area. The escalating GBV statistics, particularly within the Limpopo province, underline the significance of conducting meticulous investigations into GBV's prevalence in distinct regions of South Africa.

Opting for a single case study of Mankweng Township serves to approach this critical research theme with the necessary caution, protecting against the inadvertent triggering of traumatic experiences within a larger population. To maintain participant well-being, the sample size was intentionally limited, ensuring a focused and empathetic exploration. The selection of participants was thoughtfully curated to include individuals capable of engaging thoughtfully with the concept of GBV, ensuring the acquisition of meaningful and insightful responses.

3.2 Target Population and Study's Location

The study's focus was on a specific target population within the context of Mankweng Township, directly aligning with the research topic of the implementation of the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) policy framework. The targeted population consisted of women aged between eighteen and thirty-six years old, men aged between nineteen and forty-three years old, and members of the LGBTQ+ community aged between eighteen and twenty-eight years old. The selection of these age groups was intentional, aiming to capture a broad spectrum of perspectives spanning different life stages. Participants below the age of eighteen were excluded due to the sensitive nature of the topic and the potential impact it could have on their emotional well-being.

The study's location was Mankweng Township itself, which was chosen due to its direct relevance to the research topic. By conducting the research within Mankweng Township, the study sought to gain insights into the experiences, opinions, and perceptions of those who live, work, and study within this specific community context.

3.3 Sampling

This study employed a purposive sampling method, specifically drawing from the approach outlined by Kanjiri and Nomnggcayiya (2021). The rationale behind choosing this sampling method was its alignment with the research goal, which aimed to comprehensively explore the reasons behind the failure of the implemented gender-based violence policy framework in Mankweng Township. The purposive sampling technique provided the flexibility to select participants based on their capacity to comprehend and address the research questions effectively.

To ensure confidentiality, participants were assigned unique code numbers, such as Participant 001, to safeguard their identities. The selection of these specific participants was driven by the study's geographic focus on Mankweng Township. Given that the research questions centred on this locale, residents, the University of Limpopo students, and local institution staff were deemed particularly relevant as they might have encountered or observed instances of gender-based violence within the township. Their insights and perspectives carried considerable significance in shedding light on the study's concerns.

The sampling process adhered to two distinct criteria:

Inclusion Criteria

- All participants aged 18 and above were eligible for inclusion.
- Both undergraduate and postgraduate students were included based on their familiarity with the research topic.
- Staff members from the Mankweng police department and Mankweng hospital, as well as personnel from the University of Limpopo, were included.

- A diverse range of educational backgrounds, encompassing both educated and less educated individuals, were considered.
- Participants from various employment statuses, including both employed and unemployed individuals, were included.
- All gender identities, including women, men, and members of the LGBTQ+ community, were represented.

Exclusion Criteria

- Individuals below the age of eighteen were excluded from participation.
- Those who expressed discomfort or distress regarding the research topic and its contents were excluded.
- Individuals who declined to participate in the study were excluded.

The application of purposive sampling ensured that the chosen participants offered insightful and contextually relevant perspectives on the failure of the gender-based violence policy framework implementation within Mankweng Township.

3.4 Data Collection

In pursuit of comprehensive insights into the implementation of the gender-based violence (GBV) policy framework in Mankweng Township, this study employed a strategic data collection approach. The chosen instrument for data collection was semi-structured interviews, carefully designed to delve beyond surface-level responses and uncover nuanced counter-narratives from the participants. As the data collection process unfolded, the researcher recognized the significance of eliciting specific information through participants' narratives, thereby contributing to a richer understanding of the research topic.

3.4.1 Utilizing Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were meticulously chosen as the data collection instrument due to their unique capacity to encourage storytelling (Rass, 2020). This method was

particularly well-suited for unearthing candid perspectives on the GBV policy framework's efficiency in Mankweng Township. Rather than restricting participants to brief or formulaic answers, the semi-structured interview format invited them to share their experiences, insights, and observations in a narrative manner.

3.4.2 Exploring Counter-Narratives

Acknowledging the complexity of the research topic, the questions posed during the interviews were deliberately designed to evoke counter-narratives. This approach aimed to illuminate perspectives and insights that might diverge from prevailing discourse, shedding light on factors often overlooked or marginalized (Graaff, 2021). By focusing on counter-narratives, the study aimed to capture a more holistic understanding of the GBV policy framework's implementation challenges.

3.4.3 Aim for Specific Information

The essence of the semi-structured interviews was to extract specific information from the participants. This specificity enabled the researcher to delve deeply into participants' perceptions, opinions, and personal experiences related to GBV. The questions asked during the interviews were crafted to guide participants in sharing their views in a manner that went beyond generalizations, allowing for a detailed exploration of the research topic (Mkhonto, 2022).

3.4.4 Eliciting Storytelling Responses

Recognizing the significance of participant narratives in comprehending the intricacies of GBV policy implementation, the semi-structured interviews encouraged participants to narrate their experiences and insights. This approach fostered an environment where participants felt comfortable sharing personal stories, allowing for a more profound connection to the research topic (Rass, 2020). By capturing these stories,

the study aimed to humanize the statistics and policy issues surrounding GBV, providing a deeper perspective into its real-world impact.

In the pursuit of capturing authentic and diverse perspectives on the GBV policy framework, the data collection process through semi-structured interviews facilitated an exploration of counter-narratives and personal narratives. This methodological approach aimed to contribute to a holistic understanding of the complexities and challenges inherent in addressing GBV in Mankweng Township.

3.4.5 Tools Used for Collecting Data

The data collection process was an exhaustive endeavour, employing an array of tools to gather substantial insights essential for addressing the intricate challenges posed by the failed policy framework aimed at dealing with GBV. The instruments used to collect data are as follows:

- **One-on-one Interviews**

One-on-one interviews emerged as a pivotal data collection instrument. Employing a semi-structured approach, the researcher engaged participants in candid conversations, unearthing their perspectives on the deeply entrenched GBV issue. This approach aimed to strike a balance between uniformity and the freedom to provide expansive insights. The choice of semi-structured interviews, as opposed to unstructured ones, was guided by the researcher's intention to respect participant comfort levels, steering clear of overwhelming attention that might compromise their openness.

The rationale for this approach aligns with Graaff's observation (2017) that the opinions of participants regarding interventions had often been relegated or underestimated. The study seeks to offer a platform for every voice to be heard, irrespective of societal standing, underlining the collective effort required to combat the perils of GBV. This individualized interaction allowed participants to share experiences, opinions, and

concealed sentiments with the researcher, often more comfortably than with their close circles due to the perceived impartiality and confidentiality of the researcher.

Guiding the interviews was an approach that extended beyond mere questioning, demonstrating empathy and compassion. This approach fostered a responsive dialogue, where participants felt understood and acknowledged rather than interrogated. By embracing semi-structured interviews, participants were empowered to independently articulate their perceptions regarding GBV, unveiling insights not solely reliant on learned opinions.

- **Questionnaire**

The questionnaire, a non-intrusive tool, was effectively employed to gather data. Ensuring participant comfort, the researcher distributed questionnaires that were to be completed over seven days. This approach granted participants the flexibility to respond at their convenience, effectively balancing their busy schedules. The method, bolstered by participants' signed consent forms, maintained ethical standards and autonomy.

Crafted for different scenarios, the questionnaire's content varied. One version was intended for one-on-one interviews, guiding participants to orally address the questions. Another was designed for focus group discussions, stimulating open dialogues by presenting the questions for communal deliberation. Lastly, a questionnaire was provided for independent completion, facilitating private responses in line with participants' preferences.

- **Documentation**

The essence of data preservation and security led to the inclusion of documentation as a robust tool. Information gathered from the case study, interviews, and questionnaires were meticulously converted into soft copy documents and stored in a

secure, researcher-accessible location. This practice safeguards against data loss and assures the information's safety for future inquiries.

- **Virtual Interviews Through Online Platforms**

Acknowledging the diversity of participants and their constraints, virtual interviews emerged as a viable solution. Leveraging platforms like Google Meet and Zoom, or even telephonic communication, these virtual engagements enabled the researcher to engage with participants who couldn't attend face-to-face interviews. This approach reflects the researcher's commitment to inclusivity and flexibility, ensuring diverse perspectives were captured.

3.4.6 Data Collection and Privacy

To ensure the comfort, confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity of participants, individual interviews were conducted. Each participant had the autonomy to select a location that they felt most at ease with for their scheduled interviews. This approach aimed to create a safe and secure environment that encouraged open and honest dialogue. As a result, interview locations varied among participants and included settings such as examination halls, restaurants, offices, shaded benches at the University of Limpopo, personal accommodations, as well as online platforms such as Google Meet, Zoom, or telephone calls. The utilization of a semi-structured interview questionnaire facilitated the exploration of diverse viewpoints.

3.4.7 Language Diversity

The interviews were conducted in various languages, reflecting the linguistic diversity of the Limpopo province. Participants were given the option to express themselves in their native languages including Sepedi, Venda, Tsonga, and English. This approach accommodated individuals who were more comfortable communicating in their preferred languages, contributing to more accurate and comprehensive data collection.

By focusing on the targeted population within Mankweng Township and providing flexible and considerate data collection methods, the study aimed to authentically capture the nuances of experiences related to the GBV policy framework implementation, as well as to respect the diverse backgrounds and preferences of the participants.

3.5 Data Analysis

In alignment with the research's qualitative approach, a deliberate choice was made to employ thematic analysis as a versatile and comprehensive research tool. Thematic analysis emerged as a strategic framework to dissect the amassed data, allowing for a nuanced exploration of the intricacies within the implementation of the gender-based violence (GBV) policy framework. The six-stage process of thematic analysis, encompassing familiarization of data, generation of initial codes, topic exploration, theme review, theme definition, and labelling, was applied to unravel the multifaceted dimensions of the collected data (Mkhonto, 2022).

- **Familiarization of Data**

In this initial stage, the researcher immersed herself in the collected data, which included transcripts from interviews, focus group discussions, and questionnaires. This immersion allowed the researcher to become intimately acquainted with the data, identifying patterns, recurring themes, and notable insights. This stage involved deeply engaging with participants' narratives about gender-based violence (GBV) in Mankweng Township. The researcher delved into the tones of their accounts, understanding the range of experiences, opinions, and emotions expressed by participants regarding the GBV policy framework (Graaff, 2017).

- **Generation of Initial Codes**

During this phase, the researcher began to extract meaningful segments from the data and assigned initial codes or labelled them (Gervais et al., 2019). These codes captured the essence of the content and provided a preliminary structure for analysis. The researcher then identified specific excerpts related to the failure of the GBV policy framework in Mankweng Township. This included discussions about traditional values, community perceptions, institutional challenges, etc. Each of these segments was coded to encapsulate the underlying meaning.

- **Topic Exploration**

This stage involved grouping initial codes into potential themes. The researcher organized similar codes under overarching categories to uncover emerging patterns (Javed and Kumar, 2021). This involved grouping codes that relate to factors contributing to the failure of the GBV policy framework, such as socio-cultural norms, inadequate enforcement, or lack of awareness. The aim was to identify potential themes that reflect significant aspects of the GBV policy implementation issue.

- **Theme Review**

At this point, the researcher reviewed the potential themes to refine and consolidate them further. Themes were scrutinized for coherence and relevance to the research objectives. The researcher assessed whether the identified themes genuinely encapsulate the key factors behind the GBV policy framework's shortcomings in Mankweng Township. It is important to acknowledge that themes might be adjusted, combined, or split to accurately reflect the complexity of the data (Kostovicova et al., 2020).

- **Theme Definition**

In this stage, the refined themes were given clear and precise definitions. Each theme is crafted to capture the essence of the data it represents explained Grass (2020). The researcher crafted thematic definitions that encapsulate the distinct aspects

contributing to the GBV policy framework's inadequacy. These definitions provided a framework for interpretation and analysis in subsequent stages.

- **Labelling**

Finally, each theme was given a succinct and meaningful label that encapsulates its core essence (Manzoor, 2017). This label became the shorthand representation of the theme throughout the analysis. The researcher assigned labels to the themes that succinctly capture their respective aspects of the GBV policy framework's failure. These labels offered a quick reference point for understanding the themes as the analysis progresses (Mkhonto, 2022).

By employing this six-stage process of thematic analysis, the research gained a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics surrounding the implementation of the GBV policy framework in Mankweng Township. This structured approach ensured that the data was thoroughly explored, patterns were identified, and key insights were extracted to shed light on the multifaceted issue at hand (Rass, 2020).

3.5.1 The Rationale for Thematic Analysis

The selection of thematic analysis as the analytical methodology was driven by its inherent adaptability, capable of accommodating diverse theories and epistemological perspectives (Mohapatra, 2021). This characteristic facilitated a robust and nuanced depiction of the data, contributing to a thorough understanding of the underlying facts (Graaff, 2021). The research topic's complexity warranted an analytical approach that could holistically capture the range of insights offered by participants.

3.5.2 Audio-Recorded Interviews and Confidentiality

Several interviews were audio-recorded, as per participant permission, to ensure the accuracy and integrity of data capture (Graaff, 2017). However, it's important to note that not all interviews were recorded due to participants' concerns regarding confidentiality and potential repercussions. Despite assuring participants of the paramount of confidentiality, some individuals remained wary of leaving traces that might inadvertently expose them to harm or distress. The researcher respected their apprehensions and adhered to their terms and conditions, underlining the ethical importance of participant comfort and security.

3.5.3 Comprehensive Data Collection

A total of 34 interviews were successfully conducted, encompassing one-on-one interactions, focus group discussions, and virtual online interviews. The study maintained a meticulous focus on the quality and comprehensiveness of data collection, ensuring a high completion rate of questionnaires to mitigate any implications on data capture. Rigorous checks for completeness and accuracy were conducted before initiating the subsequent phases of coding and data entry, aligning with best practices to ensure the sturdiness of the findings (Dzinavane, 2016).

3.5.4 Compilation and Analysis

The amassed data from diverse sources such as questionnaires, interviews, and more became the cornerstone for Chapter Four of this study. Within this section, a meticulous and detailed analysis of the findings is expounded. This analysis seeks to unearth patterns, insights, and overarching themes that arise from the comprehensive data collection process (Tonsing and Tonsing, 2017). The auditory interviews were diligently transcribed into textual format, preparing the data for further in-depth analysis.

In embracing thematic analysis, this study unfurled the layers of insight embedded within the collected data. This methodological choice aligns seamlessly with the research topic's complexity and facilitates the exploration of various viewpoints

(Stafford and Kuiper, 2021), ultimately contributing to a profound understanding of the challenges and nuances of the GBV policy framework's implementation in Mankweng Township.

3.6 Reliability and Validity

In the pursuit of ensuring the strength of this study's findings, measures were undertaken to ascertain the reliability and validity of the collected data. These critical aspects of the research methodology were carefully addressed to emphasize the integrity and trustworthiness of the study's outcomes (Silva, 2021).

3.6.1 Consistency in Questionnaire Responses

The researcher adopted a rigorous approach to validate the data by employing the same questionnaire for one-on-one interviews. The striking outcome was that while the responses weren't uniform, they shared common threads in their insights regarding gender-based violence (GBV). The data exhibited consistency in the sense that participants' viewpoints converged around certain themes related to GBV (Schenck et al., 2021). Even though their responses weren't identical, this convergence across diverse participants confirmed the reliability of the data.

3.6.2 Unified Agreement in One-on-One Interviews

A noteworthy observation emerged from the one-on-one interviews: a unanimous agreement among participants, transcending gender lines. This agreement centred on the notion that the escalation of GBV was intricately tied to entrenched traditional values that persistently marginalize women. This shared sentiment among both women and men (Rua et al., 2020), indicated a high level of consistency in participants' viewpoints, reinforcing the reliability and validity of the data.

3.6.3 Ensuring Data Collection Integrity

The research aimed to secure the reliability and validity of the data collected through several meticulous steps. Unstructured questionnaires were used to assess the participants' competency level regarding the research topic. This approach ensured that the data-gathering process aligned with the research objectives and participant capabilities (Perrin et al., 2019).

Moreover, participants were afforded the independence to choose comfortable environments for interviews and discussions. This deliberate decision aimed to provide a consistent and welcoming atmosphere, fostering candid interactions, and safeguarding against any external influences that could compromise the authenticity of responses (Mohammad, 2019).

3.6.4 Content Validity and Supervisory Approval

Content validity was another avenue adopted by the researcher to ascertain the reliability and validity of the data. Measures were put in place to assess participants' reading and writing skills, ensuring that the chosen instruments matched their comprehension levels accurately (Mohapatra, 2021). Prior to data collection, the draft questionnaires and interview questions were submitted to the study's supervisor for approval. This collaborative validation process ensured that the data instruments were aligned with research objectives, lending credence to the data's reliability and validity (Mohammad, 2019).

The comprehensive validation process undertaken through consistent questionnaire responses, unified agreement in one-on-one interviews, careful participant selection, consideration of environmental factors, content validity assessments, and supervisor approval substantiates the reliability and validity of the data collected. These rigorous efforts fortify the study's findings and uphold its credibility (Silva, 2021), in exploring the intricate landscape of gender-based violence policy implementation in Mankweng Township.

3.7 Trustworthiness of the Study

In the realm of qualitative research, maintaining trustworthiness is paramount to ensuring the credibility and reliability of the study's findings. To uphold these principles, the researcher diligently adhered to ethical guidelines outlined in the ethical approval certificate (Rass, 2020). The study's trustworthiness was reinforced through four key criteria: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability, each playing a pivotal role in elevating the accuracy and validity of the collected data.

3.7.1 Credibility

Credibility, often regarded as the foundation of trustworthiness, was meticulously established in this study (Mkhonto, 2022). The alignment between participants' perspectives and the presentation of findings was thoroughly maintained. To ensure consistent data collection, the researcher employed the same interview schedule across all participants, fostering uniformity in information gathering. A considerable effort was invested in crafting an interview guide that resonated with participants (Silva, 2021), utilizing native languages such as Sepedi, Venda, and Tsonga, alongside English for those comfortable with it. The researcher's probing and clarifying questions reflected a deep commitment to clarity, enhancing participants' understanding and bolstering the credibility of the data (Rass, 2020).

3.7.2 Dependability

Dependability, a cornerstone of trustworthiness (Webster, 2022), was upheld through the meticulous collection, reporting, and documentation of data. The study carefully adhered to a step-by-step research process in alignment with TREC's approved protocol. The research design and data-gathering process were comprehensively described, cementing the dependability of the research process.

3.7.3 Transferability

A comprehensive avenue to ensuring trustworthiness lies in enhancing the study's transferability. A detailed and transparent depiction of the research process and methodology was provided, facilitating future research endeavours with a similar focus (Mkhonto, 2022). By carefully delineating the research's plan and methodology, the study aimed to enable the application of its findings in comparable contexts. The researcher's commitment to selecting participants based on stringent inclusion criteria (Rass, 2020), facilitated the transference and potential generalization of the study's population to analogous settings.

3.7.4 Confirmability

The study's confirmability was diligently fortified by practising reflexivity. Recognizing the potential influence of personal biases and assumptions, the researcher proactively minimized their impact on the study's process and conclusions (Graaff, 2017). To counteract any researcher-driven bias, a literature review was conducted subsequent to the semi-structured interviews, guiding the research's trajectory (Rass, 2020). The adoption of a systematic and transparent data analysis method, namely theme analysis, further solidified the study's confirmability, ensuring a reliable and objective interpretation of the data.

In the realm of exploring the implementation of the gender-based violence policy framework in Mankweng Township, the study's trustworthiness stood as a beacon of integrity (Graaff, 2021). Through the careful cultivation of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability, the research succeeded in elevating the accuracy, reliability, and significance of its findings, reinforcing its contribution to the understanding of this pressing societal issue.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations play a pivotal role in ensuring the integrity and credibility of any research study. Particularly in the sensitive jurisdiction of investigating the implementation of gender-based violence (GBV) policy framework, the researcher took the utmost care to uphold ethical standards that prioritize the well-being and rights of participants.

3.8.1 Legal Authorization

To commence this study, a thorough ethical clearance process was followed, securing official ethical clearance from the University of Limpopo and the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC). This meticulous scrutiny ensured that the study adhered to ethical principles that safeguarded the participants' rights and ensured their protection.

3.8.2 Informed Consent with Gatekeeper Permission

Establishing a foundation of trust between the researcher, the participants, and gatekeepers is crucial in any research project that involves human subjects. Informed consent, based on this trust, will be sought from all participants (Parija & Mandal, 2014), with due consideration for the role of gatekeepers in facilitating access to the participants. All 35 participants were fully informed of the purpose, procedures, and potential risks and benefits of the study.

They were given the opportunity to ask questions and clarify any concerns before providing their consent. Additionally, in cases where gatekeepers played a role in granting access to potential participants, their consent or approval was also obtained. This ensured that not only the participants but also those responsible for protecting their interests were aware of and in agreement with the study's objectives and procedures. Furthermore, it was explicitly communicated that the interviews might be recorded, and participants were given the autonomy to voice any reservations they had about being recorded (Ratan et al., 2019). Hence, the researcher ensured that participants knew that the intention to record or videotape the interviews was for future research purposes, and their consent was sought accordingly.

This transparency allowed participants to make an informed decision regarding their participation, taking into account the recording aspect. In alignment with ethical guidelines, participants agreed to read and sign a consent and confidentiality form prior to their involvement in the research study. This document outlined the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, the use of recordings (if applicable), and the rights of the participants. Gatekeepers were also provided with relevant information and were required to provide their approval or consent, ensuring that the research was conducted ethically and with the utmost consideration for all parties involved.

3.8.3 Anonymity

Respecting participant anonymity was paramount. The majority of participants were provided with the option to remain anonymous, referred to only by assigned code numbers (e.g., Participant 001, Participant 002). This practice was instituted to protect participants from potential risks associated with disclosing personal information in relation to the sensitive topic of GBV. However, some participants chose to reveal their identities willingly, recognizing the significance of their voices in contributing to the study's depth and insight though the researcher did not use their identities in the study.

3.8.4 Voluntary Participation

Additionally, voluntary participation was upheld vigorously. Participants were invited to join the study without any form of coercion. The researcher emphasized the voluntary nature of their participation, making it clear that they could withdraw at any point if they felt even the slightest discomfort. It was reiterated that participation was completely optional and that the study's confidentiality would be diligently maintained (Wanjiru, 2021).

These ethical considerations were not merely procedural but were woven into the very fabric of the research (Rass, 2020), reflecting a commitment to uphold the dignity, safety, and rights of participants. By adhering to these principles, the study ensures

that the insights gained into the implementation of the GBV policy framework in Mankweng Township are not only rigorous and meaningful but also ethically sound.

3.9 Measure to be Followed to Ensure the Well-Being of Participants

Ensuring the overall well-being of participants, especially victims of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), during interview sessions is of paramount importance. Here are several measures that the researcher was able to implement in order to support and protect participants who relived traumatic experiences:

- **Informed Consent:** Before beginning the interview, the researcher ensured that participants had a clear understanding of the research purpose and the potential emotional challenges involved. Obtained their informed consent and reminded them that they could withdraw from the interview at any point if they felt distressed or uncomfortable.
- **Trauma-Informed Approach:** The researcher adopted a trauma-informed interviewing approach, which involved acknowledging the potential for trauma and being sensitive to the emotional impact of discussing traumatic experiences. A safe and non-judgmental space was created for participants to share their stories.
- **Pre-Interview Preparation:** The researcher discussed the interview expectations and potential emotional responses with participants beforehand. She let them know it was okay to pause or take breaks during the interview when they became overwhelmed. The researcher ensured to be empathetic, patient, and capable of providing emotional support.
- **Supportive Environment:** The researcher conducted interviews in a quiet, private, and comfortable location where participants felt safe and secure. The researcher offered tissues and water and made sure participants knew they could take breaks as needed.
- **Debriefing:** After the interviews, the researcher ensured to provide participants with an opportunity to debrief and discuss their feelings. She advised the participants about resources such as counselling (at D-Block) or support services (friendship) if they expressed a need for further assistance.

- **Data Handling and Confidentiality:** The researcher emphasized the confidentiality of their responses and the steps taken to protect their identity in the research findings. Assured them that their information will not be shared without their consent.
- **Self-Care:** The researcher encouraged participants to engage in self-care activities after the interviews, such as talking to a friend or loved one, engaging in relaxing activities, or seeking professional support if needed.
- **Continuous Monitoring:** The researcher was attentive by staying attuned to participants' emotional state throughout the interview. If the researcher noticed signs of distress, she was able to offer support and reassurance.
- **Ethics Committee Approval:** The researcher ensured that the research protocol, especially the procedures for handling potential harm to participants, was reviewed and approved by an ethics committee which is (TREC).
- **Follow-Up:** The researcher conducted follow-up interviews or check-ins with participants to assess their emotional well-being after the interview. This provided an opportunity to offer further support if necessary. By implementing these measures, the researcher was able to help protect the emotional well-being of participants who may have experienced and witnessed GBV and created a research environment that was both ethical and supportive.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive outline of the research methodology employed to investigate the implementation of the gender-based violence (GBV) policy framework in Mankweng Township. A qualitative approach was selected to capture the depth and complexity of participants' experiences and perceptions. The research design, sampling strategy, data collection tools, analysis methods, and ethical considerations were meticulously detailed to ensure the study's rigour and validity.

By adopting a thematic analysis approach, the study sought to uncover the multifaceted dimensions of the data collected (Javed and Kumar-Chattu, 2021), allowing for a holistic exploration of the research topic. The ethical considerations

accentuated the researcher's commitment to protecting participants' dignity, privacy, and well-being. While acknowledging the limitations inherent in any research endeavour, the methodology chapter lays the groundwork for the subsequent analysis and discussion of findings. The insights gained through this research methodology aim to shed light on the intricate challenges and potential solutions in addressing the gender-based violence policy framework within the context of Mankweng Township.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, AND DISCUSSION

4. INTRODUCTION

This chapter delves into the qualitative data, its presentation, analysis, interpretation, and discussion. Robust empirical research hinges upon the meticulous examination and profound comprehension of data, which ultimately culminate in the study's findings and implications (Graaff, 2021). Therefore, this chapter offers an in-depth exploration of the data gleaned from semi-structured interviews. These interviews were conducted in Mankweng Township, with the choice of environment being guided by the participants themselves. The researcher employed semi-structured interviews as the primary means to collect information from the participants, in alignment with the research's aims and objectives (Mkhonto, 2022). This chapter not only draws conclusions from the data but also connects these findings to the broader issues of gender-based violence expounded upon in chapters two, three, and four (Dzinavane, 2016).

4.1 Participants

A total of thirty-four participants participated in this study. Among them, eighteen identified as women, twelve as men, and four as members of the LGBTQ+ community. The participants' ages ranged from eighteen to forty-three, with twenty-three being single, three married, and two divorced. Their educational backgrounds varied, with nine pursuing undergraduate studies at the University of Limpopo, eleven holding postgraduate degrees from the same institution, one working as a professional nurse at Mankweng Hospital, one as a police officer at Mankweng police department, two as security personnel at the University of Limpopo, and one holding a matric certificate. Eleven participants were unemployed, while twenty-one were employed or self-

employed. The participants represented diverse ethnic backgrounds, including Swati, Sepedi, Venda, Tsonga, among others. Proficiency in English varied, with some participants lacking formal education.

It's noteworthy that not all participants were residents of Mankweng Township, as some security personnel and students who rented rooms came from different areas or provinces but were residing in Mankweng for academic or work-related purposes. Additionally, some authority figures and lecturers at the University of Limpopo resided in various townships such as Polokwane and Seshego, even though they worked or studied at the university campus. Participants were selected based on their ability to engage with the concept of Gender-Based Violence. Prior to participation, each participant was required to sign a confidentiality and consent form (Rass, 2020). The interviews were conducted in three native languages commonly spoken in Limpopo province, namely Sepedi, Venda, Tsonga, in addition to English.

Table A: Participant Demographics

Please refer to Table A below for a breakdown of demographic details for each participant, including their assigned code, age group, education level, spoken language, marital status, gender (if provided), and employment status:

| Participant Code | Age Group | Education Level | Language Spoken | Marital Status | Gender (Optional) | Employment Status |
|------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Participant 001 | 23 | Honours | Sepedi | Single | LGBTQ+ | Unemployed |
| Participant 002 | 32 | Diploma | Venda | Single | Male | Security Personnel |
| Participant 003 | 29 | Bachelor | Sepedi | Single | Female | Administrative Assistant |
| Participant 004 | 25 | Masters | Sepedi | Single | Male | Assistant Lecturer |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------|----|--------------------|--------|----------|--------|--------------------|
| Participant 005 | 38 | Higher Certificate | Tsonga | Divorced | Male | Shop Retailer |
| Participant 006 | 20 | Undergraduate | Venda | Single | Female | Unemployed |
| Participant 007 | 43 | Diploma | Sepedi | Married | Male | Police Officer |
| Participant 008 | 35 | Bachelor | Sepedi | Divorced | Female | Receptionist |
| Participant 009 | 27 | Honours | Venda | Single | Female | Security Personnel |
| Participant 0010 | 23 | Bachelor | Sepedi | Single | LGBTQ+ | Entrepreneur |
| Participant 0011 | 30 | Grade 10 | Sepedi | Single | Female | Unemployed |
| Participant 0012 | 33 | Doctorate | Tsonga | Married | Male | Lecturer |
| Participant 0013 | 24 | Honours | Swati | Single | Male | Lab Assistant |
| Participant 0014 | 21 | Undergraduate | Venda | Single | Female | Unemployed |
| Participant 0015 | 22 | Undergraduate | Swati | Single | Female | Unemployed |
| Participant 0016 | 34 | Doctorate | Sepedi | Single | Male | Lecturer |
| Participant 0017 | 29 | Diploma | Sepedi | Single | Female | Store manager |
| Participant 0018 | 26 | Masters | Tsonga | Single | Male | Assistant Lecturer |
| Participant 0019 | 27 | Diploma | Sepedi | Single | Female | Unemployed |

| | | | | | | |
|------------------|----|---------------|--------|----------|--------|---------------------|
| Participant 0020 | 36 | Bachelor | Sepedi | Married | Female | Nurse |
| Participant 0021 | 24 | Undergraduate | Swati | Single | Male | Entrepreneur |
| Participant 0022 | 35 | Bachelor | Venda | Divorced | Female | Cashier |
| Participant 0023 | 33 | Bachelor | Venda | Married | Female | Cashier |
| Participant 0024 | 19 | Undergraduate | Sepedi | Single | Male | Unemployed |
| Participant 0025 | 28 | Diploma | Swati | Single | Female | Secretary |
| Participant 0026 | 29 | Bachelor | Venda | Single | Female | Finance Manager |
| Participant 0027 | 20 | Undergraduate | Swati | Single | Female | Unemployed |
| Participant 0028 | 18 | Undergraduate | Sepedi | Single | Female | Unemployed |
| Participant 0029 | 24 | Honours | Sepedi | Single | Female | Peer Counsellor |
| Participant 0030 | 26 | PGCE | Swati | Single | Male | Language Consultant |
| Participant 0031 | 23 | Undergraduate | Tsonga | Single | Female | Unemployed |
| Participant 0032 | 27 | Honours | Venda | Single | Male | Lab Assistant |
| Participant 0033 | 18 | Undergraduate | Sepedi | Single | LGBTQ+ | Unemployed |
| Participant 0034 | 28 | Masters | Sepedi | Single | LGBTQ+ | Accountant |

This participant information sets the stage for the subsequent analysis and discussion of the research findings, all of which directly align with the research topic's aim, objectives, and research questions (Graaff, 2021).

4.2 Procedures

Before venturing into data collection, a series of essential procedures were meticulously followed to uphold the research's integrity and ethical standards. The study commenced by seeking approval from the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC), ensuring that the research posed no harm or risk to its participants. The University of Limpopo granted an ethics clearance certificate, authorizing the data collection process. Data collection unfolded between the first week of October 2023, spanning day and night dedication by the researcher to deliver a comprehensive data analysis after data gathering.

During the data collection phase, participants were segregated into three categories: one-on-one interviews, focus group discussions, and virtual (online) interviews. Twelve participants participated in one-on-one interviews, typically lasting 15-30 minutes, while thirteen participants opted for virtual interviews, averaging 30-45 minutes each. Nine participants engaged in a focus group discussion, which extended for approximately 60-90 minutes. Questionnaires distributed to participants in those three categories took four days to a week to be returned. Audio recording was employed in some interviews with the consent of the participants. Every participant was presented with a confidentiality and consent form before participating in interviews, focus group discussions or filling out the questionnaires. It's crucial to emphasize that all participants willingly chose to participate, and no form of coercion or inducement was employed.

4.3 Data Presentation and Interpretation

In the transcription phase of this study, the researcher devoted meticulous attention to comprehending the depth and breadth of the gathered information (Rass, 2020). The

topics discussed during the semi-structured interviews were systematically and scrupulously categorized, adhering to the principles of thematic analysis. To ensure the verbatim capture of each participant's statements, transcription was carried out with precision (Yin, 2018). As the researcher immersed herself in the data's familiarity, essential patterns, contradictions, and novel insights emerged. This process allowed the researcher to gain profound insight into the research concept through the narratives of the participants.

The subsequent step was the initial coding process, where relevant portions of the data received labels or codes that acted as concise summaries (Tonsing and Tonsing, 2017). These codes enabled the identification of specific quotes pertinent to the implementation of the GBV policy framework in Mankweng Township. Following the initial coding, codes were scrutinized, and comparable ones were grouped to facilitate the development of themes and sub-themes (Turnell et al., 2019). This iterative process continued until no new patterns emerged that could be transformed into themes.

The emerging themes were then meticulously refined and endowed with clear, precise definitions (Rass, 2020). Each theme was assigned a succinct label that encapsulated its core essence. These themes served as immediate reference points for comprehending the participants' views regarding the shortcomings of the GBV policy framework. This thematic analysis approach not only captured participants' direct statements but also illuminated the underlying ideas and concepts embedded in their narratives. This robust analysis method ensured that the research findings were closely aligned with the research topic's objectives and questions, enhancing the overall quality and validity of the study (Speed et al., 2020).

Table B presents the summary of themes and sub-themes that arose from the study.

| | Theme | Sub-theme |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Staying in an abusive relationship for too long | Sub-theme 1.1: Coping mechanism |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | | <p>Sub-theme 1.2: Challenges Faced by Victims of GBV</p> <p>Sub-theme 1.3: The Effects GBV had on its Victims</p> |
| 2 | The Failure of GBV Policy Framework in Mankweng Township | <p>Sub-theme 2.1: Domestic Violence Act (Act No. 116 of 1998)</p> <p>Sub-theme 2.2: The Protection from Harassment Act (Act No. 17 of 2011)</p> <p>Sub-theme 2.3: The South African Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996)</p> |
| 3 | The Most Prevalent Types of GBV in Mankweng Township | <p>Sub-theme 3.1: Sexual Assault</p> <p>Sub-theme 3.2: Brutal Murders</p> <p>Sub-theme 3.3: Physical Abuse</p> |
| 4 | How to Prevent GBV in Mankweng Township | <p>Sub-theme 4.1: Lack of Education</p> <p>Sub-theme 4.2: Stop Victim Blame</p> <p>Sub-theme 4.3: Media Coverage</p> |

The table above represents the host of themes and subthemes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews conducted in this research study. Each theme has provided distinct insights about the research topic. The subthemes are organised under the main four themes.

4.3.1 Theme 1: Staying in an Abusive Relationship for a Long Time

The first theme delves into the phenomenon of individuals, particularly women, enduring abusive relationships for extended durations, corroborating with Learned Helplessness Theory stated in Chapter Two of this study. This theme uncovers the coping mechanisms employed by victims and the multifaceted challenges they face within these abusive relationships.

4.3.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Coping Mechanism

Participants were queried about the strategies they employed to cope with the prolonged exposure to abusive relationships. In this sub-theme, the participants' responses unveiled diverse coping mechanisms.

Some participants found strength through supportive relationships. One participant shared her experience, stating, *"To be honest, I was never going to make it without my brother-in-law, who was a very stubborn person. He would tell me that I was giving power to my abuser by not fighting to be better. So, one day, I think I shocked him when I asked him and my sister to accompany me to file a case of domestic violence. Since then, he was the person I spoke to more than my sister because he was my best friend before my brother-in-law. He became my unofficial therapist."* - Participant 0023

Religion played a pivotal role in aiding some participants in their healing process. Participant 006 highlighted her faith, stating, *"The only answer I am going to give you is that God did it with me, that's the truth and nothing else. Ke be ke le ready go lathlela toulo empa Modimo waka a ntshwera ka letsogo meaning 'When I was ready to give up, my God held my hand'. I don't know if you are religious, but I can tell you that God is the reason I am sitting here with you right now."* - Participant 006

Another participant echoed the importance of hope, emphasizing the role it played in her recovery. She expressed, *"I survived on hope because sometimes I was thinking harmful thoughts. But even in my pain, I still knew that my baby was innocent, and I*

couldn't take away her chance at life because of the bitterness I was harbouring. So, I decided to turn to prayer as a last option, and it worked. I used to be a non-believer, but after what I went through, there was no one who could have put me out of my misery but God." - Participant 0019

It is worth noting that most participants turned to religion as a form of coping with their traumatic experiences. However, some participants expressed resentment towards religion, perceiving it as perpetuating gender-based violence by emphasizing women's obedience to their husbands.

4.3.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Challenges Faced by Victims of GBV

While exploring the coping mechanisms, it became evident that participants had to overcome various challenges within abusive relationships. Financial dependency emerged as a significant challenge. Participant 0022 emphasized this aspect, stating, *"Religion teaches women to obey their husbands if they provide for you, and it does not account for when that same husband treats you like a doormat...Sigh... We are expected to endure any kind of torture they throw our way."* This participant took back her freedom into her own hands as her coping strategy by starting yoga to feel calm and collected when previously she was not allowed to.

Some participants also questioned the role of religion and culture, perceiving them as legitimized violence against women. These participants decided to rely on their inner strength and resilience as their primary coping mechanism.

Within this sub-theme, participants vividly articulated an array of challenges they encountered while trapped in abusive relationships. These challenges resonate with the concepts explored in Chapter Two of this study. Traditional customs emerged as a significant hurdle, as participants explained that they often felt unsupported by their families due to prevailing traditional norms that expect women to endure marriages, even in situations of abuse.

Participant 0022 shared her experience, highlighting the influence of traditional customs, *"Ma utshe mangisaphela ngifanele ngi lwele omshado wam because abasfazani ba qingile bayentza njalo meaning 'My mother told me that if I am still breathing, I should fight to hold my marriage together; that's what strong women do'. She literally said, 'until death do us part.' Even right now, I am not talking to her. I then realized that even though it's the 21st century, we still live with old-fashioned traditions. I could have died in that hell-sack of a marriage, but she couldn't care less."*

Participants also revealed that they were often blamed for their clothing choices or for consuming alcohol. The culture of victim-blaming, where survivors are held responsible for the violence inflicted upon them, surfaced as a significant factor contributing to gender-based violence. This culture perpetuates the cycle of abuse by shifting blame away from perpetrators and onto victims (Graaff, 2017).

Participant 0017 recounted a distressing episode, sharing, *"There was a day when I regretted being drunk because that's when I woke up in a hospital bed with my mother shouting at me for going to a tavern and drinking myself to oblivion. She said no man would want me because I am tainted. After I got over my misery alone, my mom said she just said that because she didn't want to feel sorry for me as it was going to make me worse. I just got over her hurtful words eventually."*

Another participant narrated a harrowing incident involving her friend who was gang-raped and subsequently mocked and blamed for her sexual orientation. This highlights the deeply ingrained stereotypes and prejudices that persist in society.

Participants also pointed to poverty as a major driver of gender-based violence in Mankweng Township. The economic struggles faced by many residents, exacerbated by high competition for limited job opportunities, often lead young women to seek financial support from older men, colloquially referred to as "sugar daddies." This economic vulnerability places them in precarious situations.

According to Dzinavane (2016), a strong connection exists between poverty and gender-based violence. Economic hardships force individuals, particularly women, to engage in informal trading, which disrupts power dynamics within households and fuels gender-based violence (Shaw, 2017). Women become more vulnerable, trapped in a cycle of poverty, limited access to resources, and dependency on older men for financial assistance.

Participant 0023 candidly expressed, *"If you grew up in a household of poverty, you start to think of ways to not be in the same position as your mother. Because most people already think that we have daddy issues, we just let them assume that is the reason we date sugar daddies instead of explaining ourselves. I don't mean that I am dating a sugar daddy, but I have witnessed some of my friends do, and it never ended well. Those men treat them as if they own them."*

Another participant suggested that the government bears some responsibility for the increase in gender-based violence cases due to its failure to allocate resources effectively to support women and girls. The mismanagement of funds during the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated economic hardships, pushing some individuals to desperate measures.

These narratives underscore the complex web of factors contributing to gender-based violence, including traditional customs, victim-blaming culture, economic vulnerabilities, and government shortcomings. It is evident that addressing gender-based violence requires a multi-faceted approach, including cultural awareness, economic empowerment, and policy reform (Rass, 2020).

4.3.1.3 Sub-theme 1.3: The Effects GBV had on its Victims

Another important facet revealed within this theme was the enduring impact of gender-based violence on its victims. The effects of such violence ranged from emotional trauma to physical injuries. Participant 0014 shared a particularly poignant story of her friend's ordeal *"I was just there at her house but afraid to defend my friend because I*

was a coward, and our friendship ended there because I never wanted to be seen with her in public because I thought he would do to me what he did to her...she looked at the floor."- Participant 0014, emphasizing the consequences of domestic violence. Her account serves as a stark reminder of the profound impact such violence can have on individuals.

The sub-theme "Coping Mechanism" demonstrates that victims often employ various strategies to navigate abusive relationships. However, the sub-themes "Challenges Faced by Victims of GBV" and "The Effects GBV had on its Victims" underscore the pervasive and deeply rooted challenges and repercussions of gender-based violence. These sub-themes offer valuable insights into the complexities surrounding the experiences of those trapped in abusive relationships and shed light on the urgent need for effective interventions and support systems.

This sub-theme delves into the profound and enduring effects that gender-based violence inflicts on both victims and perpetrators. The participants' stories shed light on the stark realities they faced and the long-lasting consequences of their experiences.

Participants recounted grappling with self-blame and shame following their ordeals. Participant 009 poignantly expressed, *"You know I started to blame myself after what happened. I can't believe I listened to the mentality that said if I did not wear my mini-skirt, I would not have been raped. To this day, I am the one dealing with the effects that rape left behind."* These emotions often led to diminished self-esteem and a sense of unworthiness.

A pervasive distrust of the police department emerged as another notable effect of gender-based violence. Participants shared distressing encounters with police officers who were dismissive or victim-blaming, further eroding their faith in law enforcement. Participant 008 recounted a particularly disheartening experience, *"Since then, I stopped wearing any clothing that could reveal my skin and I go to the lab with other students in a group. I HATE POLICE NOW."*

“I mean I know that my mom is working as an assistant administrator not because she wanted to but because she needed a job, same with most police officers. They are just not passionate about helping protect citizens”- Participant 0023

Additionally, self-esteem and confidence took a significant hit for many survivors. The trauma and fear associated with their experiences left them feeling exposed and vulnerable.

Participant 0015 disclosed, *“I felt naked, and I started closing myself off from the world. I no longer went out of my room except for classes and went straight to my room again.”* These feelings of insecurity and self-doubt lingered long after the abuse had ended.

Tragically, some participants revealed that the lasting effects pushed them to contemplate suicide. The emotional pain and turmoil became overwhelming, leading them to consider taking their own lives as a means of escaping shame and pain.

Participant 0016 shared a devastating account of her friend's tragic end *“I called that same day but she never answered and that's when I received her ‘I love you’ message and she was found dead the next day with her wrist slit. I did not believe that because I knew how much she was afraid of sharp things and she loved life even when she was tolerating her scum boyfriend's abuse. I just wish the guy was arrested but since there was no suicide note he was left alone”- Participant 0016,* highlighting the dire consequences of inadequate support systems, both within families and from law enforcement.

The narratives within this sub-theme emphasize the far-reaching and deeply impactful consequences of gender-based violence, particularly on women. Survivors often grapple with profound psychological and emotional trauma, deteriorating self-esteem, and in some cases, life-threatening despair. These accounts underscore the urgency of addressing gender-based violence comprehensively, not only by holding

perpetrators accountable but also by providing robust support systems for survivors (Rahman et al., 2021).

4.3.2 Theme 2: The Failure of GBV Policy Framework in Mankweng Township

Amidst the prominent political movements and agendas, there is a pressing need to address the inherent gender struggles, national coalition efforts, and the invaluable indigenous knowledge gleaned from the experiences of women and men who were instrumental in the initial formulation of ideas to combat gender-based violence (GBV) (Rass, 2020). In the context of South Africa, it becomes crucial to scrutinize the effectiveness of national policies that have been put in place to tackle this pervasive issue. These policies are pivotal in establishing national priorities and allocating resources to programs aimed at addressing GBV (Graaff, 2021). However, as revealed by most participants, these policies often remain mere ink on paper, as many perpetrators of GBV continue to evade justice.

As one participant astutely pointed out, "I can guarantee that many residents in Mankweng have never even heard of these policies. I only know about them because I'm pursuing a degree in public administration. Otherwise, I'd be fighting this battle blind."- Participant 004

The prevailing sentiment among participants is that these policies might as well not exist in Mankweng Township due to their inefficiency, categorizing them as failures. Subsequently, the sub-themes derived from this theme delve into the policies known to participants and their perspectives on their failure, along with their explanations for why they believe these policies have faltered in their mission against GBV.

4.3.2.1 Sub-theme 2.1: The Domestic Act (Act No.116 of 1998)

The Domestic Act was conceived in response to South Africa's formidable challenge of domestic violence, a problem deeply rooted in society. The Preamble to the Act

recognizes domestic violence as a "serious evil." South Africa's high prevalence of intimate partner violence underscores the necessity for such legislation, aimed at safeguarding the victims and potential victims of GBV (Graaff, 2017). However, participants expressed their disillusionment with this act, asserting that instead of reducing GBV cases, it has seen a worrying increase.

Participant 0014 articulated her scepticism: *"I feel like this act was just invented as a strategy to calm the citizens and make it look like the government is doing something to fight GBV, but in reality, it is nothing but a front for the government to hide behind."*

Another participant questioned the act's effectiveness, remarking, *"It is a decoration on paper and nothing more. If it were effective, the government would ensure that the policy is followed, rather than just putting it out there without action."*

Nonetheless, some male participants exhibited chauvinistic attitudes and questioned the necessity of such an act. They suggested that women should conform to traditional gender roles, potentially eliminating the need for such policies. This perspective underscores the deep-seated gender inequalities that persist in society.

According to the participants, the Domestic Violence Act has failed to address significant issues contributing to GBV. It should have tackled customs like lobola known as dowry in other countries that can lead to women being controlled and abused. Moreover, it should have addressed the issue of child marriages, which continues to persist. Participants also underscored the lack of awareness about the act among the general populace, especially in rural areas where education on GBV is sorely lacking.

4.3.2.2 Sub-theme 2.2: The Protection from Harassment Act (Act No.17 of 2011)

The Protection from Harassment Act was introduced to protect primarily women and girls from harassment in both private and public spaces. However, this sub-theme

emerged as participants discussed the government's perceived failure to protect GBV victims. Many women and girls continue to experience harassment, whether at work, home, or school, despite this act. Participants expressed their disillusionment, deeming the act ineffective.

Participant 0022 highlighted the act's shortcomings, stating, *"This act was supposed to protect us from being harassed, but it is worthless. Even if I report my offender, the court can only give the perpetrator a fine or three days' imprisonment at most. Such minor punishments hardly discourage offenders from repeating their actions."*

Participant 008 echoed these sentiments *"If you ask me about this act, I will tell you that it is used by the government to make money instead of protecting the victims. I mean why fine the offender instead of putting his ass in jail for a few years to learn not to disrespect or harass others?"*- Participant 008, suggesting that the act is used by the government to generate revenue rather than genuinely protecting victims.

Participants placed the failure of this act on the government's inaction and profit-oriented approach. They argued that if the government truly wished to curb GBV, the punishments for offenders should be far more severe. The participants offered suggestions for rectifying the situation, emphasizing the need for stronger punishments and increased awareness campaigns.

"If I were a policy maker, I would ensure that these policies have no clause that could compromise the safety of the people it's meant to protect. I would ensure that people are aware that they are not alone and publicize the act frequently on social media. Those who are not aware of social media or don't have it will have to be informed of the old tradition by holding meetings, especially in rural areas where a lot of people are not educated about GBV. I would make the punishment very severe for those who are not in compliance with the act."- Participant 0014

During the COVID-19 lockdown, participants observed that the act failed to protect those who needed it most. Reports of sexual, verbal, and physical harassment

escalated during this period, yet the response from law enforcement was often inadequate, leading to further disappointment.

In essence, participants expressed their frustration with these policies, seeing them as ineffective and highlighting the urgent need for more substantial measures to address GBV. Their accounts reveal that the government could do more to ensure the success of these policies and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. Moreover, the participants called for increased awareness campaigns, especially in rural areas where education on GBV remains limited.

4.3.2.3 Sub-theme 2.3: The South African Constitution (Act No.108 of 1996)

South Africa, like every country, has a constitution designed to protect the rights of its citizens. The Constitution (1996) unequivocally states that every citizen, regardless of their gender, age, or any other characteristic, deserves the fundamental rights to life, freedom, and security of persons. However, the stark reality is that these rights often go unfulfilled, especially when it comes to the pervasive issue of gender-based violence (GBV). Despite the Constitution's stern warnings of severe consequences for violations, South Africa continues to bear the ignominious distinction of having the world's highest GBV statistics (Graaff, 2017). This sub-theme focuses on participants' awareness of their constitutional rights and their views on how these rights have been inadequately protected.

One participant passionately expressed their perspective, stating, *"First and foremost, the constitution says everyone has the right to freedom, but they neglect the freedom of women and young women who are controlled because of lobola. If they want women to take them seriously, they should ban traditional customs such as virginity testing and lobola, among others, that oppress women."* - Participant 0014

Section 205(3) of the Constitution explicitly empowers the police to execute their powers and authority with the primary objective of safeguarding citizens' rights

(Mkhonto, 2022). The South African Police Service (SAPS) is tasked with combating and investigating domestic violence incidents, with a mandate to protect the rights of every citizen. However, the sentiments expressed by the participants paint a bleak picture of law enforcement's role in addressing GBV.

Participant 0023 astutely remarked, *"I think the police reflect the state of our country by the way they carry out their duties. Many police officers are not passionate about protecting citizens; they are simply in these positions out of necessity. Nothing written in the constitution will make a difference until the police decide to empathize with their sisters, daughters, mothers, and wives and carry out their duties diligently."*

Participant 003 eloquently underscored the need for unity in fighting GBV, emphasizing that the citizens of South Africa need to come together rather than being divided, as this division inadvertently enables GBV to take root in society.

4.3.3 Theme 3: The Most Prevalent Types of GBV in Mankweng Township

Mankweng Township, characterized as a rural ghetto area, often escapes media attention on GBV issues, creating a dangerous blind spot for such incidents. With the University of Limpopo situated in the heart of the township, the prevalence of GBV is exacerbated, especially among the young student population. This theme explores the various types of GBV most prevalent in Mankweng Township, capturing the perspectives of participants who have had direct experiences or insights into these forms of violence.

4.3.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Sexual Assault

Sexual assault, often defined as the act of coercing an individual, whether an intimate partner or a stranger, into engaging in non-consensual sexual activities, is a nightmarish reality for many women, girls, and LGBTQ+ individuals in Mankweng Township. This form of violence inflicts profound and lasting trauma on its victims, making it crucial to understand its dynamics and prevalence in the area. Sexual assault

often occurs both within intimate relationships and outside them, and the participants' accounts illuminate the broader scope of this issue. Shockingly, shock often renders victims momentarily mute, preventing them from seeking help immediately, and enabling perpetrators to evade justice.

As Participant 0020 tragically recounted, *"I was a victim of attempted rape four years ago at a friend's party. I couldn't understand why I didn't scream for help due to shock. Lucky for me, the perpetrator was too intoxicated to carry out his act fully before he was caught."*

Participant 0025 shared another distressing incident where she walked in on her best friend being assaulted, emphasizing that these assaults often go unreported, particularly when the perpetrator is known to the victim. *"During June recess I came back early from home to spend some time with my friend since she did not go home, so I didn't even knock when I entered her off-campus room and I froze. I couldn't utter a single word, my friend was gagged and tied to the bed with a rope and a naked jerk inside her. Her face was wet with tears and what seemed to be blood where she might have bitten herself or the injury from her split lip. The package I was holding must have dropped to the floor because the next thing I knew the guy was barrelling past me in only boxers, and someone screamed outside. And then there was a blur of movement next I was asked what happened by the police while my friend was in hospital. She never came out of her trauma and decided to drop out. Ohh the guy was released a year later."*-said Participant 0025 with tears in her eyes.

These narratives highlight the grim reality that sexual assault can occur at the hands of strangers and loved ones alike. The reluctance to report such incidents, often due to societal stigma or fear, underscores the need for improved support systems and awareness campaigns.

Participant 0026's account of reporting abuse by a stepfather, despite encountering resistance from law enforcement and family members, illustrates the immense challenges faced by survivors of sexual assault. In her case, her stepfather was

ultimately imprisoned, shedding light on the importance of persistence in seeking justice. In corroboration, Participant 0015 echoed support by saying *“All I can say is that men are horrible human beings it doesn’t matter if they are your family or lover, they are just horrible.”*

Another participant said *“Even now I am still afraid to date because I am afraid of men in general. I keep thinking that if I have a boyfriend, he will either force me to sleep with him or murder me in a fit of rage. My trauma is trying to steal my future, but I won’t let it...she said determined (the researcher was so proud to see her say it with such conviction).”* - Participant 008

Participant 0025, Participant 0015, and Participant 008's comments reflect the deep-seated fear and mistrust that sexual assault survivors often carry, influencing their future relationships and mental well-being.

Despite the profound trauma caused by sexual assault, many participants displayed remarkable resilience and determination in their journeys towards recovery, underscoring the need for effective support mechanisms and counselling services. These stories emphasize the necessity of comprehensive GBV prevention and support programs tailored to the unique needs of Mankweng Township's residents, addressing both prevention and recovery aspects.

4.3.3.2 Sub-theme 3.2: Brutal Murders

This sub-theme delves into the harrowing realm of extreme physical violence, a form of brutality that transcends the boundaries of pain infliction, leaving victims not only traumatized but also at the peril of their lives. Such violence encompasses acts like punching, hitting, kicking, and choking, and tragically (Mkhonto, 2022), it can be directed at anyone with perceived vulnerability. This sub-theme connects to the broader context discussed in Chapter Two, highlighting how physical violence, alongside sexual assault, has dominated the headlines in South Africa. The victims of this violence are often sexually assaulted before their lives are brutally taken,

underscoring the profoundly dangerous nature of gender-based violence (GBV) in society. Participants have shared heart-wrenching stories of losing loved ones to brutal murders.

Participant 0021 poignantly shared, *"I will never forgive myself for not being there when she needed me the most. My own father repeatedly raped my younger autistic stepsister for years, ultimately smothering her during one of his horrendous assaults. I feel ashamed that I share blood with such a monster."*

Participant 0012 recounted a similarly tragic experience, *"Growing up, I was the only boy in my household until my mom married my step-dad. I once heard my mom screaming at him to leave my disabled sister alone. I chose to attend football practice to avoid confronting the conflict, but upon my return, I found my sister crawling in a pool of her own blood, along with my mother. My stepdad had murdered my mother while attempting to rape my sister. My guilt still haunts me because I wasn't there to protect them."*

These chilling stories reveal that physical violence, often perpetrated by individuals known to the victims, leaves survivors in an inescapable cycle of trauma and self-blame. It underscores the urgent need for interventions to prevent such horrific acts within the community, and particularly within families.

4.3.3.3 Sub-theme 3.3: Harassment

Harassment is an enduring issue not only in South Africa but also worldwide. The experience of harassment can have severe consequences, triggering symptoms of depression and anxiety among victims (Rass, 2020). Those enduring harassment often live in a state of extreme paranoia, fearing for their lives, especially when harassment escalates into assault or violence. Perpetrators of harassment frequently employ tactics such as constant surveillance, persistent phone calls, or even enlisting others to contact the victim, intensifying their torment. Stalking, both physical and cyber, further compounds the fear and distress experienced by victims.

Mkhonto (2022) has aptly described how the perpetrators of harassment relentlessly intrude into the lives of their victims, sometimes physically visiting their homes, places of study, or work, leaving victims trapped in a state of perpetual dread. In some cases, perpetrators utilize psychological manipulation, seeking to brainwash their victims into believing they are unlovable or that the abuser alone can provide love, further entrapping them in toxic relationships.

Participant 0027 shared her experience with taking action against her harasser, stating, *"I consider myself fortunate that nothing too severe happened to me. When I noticed my ex-boyfriend stalking me on social media through new accounts after I blocked him, I went to the police to obtain a protection order. His relentless pursuit escalated to the point where he claimed to run into me everywhere I went. After securing the protection order, he finally stopped haunting my life."*

Another participant, Participant 008, detailed her harrowing ordeal, saying, *"I've become fearful of men in general. Dealing with trauma from a past incident was already challenging, and now I had to grapple with a stalker as well. I decided to take my power back. I enrolled in self-defence classes and made myself a less vulnerable target. Fortunately, my stalker disappeared after that. It was empowering to stand up to my fears."*

These accounts emphasize the detrimental effects of harassment on mental health and the importance of raising awareness about these issues and empowering individuals to protect themselves. It's essential to acknowledge that these sentiments and responses do not represent the entire population of Mankweng Township. While they provide valuable insights, the study recognizes that diversity exists in residents' experiences and perspectives.

4.3.4 Theme 4: How to Prevent GBV in Mankweng Township

This theme focuses on identifying potential solutions to combat gender-based violence (GBV) in Mankweng Township. Before effective solutions can be formulated, it's imperative to comprehensively understand the underlying causes of GBV. Dzinavane (2016) underscores the recognition of violence against women as a human rights violation, necessitating government mechanisms to respond adequately, even though existing policies may have fallen short.

During data collection, two significant causes of GBV surfaced. One of these causes is deeply rooted in concepts of masculinity. Masculinity encompasses societal roles, behaviours, and attributes considered appropriate for men (Graaff, 2017). In many societies, men are expected to hold dominant positions in households, while women are often subordinated. This sub-theme investigates how adherence to traditional norms of masculinity can contribute to violence perpetration. This study acknowledges the complexity of masculinity, which can manifest as hegemony, subordination, complicity, and marginalization.

Some participants defended masculinity as an integral aspect of their identity and highlighted that witnessing or experiencing violence during childhood could contribute to violent behaviours in adulthood. These perspectives suggest that interventions focusing on individuals, such as psychotherapy, could be effective in reducing future violence perpetration.

Participant 0013 asserted, *"Masculinity is about embracing manhood and protecting our loved ones. While I do not condone violence, we should allow men to be men, to protect our communities from toxic behaviours. It's a matter of empowerment, not oppression."*

Participant 0028 shared a nuanced view, explaining that some men's violent tendencies might be rooted in their upbringing, confirming the Social Learning Theory that people learn behaviours from their surrounding environments through observation. *"Growing up in an abusive family where my father constantly abused my mother, my brother might follow the same path. Not that he wants to, but because it's*

a learned behaviour. We shouldn't blame them for growing up in dysfunctional families."

Another cause identified is cultural factors, including patriarchy and sexist views, which legitimize violence as a means to assert male dominance and superiority over women. Traditional practices like lobola (the payment made to marry a woman) can exacerbate GBV, as they give men a sense of entitlement and control over women's lives. Women may feel trapped in abusive relationships due to the fear of returning lobola or the societal stigma associated with failed marriages (Maphanga, 2020).

Participant 0031 criticized harmful cultural practices corroborating with the Gender-Roles Theory explained in Chapter Two of this study that affect women more than men, saying, *"Even in this day and age, women are subjected to ridiculous traditions like virginity testing. Parents need to reconsider these practices."*

Participant 003 shared her resistance to traditional customs, stating, *"I rebelled against harmful traditions like female circumcision so that I can give a man power over my body. I refuse to marry for power and control; I will marry for love."*

The following sub-themes emerged during discussions about how to prevent GBV in Mankweng Township. Graaff (2017) acknowledges the various interventions in South Africa, ranging from national-level activism and legislation to local-level and NGO initiatives. These prevention measures primarily draw from the insights and recommendations of the study's participants.

4.3.4.1 Sub-theme 4.1: Lack of Education

Lack of education emerges as a critical impediment to tackling GBV effectively. To raise awareness about GBV, community structures like men's groups, women's groups, and LGBTQ+ groups should be established. These platforms can sensitize community members to GBV, providing support through shared experiences and remedies (Graaff, 2021). Educational initiatives should be prioritized to eradicate GBV

at its roots. One participant revealed that her understanding of GBV only came after she started her university studies at the University of Limpopo. She highlighted the stark difference between urban and rural perceptions of violence against women. In her village, if a boyfriend beats his girlfriend, the community often blames the woman, demonstrating a lack of awareness about GBV.

Another participant emphasized the significance of education in addressing not just GBV but also many societal issues in South Africa. Education enables individuals to become observant and informed, making it difficult for GBV to continue hiding in the shadows.

Participant 0018 summed it up, saying, *"Education is the key to many of South Africa's challenges. It equips individuals with the knowledge and awareness needed to tackle issues like GBV. While success can be achieved without formal education, an educated populace is better equipped to understand and address real issues like GBV."*

These sub-themes and expanded discussions provide a comprehensive view of the issues surrounding GBV in Mankweng Township and offer valuable insights into potential solutions and prevention measures.

4.3.4.2 Sub-theme 4.2: Stop Victim Blame

Victim-blaming is a pervasive issue in the context of gender-based violence (GBV). Often, victims, particularly women, are unfairly held responsible for the violence perpetrated against them due to circumstances such as being under the influence of alcohol, going out alone at night, or wearing clothing perceived as provocative (Mathivha, 2016). This form of blame effectively allows offenders to escape justice. In light of this, communities must shift their focus from blaming victims to holding perpetrators accountable. One crucial aspect of this shift involves offering individual counselling to survivors of GBV. Such counselling provides a safe and supportive

environment for survivors to navigate their emotions, process their experiences, and address potential trauma.

It is crucial to recognize that women who have experienced any form of violence require unwavering support rather than condemnation. Having a network of friends, family, and community members to turn to during times of need or crisis can empower survivors to reclaim their lives. Social support is a vital element in improving the quality of life and acting as a buffer against the adverse life events experienced by women who have endured violence (Rass, 2020).

Participant 0031 shared her personal experience, underscoring the significance of support: *"Without my mother and fiancé, I don't think I would have maintained my sanity after losing my child due to gang rape. Looking back now, I'm proud I had something to fight for."*

Participant 0032 emphasized the transformative power of support: *"Supporting those who have experienced GBV can make all the difference. When I encouraged my friend to reclaim her power, I was initially furious at her for contemplating giving up. However, I assured her of my unwavering support. This gave her the courage to seek counselling and support, knowing that there was hope for her future. It even fuelled her determination to see her perpetrator brought to justice."*

These participants' narratives vividly illustrate that displaying support and affection for GBV survivors can be the determining factor between life and death. Community support, devoid of condemnation, can empower survivors to fight for their well-being. When communities unite to offer support, the battle against GBV becomes a collective endeavour, bringing hope for a future without such horrors.

4.3.4.3 Sub-theme 4.3: Media Coverage

Media, particularly social media, wields substantial influence in the fight against GBV. Numerous hashtag movements have shed light on the brutal reality of gender-based

violence (Buiten & Naidoo, 2020). While there have been attempts at preventative programs in the form of media or information campaigns, Mankweng Township has often been overlooked, allowing GBV to fester unchecked. Unfortunately, media coverage is not evenly distributed in all parts of the Limpopo province, leaving many communities uninformed about critical issues. Some participants astutely observed this issue and recommended expanded media coverage as a potential solution to address GBV in the township.

Participant 004 pointed out, *"Media outlets tend to prioritize covering news related to famous individuals rather than addressing critical national issues. If Mankweng received more media attention, more people would be aware of the severity of GBV in this township."*

Participant 006 humorously acknowledged the media's preference for success stories but emphasized the importance of shedding light on issues like GBV. *"Media outlets may avoid reporting on GBV to prevent further negative press for our country...hahaha..., which already grapples with high GBV statistics. However, I believe that exposing the extent of the issue can create awareness and potentially deter perpetrators."*

Notably, some participants expressed concerns about media coverage, suggesting that it might inadvertently glorify violence and influence impressionable individuals negatively.

Participant 0014 highlighted the potential risks, saying, *"In today's digital age, bad news often becomes a trend. Young people may not fully grasp the distinction between good and bad influences and might copy what they see online."*

Participant 004 echoed these concerns, stating, *"Media outlets sometimes blur the line between reality and entertainment. This can be especially confusing for children growing up in the digital age."*

While these reservations about media coverage are valid, the study acknowledges the importance of striking a balance. Media outlets should aim to report the truth about GBV while also promoting positivity and emphasizing the dangers of emulating acts of gender-based violence. It is vital to consider the influence of media on impressionable minds, especially among younger audiences. In summary, this sub-theme emphasizes the role of media in creating awareness about GBV and calls for responsible reporting that highlights the gravity of the issue without inadvertently glorifying violence. Media has the potential to be a powerful ally in the fight against GBV when used judiciously and responsibly.

4.4 The Semi-Formal Focus-Group's Findings and Discussions

As part of the data collection process for this study, focus groups were utilized to explore the topic of the "implementation of the gender-based violence policy framework in Mankweng Township." The use of focus groups was strategic, aimed at capturing a wide range of views, opinions, and perspectives in a group setting, allowing participants to engage in an open and constructive dialogue centred around the research topic. This method created a secure environment for participants to share their thoughts, experiences, and concerns, fostering a sense of solidarity and collective understanding.

However, this approach presented several challenges during data collection. Firstly, coordinating a meeting that accommodated the availability of all participants proved difficult. Participants had diverse commitments, such as varying class schedules, exams, or late working hours, which complicated the scheduling process. Secondly, maintaining focus within the group proved challenging, as some participants became distracted by unrelated discussions or preoccupied with their mobile phones. Thirdly, striking the right balance between formality and informality was a concern. As participants grew more comfortable within the group, they occasionally overlooked the sensitivity of the topic and the need for a respectful and considerate atmosphere. Lastly, ensuring that all group members had an opportunity to express themselves was

a task in itself. It was essential to foster inclusivity, ensuring that quieter members felt encouraged to contribute without being overshadowed by more assertive participants.

Despite these challenges, the focus group discussions yielded valuable data regarding the research topic.

4.4.1 Formation of Focus Groups

The following setting outlines how the focus groups were formed during the data-gathering process:

- **Women and Men; and LGBTQ+ of Different Ethnicities**

In this group, a total of nine women, seven men representing different age groups, and four LGBTQ+ individuals were brought together in the same room to engage in discussions about the implementation of the gender-based violence policy framework in Mankweng Township. The primary objective was to assess the differing reactions, responses, and perspectives of men, women, and LGBTQ+ individuals when discussing gender-based violence. The discussions raised questions that sparked debates among the participants, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of GBV in Mankweng. The researcher also used this setting to identify themes and subthemes that emerged during the discussions.

- **Women Only (Representing Different Ethnicities)**

Nine women from the combined group were then gathered in a separate room, excluding the men and members of the LGBTQ+. The aim here was to observe how women discuss the concept of gender-based violence when not in the presence of men. This provided an opportunity to compare their responses and reactions when discussing GBV among themselves as opposed to when in mixed-gender groups. Understanding why responses and reactions differed in these different settings was crucial for identifying potential solutions. The women were asked about the driving factors behind GBV in Mankweng Township, potential solutions, and why the implemented policy framework had fallen short in addressing GBV.

One participant showed immense relief to be able to answer in the absence of men, *“I can’t help but notice that when we discussed this issue men were subconsciously defending men who did commit acts of violence.”*- Participant 0027

Another agreed by saying *“I told you guys it's not because they want to be that is because they were raised to justify any act of violence against a woman as a form of disciplinary action.”*- Participant 0028

- **Men Only (Representing Different Ethnicities)**

In a similar manner, six out of seven men as was originally planned were assembled in a room without women due to one participant having an emergency. Here, the men were afforded privacy to discuss GBV in the absence of women and LGBTQ+ members while being observed by the researcher. They were asked specific questions, such as why women and children are often the primary victims of GBV, why the underlying drivers of violence perpetrated by men against women, potential solutions, and their insights into why the GBV policy framework had not been successful in addressing the issue.

What surprised the researcher was the determination to really do better as a new generation of the modern world. Some expressed wanting to pursue degrees in fields that will allow them to officially and legally help in this fight. One participant said, *“I wish I could say GBV affects women and children more because they are weak, but the truth is we as men do ugly things just because we want to prove to ourselves and society that we are strong.”*- Participant 0032

Others just nodded their heads in support of Participant 0032’s sentiment. Two participants even revealed that they attended the Men’s Association Against Violence (MAAV) in May 2023 at the University of Limpopo, where they learned more about gender-based violence and how to do better as men when they encounter violence against women and anyone in general. One of the MAAV attendees explained that *“I just wanted to go add to the number of attendees because people think we don’t care*

about GBV as we are the perpetrators of it, however, I ended up being grateful I did because I learned that indeed men are ignorant of the role they play in GBV.”

- **LGBTQ+ Only**

All four LGBTQ+ participants were convened to discuss the implementation of the gender-based violence policy framework in Mankweng Township. This discussion allowed for an exploration of the impact of the LGBTQ+ community's experiences with the inadequate response to GBV. Participants were encouraged to share their insights on effective strategies for addressing this issue more effectively.

One participant said *“Forget the policy framework that was meant to govern GBV, gays are excluded from any preventative programs developed to deal with gender-based violence because we are ‘apparently’ fake”*- Participant 001

Another echoed the sentiment by expressing that *“Even the churches suddenly became God and judge the hell out of us.”*- Participant 0033

These focus groups were thoughtfully designed to explore the interactions between different genders and how gender dynamics might influence gender-based violence. The inclusion of women, men, and LGBTQ+ members was deliberate, as it reflected the researcher's belief in the importance of unity rather than division in the fight against GBV. This approach aligns with the principle that engaging men and boys as participants and stakeholders in gender-based violence prevention initiatives is essential (Casey et al., 2018).

However, it's important to note that men's involvement in GBV prevention is a complex endeavour that challenges traditional power dynamics. While men's engagement in anti-violence efforts is crucial, women often continue to bear the brunt of the burden (Kanjiri et al., 2021). Participants recognized the significance of involving men and boys but acknowledged that this was just one piece of the puzzle. Being surrounded by like-minded peers in the focus group setting provided a 'safe space' for participants

to discuss issues and ideas they might have felt less confident addressing in the broader community (Graaff, 2017).

In summary, the focus group discussions provided valuable insights into the multifaceted issue of GBV in Mankweng Township, shedding light on how different gender dynamics and perspectives shape perceptions and responses to GBV. This approach underscored the importance of fostering unity in the fight against GBV and the need for a multifaceted approach that includes all segments of the community.

4.4.2 Describing Gender-Based Violence (Mixed Responses)

During the interviews, participants consistently highlighted the prevailing gender-based violence dynamics in Mankweng Township, often attributing its roots to traditional beliefs and societal norms that perpetuate male dominance and female submission. The open-ended questions in the administered questionnaires facilitated rich and comprehensive discussions, the emerging results include:

- **Physical and Sexual Abuse:** Participants identified physical and sexual abuse as prominent forms of gender-based violence. These acts were typically perpetrated by loved ones, including partners, stepfathers, uncles, and, in most cases, involved rape by strangers or sexual harassment at the workplace. Remarkably, male participants acknowledged that verbal abuse, which they considered a common form of violence, was predominantly perpetrated by women, especially during instances where women belittled their masculinity, insulted them, or engaged in confrontational shouting matches.
- **Arranged Marriages:** Some participants shared their experiences of being forced into arranged marriages, often as a result of financial constraints within their families. In these scenarios, lobola, or the bride price, was perceived as a form of financial assistance expected from the bride-to-be's family. This practice was viewed as a root cause of gender-based violence, as it instilled a sense of possession in men, effectively stripping women of their freedom and the right to refuse.

- **Gender Stereotypes:** Participants noted the persistence of gender-based violence due to gender stereotypes, which led to discrimination against women in certain job sectors. Citing Zhang et al. (2020), some participants argued that stereotype-based gender bias discouraged women from pursuing leadership positions. Interestingly, male participants contended that certain job roles were restricted to women not because of gender bias but because of the physical demands involved. They compared this situation to men not being able to give birth, recognizing inherent biological differences.
- **Male Ego:** Gender-based violence was attributed to male ego by several participants. They asserted that men's belief in their superiority over women contributed to acts of violence. For instance, if a married woman had a job while her husband did not, it was still deemed disrespectful to the man of the house. This often resulted in women surrendering their salaries to their husbands or in-laws, creating a power imbalance that sometimes led to physical or verbal abuse.
- **Mockery of LGBTQ+ Members:** Participants also recognized the role of mockery in perpetuating gender-based violence. They observed that individuals who did not conform to traditional gender roles faced ridicule and were sometimes subjected to violence. This attitude contributed to the vulnerability of LGBTQ+ individuals, making them more likely targets of sexual assault.

4.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter highlights the complexity of gender-based violence in Mankweng Township, emphasizing that pinpointing a single cause is challenging. While some attribute it to the legacy of Apartheid (Graaff, 2017), the study suggests that acknowledging the problem of GBV is the first step in addressing it effectively. It underscores the need for comprehensive policy frameworks and public awareness campaigns to combat deeply ingrained societal norms and customs perpetuating gender-based violence.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

5. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a concise summary of the key findings derived from the research interviews, questionnaires, and focus group discussions conducted in Mankweng Township. Additionally, it offers recommendations aimed at addressing the persistent issue of gender-based violence (GBV) in this community. Finally, this chapter concludes the study by synthesizing the findings and offering a comprehensive understanding of the research topic.

5.1 Research Objectives' Achievement

In this section, we evaluate how well the research objectives were met and the extent to which they contributed to our understanding of GBV in Mankweng Township.

- **Objective 1: To Examine the Root Cause of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Mankweng Township**

This objective has been successfully achieved. The research findings have revealed that traditional cultural customs continue to serve as the primary root cause of GBV in Mankweng Township. Participants emphasized that deeply ingrained gender roles and expectations contribute significantly to the perpetuation of violence. The study's alignment with gender-role theory further solidifies the understanding that traditional customs are at the core of this issue. Additionally, toxic masculinity emerged as another critical cause of GBV, as men sought to assert their dominance, often resorting to violence to satisfy their egos. These findings underscore the need to address deeply rooted cultural norms and empower individuals economically, as emphasized by Dzinavane (2016).

- **Objective 2: To Explore the Reasons Behind the Failure of the Implemented Public Policy Framework in Efficiently Addressing GBV**

The objective of understanding the reasons behind the failure of public policy frameworks in addressing GBV has been satisfactorily achieved. The study uncovered several factors contributing to the ineffectiveness of these policies, refer to theme 2 and its sub-themes for more details. Participants pointed out that a lack of awareness among the general population hindered the implementation of these policies, as many were simply unaware of their existence. Moreover, participants expressed frustration with the government's lack of commitment to ensuring that these policies were effectively implemented. This critical insight into the challenges surrounding policy implementation can guide future efforts to address GBV effectively.

- **Objective 3: To Identify the Impacts of GBV on Individuals and the Community**

The objective of identifying the impacts of GBV on individuals and the community was thoroughly explored in the study. The research uncovered a multitude of adverse effects stemming from GBV, both on individual survivors and the broader community. This information is outlined in detail in Chapter Four, with particular emphasis on the profound psychological, emotional, and physical toll that GBV inflicts upon survivors. The study provides a comprehensive understanding of the far-reaching consequences of this issue.

- **Objective 4: To Propose Interventions to Address GBV in Mankweng Township**

The objective of proposing interventions to address GBV in Mankweng Township is at the heart of this study. It was achieved through the comprehensive exploration of preventive measures in Theme 4, titled 'How to Prevent Gender-Based Violence in Mankweng Township.' This section meticulously examined the root causes of GBV before outlining strategies to prevent it. The study emphasizes the importance of

challenging and transforming traditional cultural customs, promoting economic empowerment, and providing education on gender equality.

5.2 The Summary of Findings

5.2.1 Men's Responses

Male participants in the study disclosed their experiences with various forms of gender-based violence. However, it was noted that most men refrained from reporting such incidents to the police or discussing them with friends. One participant explained this reluctance, stating, *"In our culture, a man is considered weak if he goes to the police to report an abuse by a woman; they would laugh at you, and no one wants to be called weak"* (Participant 0016).

This study recognizes that men can also be victims of gender-based violence, underscoring the importance of involving them in initiatives to combat GBV. It aligns with Shaw's (2017) perspective that feminist theories should not exclude men but should provide a more comprehensive understanding of violence experienced by all genders. Shaw suggests that feminist theories can be applied to various gender identities, including men, women, transgender individuals, and genderqueer groups, ensuring inclusivity.

- **The Role Played by Traditional Customs**

Male participants highlighted the continued influence of traditional customs in contemporary society. They acknowledged that these customs placed expectations on women to be submissive in households. One participant emphasized, *"Even today, if a woman is to be married, she is being prepared on how to take care of and obey her husband, but men are not taught how to take care of and respect women"* (Participant 004). This acknowledgement illustrates that men recognize the challenges women face and the importance of including them in initiatives to address GBV. This aligns with the study's agenda of fostering unity and breaking down traditional gender norms.

Male participants conceded that culture often reinforced negative norms, such as the practice of lobola, which implied ownership of women, leading to the normalization of gender-based violence. They acknowledged that this cultural framework instilled submissive roles in women, often resulting in punishment, including physical and emotional abuse, for non-compliance.

These cultural factors make addressing gender-based violence more complex, but some participants believed that religion and culture could be harnessed positively to reshape societal perceptions. They suggested that churches could serve as safe spaces for discussions about GBV and provide counselling for survivors. Additionally, participants advocated for an end to judgment against LGBTQ+ members within religious institutions, emphasizing the importance of respecting diverse identities and experiences.

5.2.2 Women's Responses

The female participants in the study voiced their concerns about the persisting gender-based violence in the 21st century, reflecting a mix of disappointment and sadness. They raised issues such as the objectification of women in the film industry, particularly in superhero movies that often depict female characters in skimpy outfits, emphasizing the sexualization of women. This concern aligns with findings by Aley and Hahn (2020), who conducted a study on gender roles in film content, revealing that male heroes are often portrayed as more powerful compared to their female counterparts.

Nonetheless, some participants noted a positive shift in the industry, citing examples like the series 'WandaVision' and the male-led movie 'Doctor Strange,' where women were portrayed as powerful characters. One participant expressed pride in these portrayals, stating, "*Women are now getting more powerful roles, and I am feeling so proud right now*" (Participant 0027). This shift signifies a growing recognition of women's strength and potential, challenging traditional stereotypes that have long confined them to passive roles.

5.2.2.1 Trigger Factors of Gender-Based Violence

Women were asked to identify the triggers of gender-based violence, shedding light on the societal factors that contribute to this issue. Many participants attributed GBV to deeply ingrained beliefs in male dominance and female subservience, often cultivated within families that adhere to patriarchal norms. A participant shared her experience of divorcing her husband due to a polygamous marriage, highlighting a lack of attention and feelings of neglect. She emphasized the role of traditional customs in perpetuating gender-based violence, especially in polygamous unions.

The participants identified several triggers:

- **Shame Culture:** Many participants observed that one of the triggers of GBV was the culture of shame imposed on women who fell victim to violence. This culture often overshadowed government legislative efforts like the Domestic Violence Act and the Protection from Harassment Act, pointing to the need for a societal shift in mentality.
- **Blame Game:** Another trigger identified was the tendency to blame victims based on their clothing choices, state of intoxication, or perceived recklessness, rather than holding perpetrators accountable. This victim-blaming often led to social ostracization and further perpetuated the culture of silence.
- **Societal Treatment:** The participants highlighted society's harsh treatment of women who sought to break free from traditional gender roles by becoming independent. Women who aspired to lead and make political or domestic decisions were often criticized and discouraged.
- **Religious Influence:** The role of the church in reinforcing the docile role for women was also recognized. Participants explained how religious institutions discouraged women from seeking help and made them feel embarrassed about airing their grievances, further trapping them in toxic relationships.

- **Abusive Households:** Growing up in abusive households was identified as a potential precursor to becoming either an abuser or a victim, perpetuating the cycle of violence.

These triggers underscore how deeply entrenched gender-based violence is within Mankweng Township, driven by cultural norms and societal attitudes. The participants also alluded to the Social Exchange Theory and its application in abusive relationships, emphasizing the role of self-interest and individual social rationality (Yin, 2018) in such dynamics.

5.2.3 Effects of GBV on Women

The female participants shared the profound effects of gender-based violence on their lives. These effects often persisted long after the traumatic experiences, reshaping their identities and well-being. These consequences illuminated the partially similar diverse facets of gender-based violence, as reported by the participants of the (Dzinavane, 2016) study, the consequences highlighted include:

- **Low Self-esteem and Confidence:** Women who had experienced GBV commonly reported a loss of self-esteem and confidence. They often felt diminished and less attractive due to the emotional scars left by the abuse.
- **Sexual and Reproductive Issues:** Participants noted that GBV disproportionately affected women, resulting in unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, and difficult decisions regarding termination. The psychological trauma from such experiences was immense, sometimes leading to suicidal thoughts.
- **Impact on Productivity:** Women who survived GBV faced challenges in their daily lives, including missing school or work due to injuries, legal proceedings, and emotional stress. These disruptions often hindered their personal and professional growth.

5.2.4 LGBTQ+ Members' Responses

Members of the LGBTQ+ community, both men and women, face a disproportionately high risk of gender-based violence. Research conducted by Wirtz et al. (2018) revealed that healthcare providers often lack understanding and knowledge about the experiences of LGBTQ+ patients, further adding to their vulnerability. The fear of judgment and discrimination frequently prevents LGBTQ+ individuals from coming forward about their experiences, as emphasized by a participant's account of not revealing their sexual orientation to their Christian parents (Participant 0033).

“One day when we were casually talking I just somehow inserted this topic to observe their reactions, I hate to say I was disappointed and saddened so I did not tell them for fear of being disowned...he laughs...yes it also happens in the black communities they can disown your ass.”- Participant 0033

Studies have indicated that LGBTQ+ individuals experience higher levels of violence, leading to adverse mental health outcomes (Sherman et al., 2021). Additionally, the impact of poly-victimization within this community differs in presentation, duration, and severity (Sherman et al., 2021). It is imperative to address the stigma surrounding LGBTQ+ individuals in relationships and acknowledge the specific risks they face (Gamarel et al., 2020).

Participants shared their experiences of facing violence and discrimination due to their sexual orientation, with one recounting a disturbing incident where a lesbian was gang-raped and murdered, an event largely unreported in the media. The LGBTQ+ community often remains in the closet, fearing judgment and assault.

In conclusion, these findings offer a multifaceted view of gender-based violence in Mankweng Township, highlighting the pervasive influence of traditional customs, cultural practices, and societal norms. It underscores the necessity of including all segments of the community, particularly men, in initiatives to combat GBV and

encourages rethinking cultural and religious influences to promote gender equality and reduce violence.

5.3 The Study's Research Gap and the Direction for Future Research

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a deeply concerning issue in South Africa, recognized globally as a human rights violation. It predominantly targets women and girls, and studies often identify men as the primary perpetrators. As Brankovic (2019) noted, GBV frequently involves the assertion of power and control over another person, as seen in cases of intimate partner violence.

However, this study illuminates a crucial perspective often overlooked: not all men are perpetrators of GBV, just as there are both good and bad individuals among women. Male participants in this study displayed a promising commitment to becoming better versions of men in this era. They acknowledged their responsibility in addressing men's violent behaviour and actions against women, expressing a desire not to harbour violence or consider it an appropriate disciplinary measure against women.

The LGBTQ+ participants in this study shed light on another facet of GBV. They articulated feeling marginalized in discussions about GBV, even though they are equally impacted by it. Wirtz et al. (2018) support this sentiment, highlighting the pronounced gendered power dynamics present in cases of violence against LGBTQ+ individuals. Yet, research, prevention, and response efforts for GBV among the LGBTQ+ population remain limited.

The research gap identified in this study is the scarcity of literature addressing GBV among men and the LGBTQ+ community. While there is a substantial body of literature focusing on why women and girls are the primary victims of GBV, other genders have been comparatively neglected. The male participants in this study expressed a genuine desire to be actively involved in initiatives aimed at combating GBV, and some have already taken steps by participating in programs such as the Men's Association Against Violence (MAAV) hosted by the University of Limpopo in May this year.

One notable example of research addressing GBV among men is the study conducted by Graaff (2017) titled "Masculinities and Gender-based Violence in South Africa: A Study of a Masculinities-focused Intervention Programme." This study delved into the link between masculinity and GBV in South Africa, offering valuable insights. It demonstrated that men can also experience violence and emphasized the importance of involving them in future GBV intervention and prevention programs.

Additionally, as Brankovic (2019) pointed out, in societies where patriarchal norms and inequality prevail, frustrated masculinity can manifest in violent behaviour, not because men inherently desire violence, but because they have been conditioned to behave that way. Unveiling this dynamic is essential to understand and address GBV comprehensively.

Hence, there is a need for future research to explore GBV from the perspectives of men and the LGBTQ+ community. This research should aim to provide a more inclusive understanding of GBV, recognizing that all genders can be both victims and perpetrators. It can build upon the foundation laid by this study and scholars like Graaff (2017) to contribute to a more holistic approach to addressing GBV.

Furthermore, future research can also play a crucial role in guiding policy frameworks and government initiatives. Governments should prioritize addressing GBV across all genders and include them in prevention and intervention programs. By doing so, they can create more effective policies that address the root causes of GBV and provide support to all affected individuals.

5.4 Recommendations

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a significant challenge in Mankweng Township. Based on the comprehensive findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to address this pressing issue:

5.4.1 Awareness of Gender-Based Violence Programs

Initiatives to combat GBV should prioritize raising awareness among the community members, particularly men and boys. Programs and campaigns should be designed to reach all segments of the population to ensure that everyone understands the gravity of GBV and the role they can play in preventing it. Raise awareness by developing community-driven awareness campaigns to educate residents about existing policies and resources available to combat GBV. Collaborate with local schools, community centres, and religious institutions to disseminate information effectively.

This recommendation aligns with the study's findings that men and boys expressed a genuine willingness to be part of the solution to GBV. By increasing awareness and education, we can engage men and boys in dialogue about GBV and encourage their active involvement in prevention efforts. This is vital for changing social norms and attitudes surrounding violence.

5.4.2 Better Distribution of Resources for Gender-Based Violence Issues

Resources allocated for GBV issues should be distributed more effectively and equitably, considering the unique needs of different genders, including men and LGBTQ+ individuals. This includes funding for support services, prevention programs, and research efforts. Advocate for increased government commitment and funding towards the implementation of GBV policies. This should include rigorous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure effectiveness.

The study revealed that GBV affects various genders, including men and LGBTQ+ individuals. Therefore, resource allocation should be more inclusive and tailored to address the specific challenges faced by these groups. This recommendation aims to ensure that resources are channelled where they are most needed.

5.4.3 Rethinking Cultural and Religious Influences to Promote Gender Equality and Reduce Violence

Efforts should be made to reshape cultural and religious influences to promote gender equality and reduce violence. This can be achieved by fostering open and inclusive discussions within religious institutions, schools, and the broader community about GBV and gender equality. The cultural transformation could be achieved through the launch of community-based programs aimed at challenging and transforming traditional cultural norms and practices that perpetuate GBV. Engage community leaders and elders in these efforts.

Cultural and religious norms were identified as significant factors perpetuating GBV. To address this, it is essential to create safe spaces for dialogue within these institutions. By challenging traditional beliefs that normalize violence, we can work towards cultural and religious environments that support gender equality and discourage violence.

5.4.4 New Gender-Based Violence Policy Frameworks that Cater for All Genders Male, Female, and LGBTQ+ People

The government and policymakers should develop new GBV policy frameworks that are inclusive of all genders, including males and LGBTQ+ individuals. These frameworks should address the unique needs and vulnerabilities of each group. Current policy frameworks often focus predominantly on women and girls, leaving other genders marginalized. To create effective policies, it is essential to consider the experiences and challenges faced by all individuals affected by GBV. This recommendation aims to ensure that policies are comprehensive and equitable as encouraged by recommendation 5.4.2.

5.4.5 Prioritize Urgent Response to Gender-Based Violence Victims and Survivors

There should be a prioritization of urgent response mechanisms to assist GBV victims and survivors. This includes establishing rapid response teams, accessible crisis hotlines, and safe shelters for those in immediate danger. Victims and survivors of GBV often face critical situations that require immediate assistance. Establishing efficient response mechanisms can save lives and provide essential support during emergencies.

5.4.6 Increase Support Services and Access to Justice for Victims and Survivors of GBV

Access to support services, including counselling, legal aid, and medical assistance, should be increased and made readily available to victims and survivors of GBV. This includes ensuring that justice is accessible through fair legal processes and is served. The study revealed the profound and lasting effects of GBV on victims and survivors. By expanding support services and improving access to justice, we can provide much-needed assistance and help individuals rebuild their lives after experiencing GBV.

Implement economic empowerment programs targeting women in Mankweng Township, providing them with opportunities for financial independence and self-sufficiency. These recommendations, rooted in the study's findings, emphasize the importance of inclusivity, awareness, and the active involvement of all community members, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, in the collective efforts to prevent and respond to GBV. This study not only serves as a crucial foundation for future research but also as a call to action in the ongoing battle to eradicate GBV, both within this region and beyond.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

While this study endeavoured to provide a comprehensive exploration of the implementation of the gender-based violence (GBV) policy framework in Mankweng Township, certain limitations must be acknowledged. Firstly, the study's focus on a single case study limited the generalizability of the findings to other contexts (Rass,

2020). The unique socio-cultural and geographical characteristics of Mankweng Township have affected the transferability of the study's results to different regions.

Secondly, despite careful efforts to ensure the ethical conduct of the research, the sensitivity of the topic had potentially led to response bias or underreporting, as participants were hesitant to openly discuss their experiences or opinions on gender-based violence. Furthermore, the researcher's subjectivity and biases, though minimized through reflexive practices, could have influenced the interpretation of data (Garland-Thomson, 2020).

Additionally, the sample size, though selected purposefully to provide rich insights, did not fully capture the diversity of perspectives within Mankweng Township. The reliance on self-reported data, while valuable, could be subject to memory biases or varying levels of accuracy in participants' recollections (Cypress, 2017).

5.6 Deductions of the Study

This study has yielded significant deductions that broaden our understanding of gender-based violence (GBV) in Mankweng Township. These deductions are based on the comprehensive research findings and the in-depth analysis conducted:

- **GBV Affects All Genders**

Contrary to the prevailing notion that GBV primarily victimizes women, this study has demonstrated that GBV is not limited by gender. It refers to any form of violence against an individual, regardless of their perceived strength or gender identity. The findings reveal that men can also be victims of GBV, and their experiences should not be overlooked. This challenges traditional narratives surrounding GBV and emphasizes the need for inclusive approaches to address this issue.

- **LGBTQ+ Individuals Are Overlooked Victims**

The LGBTQ+ community faces a significant risk of GBV, yet they are often overlooked in discussions and interventions related to this problem. The study has underscored the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, including fear of judgment, discrimination, and violence. Recognizing and addressing GBV within the LGBTQ+ community is imperative to create a safer and more inclusive society.

- **Barriers to Reporting GBV**

The study has revealed that cultural norms, societal expectations, and fear of stigmatization act as significant barriers to reporting GBV across all genders. Victims often hesitate to come forward due to concerns about being labelled as weak, immoral, or responsible for the violence they endure. Overcoming these barriers requires a concerted effort to change societal attitudes and provide safe spaces for victims to seek help without judgment.

- **Urgent Need for Inclusivity**

The deductions emphasize the urgent need for inclusivity in addressing GBV. Gender-based violence prevention and response efforts should encompass all genders and sexual orientations. This inclusivity should extend to support services, awareness campaigns, and policy frameworks. Overlooking any group perpetuates inequality and hinders the fight against GBV.

- **Shifting Cultural and Religious Norms**

The study highlights the role of cultural and religious norms in perpetuating GBV. To combat this issue effectively, there is a need to rethink and reshape these influences to promote gender equality and non-violence. Initiatives should encourage open dialogues within religious institutions and communities to challenge harmful practices and beliefs.

These deductions shed light on the multifaceted nature of GBV and emphasize the importance of adopting a holistic and inclusive approach to address this pressing issue. By recognizing that GBV affects individuals of all genders and sexual orientations, we can work towards a society where everyone is protected from violence, discrimination, and fear, regardless of their identity or perceived strength.

5.7 Suggestions

Building upon the findings and deductions of this study, several suggestions emerge to guide future research, policy development, and interventions aimed at addressing gender-based violence (GBV): **Table C**

| Suggestion | Explanation |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive Research: | <p>Scholars should conduct more inclusive research that explores the experiences of GBV across genders, including women, men, and LGBTQ+ individuals. This approach will provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to GBV and inform targeted interventions.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intersectional Analysis: | <p>Future research should adopt an intersectional approach, considering how various factors such as race, socioeconomic status, and disability intersect with gender and sexual orientation to influence experiences of GBV. This nuanced perspective can guide more effective interventions.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive LGBTQ+ Studies: | <p>Given the underrepresentation of LGBTQ+ experiences in GBV research, future studies should focus on the unique</p> |

| | |
|--|---|
| | <p>challenges faced by this community. This includes understanding the intersections of discrimination, violence, and mental health among LGBTQ+ individuals.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normative Change Initiatives: | <p>Initiatives should be developed to challenge and change harmful cultural and religious norms that perpetuate GBV. These initiatives should involve community leaders, religious institutions, and grassroots organizations to promote gender equality and non-violence.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive Policy Frameworks: | <p>Policymakers should prioritize the development of gender-based violence policy frameworks that explicitly cater to the needs of all genders, including male, female, and LGBTQ+ individuals. These policies should provide resources, support, and protection for all victims and survivors.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GBV Prevention Programs: | <p>Universities and institutions should expand their GBV prevention programs to include men, boys, and LGBTQ+ members. Programs like the Men's Association Against Violence (MAAV) at the University of Limpopo should be promoted and supported to engage men and boys in combating GBV.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community-Based Support: | <p>Initiatives should be established within communities to provide safe spaces for victims of GBV, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation. These</p> |

| | |
|--|--|
| | spaces should offer counselling, legal support, and resources for healing. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness Campaigns: | Public awareness campaigns should be launched to challenge stereotypes, raise awareness about GBV against all genders, and encourage reporting. These campaigns should include diverse voices and representations |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage Reporting: | Measures should be put in place to encourage victims to report GBV without fear of judgment or stigma. This may involve strengthening legal protections, offering anonymity, and increasing accessibility to reporting mechanisms. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Longitudinal Studies: | Researchers should consider conducting longitudinal studies to assess the long-term effects of GBV on individuals and communities. This could provide valuable insights into the lasting impacts and recovery processes. |

Incorporating these suggestions into future research, policy development, and interventions can contribute to a more inclusive, comprehensive, and effective approach to addressing gender-based violence in all its forms and among all segments of society.

5.8 Conclusion

This study has provided valuable insights into the intricate issue of gender-based violence within Mankweng Township. By successfully achieving its research

objectives, the study has uncovered the root causes of GBV, identified the limitations of existing policy frameworks, elucidated the profound impacts on individuals and the community, and proposed interventions to combat this deeply entrenched problem. It is evident that addressing GBV necessitates a multifaceted approach that challenges deeply ingrained cultural norms, demands government commitment, and empowers individuals through education and economic opportunities (Graaff, 2017). By implementing the aforementioned recommendations, Mankweng Township can take significant strides toward reducing GBV and fostering a safer, more equitable community for all its residents.

This study underscores the significance of addressing the identified research gap through future research initiatives that explore gender-based violence (GBV) from the perspectives of men and the LGBTQ+ community. Such research endeavours are pivotal for fostering a more inclusive and comprehensive approach to combatting GBV, not only in South Africa but on a global scale. Hence, the researcher strongly advocates for the active involvement of men and boys in GBV prevention programs. These programs should prioritize educating them about healthy masculinity, consent, and the importance of fostering respectful relationships. By positioning men as allies in the battle against GBV, these programs can challenge harmful gender norms and behaviours, offering a promising avenue to reduce GBV cases.

5.9 Final Remarks

In the broader context of this study, it becomes evident that gender-based violence (GBV) continues to cast a dark shadow over South Africa, as detailed in Chapter Two under the section 'Background and Extent of Gender-Based Violence in South Africa.' The persistent rise in GBV cases underscores the urgent need for comprehensive and impactful strategies to combat this pervasive issue. This study yields several key conclusions and remarks:

5.9.1. Government Accountability: The government of South Africa must take proactive steps to address GBV. While legislative frameworks exist, their effectiveness

often falls short of expectations. These policies should be rigorously enforced and continually assessed to ensure they fulfil their intended roles, rather than remaining symbolic measures on paper, as observed by some of the study's participants.

5.9.2. Gender Equality as a Foundation: Achieving gender equality is foundational to eradicating GBV. Efforts should focus on challenging cultural and societal norms that perpetuate violence and discrimination. This includes comprehensive interventions to change ingrained beliefs and practices regarding gender roles and power dynamics.

5.9.3. Inclusivity in Research: Future research must adopt an inclusive approach, recognizing that GBV affects individuals of all genders. In addition to women, men, and LGBTQ+ individuals should be central in research endeavours to provide a holistic understanding of GBV experiences.

5.9.4. Intersectionality Matters: GBV intersects with various factors, such as race, class, and disability. Recognizing and addressing these intersections is crucial for developing targeted interventions that account for the diverse experiences of victims and survivors.

5.9.5. Policy Framework Overhaul: The development of new policy frameworks that explicitly cater to the needs of all genders male, female, and LGBTQ+ is essential. These frameworks should provide a comprehensive roadmap for prevention, support, and protection.

In closing, tackling GBV is a complex, multifaceted endeavour that requires a concerted effort from the government, civil society, academia, and the broader community. The findings and recommendations from this study offer valuable insights into the nuances of GBV in South Africa and emphasize the need for inclusive, comprehensive, and sustained efforts to bring about lasting change. The time for action is now, and the collective commitment to eradicating GBV is essential to building a safer, more equitable society for all.

Reference List

Abutabenjeh, S. and Jaradat, R. (2018). Clarification of research design, research methods, and research methodology. *Teaching Public Administration*, [online] 36(3), pp.237–258. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0144739418775787>.

Ackerman, C. (2019). *Learned Helplessness: Seligman's Theory of Depression (+ Cure)*. [online] PositivePsychology.com. Available at: <https://positivepsychology.com/learned-helplessness-seligman-theory-depression-cure/> [Accessed 15 Feb. 2023].

Aley, M. and Hahn, L. (2020). The Powerful Male Hero: A Content Analysis of Gender Representation in Posters for Children's Animated Movies. *Sex Roles*, 83. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-020-01127-z>.

Amnesty International (2021). *'TREATED LIKE FURNITURE' GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND COVID-19 RESPONSE IN SOUTHERN AFRICA*. [online] *Amnesty International*. Cape Town, South Africa. Available at: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/AFR0334182021ENGLISH.pdf> [Accessed 25 May 2022].

Applin, S., Simpson, J.-M. and Curtis, A. (2022). Men Have Gender and Women Are People: A Structural Approach to Gender and Violence. *Violence Against Women*, pp.1–22. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/10778012221104844>.

Berrend, A. (2020). *The Victim Offender as the Epitome of the Non-Ideal Victim*. [MSc] Faculty of Health and society, Department of Criminology, pp.4–28. Available at: <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1486387/FULLTEXT01.pdf> [Accessed 25 May 2022].

Boertien, D. and Härkönen, J. (2018). Why does women's education stabilize marriages? The role of marital attraction and barriers to divorce. *Demographic Research*, [online] 38, pp.1241–1276. Available at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26457075> [Accessed 16 Nov. 2022].

Brankovic, J. (2019). *WHAT DRIVES VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA?* [online] CSV . Johannesburg & Cape Town, South Africa: Research Brief. Available at:

<https://media.africaportal.org/documents/What-Drives-Violence-in-South-Africa.pdf>
[Accessed 25 May 2022].

Buiten, D. and Naidoo, K. (2020). Laying Claim to a Name: Towards a Sociology of 'Gender-Based Violence'. *South African Review of Sociology*, 51(2), pp.61–68. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/21528586.2020.1813194>.

Butler, J. (2020). Performative Acts and Gender Constitution. *Feminist Theory Reader*, pp.353–361. doi:<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003001201-42>.

Casey, E., Carlson, J., Two Bulls, S. and Yager, A. (2016). Gender Transformative Approaches to Engaging Men in Gender-Based Violence Prevention: A Review and Conceptual Model. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 19(2), pp.231–246. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838016650191>.

Castañeda Carney, I., Sabater, L., Owren, C. and Boyer, A.E. (2020). *Gender-based violence and environment linkages: The violence of inequality*. Wen, J. ed. [online] Gland, Switzerland: IUCN, Gland, Switzerland, p.272. doi:<https://doi.org/10.2305/iucn.ch.2020.03.en>.

Chapman, C. (2020). *Women's Workplace Oppression in 1970s South Africa* by Cait Chapman | *South African History Online*. [online] Available at: <https://www.sahistory.org.za/article/womens-workplace-oppression-1970s-south-africa-cait-chapman> [Accessed 26 May 2022].

Cherry, K. (2021). *What Is Learned Helplessness and Why Does It Happen?* [online] Verywell Mind. Available at: <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-learned-helplessness-2795326> [Accessed 15 Feb. 2023].

Chisango, T., Mafa, I. and Maunganidze, L. (2022). Investigating the Sexist Implications of Bride Price (Lobola) in Zimbabwe. *Society*, [online] pp.564–575. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12115-022-00743-7>.

Cordova, A. and Kras, H. (2021). State Action to Prevent Violence against Women: The Effect of Women's Police Stations on Men's Attitudes toward Gender-based Violence. *The Journal of Politics*, [online] 48(1). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1086/714931>.

Cotter, A. and Savage, L. (2019). *Gender-based violence and unwanted sexual behaviour in Canada, 2018: Initial findings from the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces - ProQuest*. [online] search.proquest.com. Available at: <https://search.proquest.com/openview/238b418d1887ebc3004e767fa0679d2b/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=44168> [Accessed 26 Aug. 2022].

Cruz, A. and Klinger, S. (2016). *Gender-based violence in the world of work: Overview and selected annotated bibliography Bureau for Gender Equality*. [online] Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---gender/documents/publication/wcms_155763.pdf [Accessed May 2022].

Cypress, B.S. (2017). Rigor or reliability and validity in qualitative research: Perspectives, strategies, reconceptualization, and recommendations. *Dimensions of Critical Care Nursing*, [online] 36(4), pp.253–263. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1097/dcc.0000000000000253>.

Debusho, T.K. (2017). *Safety in semi-urban schools of limpopo Province :A case of Mankweng Circuit*. [online] ulspace.ul.ac.za. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10386/1963> [Accessed 5 May 2023].

Diraditsile, K. (2018). Sexual abuse of children in schools: the need for social work intervention. *African Journal of Social Work*, [online] 8(1), pp.3–13. Available at: <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajsw/article/view/172904> [Accessed 16 Nov. 2022].

Dzinavane, T.M. (2016). *SAYING NO TO GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE: A STUDY OF MUSASA, A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION BASED IN ZIMBABWE* by TSITSI MARYLIN DZINAVANE submitted in accordance with the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF ARTS in the subject DEVELOPMENT STUDIES at the UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA SUPERVISOR: PROF L CORNWELL. [online] South Africa: UNISA. Available at: https://uir.unisa.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10500/22617/dissertation_dzinavane_tm.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y [Accessed 24 May 2022].

Eggers del Campo, I. and Steinert, J.I. (2020). The Effect of Female Economic Empowerment Interventions on the Risk of Intimate Partner Violence: A Systematic

Review and Meta-Analysis. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 23(3), p.152483802097608. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838020976088>.

Enaifoghe, A., Dlelana, M., Abosedo Durokifa, A. and Dlamini, Nomaswazi.P. (2021). The Prevalence of Gender-Based Violence against Women in South Africa : A Call for Action. *African Journal of Gender, Society and Development (formerly Journal of Gender, Information and Development in Africa)*, 10(1), pp.117–146. doi:<https://doi.org/10.31920/2634-3622/2021/v10n1a6>.

Gamarel, K.E., Jadwin-Cakmak, L., King, W.M., Lacombe-Duncan, A., Trammell, R., Reyes, L.A., Burks, C., Rivera, B., Arnold, E. and Harper, G.W. (2020). Stigma Experienced by Transgender Women of Color in Their Dating and Romantic Relationships: Implications for Gender-based Violence Prevention Programs. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 36(9-10), pp.8161–8189. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520976186>.

Garland-Thomson, R. (2020). Integrating Disability, Transforming Feminist Theory. *Feminist Theory Reader*, pp.181–191. doi:<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003001201-22>.

Gervais, S.J., Sáez, G., Riemer, A.R. and Klein, O. (2019). The Social Interaction Model of Objectification: A process model of goal-based objectifying exchanges between men and women. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 59(1), pp.248–283. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12339>.

Gibbs, A., Dunkle, K., Ramsoomar, L., Willan, S., Jama Shai, N., Chatterji, S., Naved, R. and Jewkes, R. (2020). New learnings on drivers of men’s physical and/or sexual violence against their female partners, and women’s experiences of this, and the implications for prevention interventions. *Global Health Action*, [online] 13(1), p.1739845. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/16549716.2020.1739845>.

gohavacyf. (2020). *EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW MEANING IN RESEARCH WRITING*. [online] Available at: <https://gohavacyf.wordpress.com/2020/04/03/empirical-literature-review-meaning-in-research-writing/> [Accessed 26 May 2022].

Graaff, K. (2021). The Implication of a Narrow Understanding of Gender-Based Violence. *Feminist Encounters: A Journal of Critical Studies in Culture and Politics*, [online] 5(1), p.12. doi:<https://doi.org/10.20897/femenc.201700>.

Graaff, K.D.V. (2017). *Masculinities and gender-based violence in South Africa: a study of a masculinities-focused intervention programme*. [PhD] Available at: https://scholar.sun.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10019.1/101057/graaff_masculinities_2017.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y [Accessed 24 May 2022].

He, S. and Tsang, S. (2016). Male Partners' Investment and Alternatives as Correlates of Women's Coerced First Sexual Intercourse in Chinese Dating Relationships: A Social Exchange Perspective. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 34(1), pp.182–199. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260516674939>.

Hollander, J.A. (2018). *Chapter 10 - Empowerment Self-Defense*. [online] ScienceDirect. Available at: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/B9780128053898000116> [Accessed 9 Jun. 2022].

Javed, S. and Kumar Chattu, V. (2021). Patriarchy at the helm of gender-based violence during COVID-19. *AIMS Public Health*, [online] 8(1), pp.32–35. doi:<https://doi.org/10.3934/publichealth.2021003>.

John, N., Casey, S.E., Carino, G. and McGovern, T. (2020). Lessons Never Learned: Crisis and gender-based violence. *Developing World Bioethics*, [online] 20(2). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/dewb.12261>.

Joseph, S. (2021). Social Learning Theory Application on Bullying Phenomenon. *Journal of International Business Research and Marketing*, 6(6), pp.7–12. doi:<https://doi.org/10.18775/10.18775/jibrm.1849-8558.2015.66.3001>.

Kanjiri, N.K., Kanomavara, N. and Nomngcoyiya, T. (2021). The feminisation of gender-based violence at an institution of higher learning in South Africa. *African Journal of Social Work*, [online] 11(3), pp.132–138. Available at: <https://africasocialwork.net/current-and-past-issues/>.

Khanal, K. and Sen, R. (2020). The Dowry Gift in South Asia: An Institution on the Intersection of Market and Patriarchy. *Journal of Economic Issues*, [online] 54(2), pp.356–362. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/00213624.2020.1743145>.

Khanlou, N., Vazquez, L.M., Pashang, S., Connolly, J.A., Ahmad, F. and Ssawe, A. (2021). 2020 Syndemic: Convergence of COVID-19, Gender-Based Violence, and Racism Pandemics. *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-021-01146-w>.

Kheswa, N. and Hoho, J.G. (2014). 'Ukuthwala' The Sexual-Cultural Practice with Negative Effects on the Personality of Adolescent Females in Africa. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, [online] 5(20), pp.2039–2117. doi:<https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2014.v5n20p2808>.

Kivunja, C. (2018). Distinguishing between Theory, Theoretical Framework, and Conceptual Framework: A Systematic Review of Lessons from the Field. *International Journal of Higher Education*, [online] 7(6), pp.44–53. doi:<https://doi.org/10.5430/ijhe.v7n6p44>.

Kostovicova, D., Bojicic-Dzelilovic, V. and Henry, M. (2020). Drawing on the continuum: a war and post-war political economy of gender-based violence in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 22(2), pp.250–272. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/14616742.2019.1692686>.

Kräh, L.M.F. (2021). *Social Media and the Mexican Feminist Movement : Leading or Impeding the Fight Against Gender-Based Violence?* [online] essay.utwente.nl. Available at: <http://essay.utwente.nl/85806/> [Accessed 8 Jun. 2022].

Kwakwa, M., Makhubele, J., Mabasa, M., Baloyi, T., Rabotata, N., Matlakala, F., Mafa, P. and Masilo, D. (2021). Factors Influencing Gender-Based Violence Against Young Women Migrants in Selected Provinces of South Africa. *Gender & Behaviour*, 19(1), pp.17634–17642.

Lester, J.N., Cho, Y. and Lochmiller, C.R. (2020). Learning to Do Qualitative Data Analysis: A Starting Point. *Human Resource Development Review*, [online] 19(1), pp.94–106. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484320903890>.

Liebling, H., Barrett, H. and Artz, L. (2020). South Sudanese Refugee Survivors of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Torture: Health and Justice Service Responses in Northern Uganda. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, [online] 17(5), p.1685. doi:<https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph17051685>.

Maduna, L. (2017). *Ukuthwala: The sex trafficking scandal devastating rural South Africa*. [online] The Mail & Guardian. Available at: <https://mg.co.za/article/2017-11-29-ukuthwala-the-sex-trafficking-scandal-devastating-rural-south-africa/> [Accessed 18 Oct. 2022].

Mahlangu, P., Gibbs, A., Shai, N., Machisa, M., Nunze, N. and Sikweyiya, Y. (2022). Impact of COVID-19 lockdown and link to women and children's experiences of violence in the home in South Africa. *BMC Public Health*, 22(1). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-13422-3>.

Mahlori, X.F., Byrne, D.C. and Mabude, L.A. (2018). Perceptions of Gender-Based Violence Among University Staff: Interim Results. *SAGE Open*, [online] 8(3), p.215824401880016. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018800163>.

Makeleni, V.T. (2021). Perceptions and experiences of females regarding adolescent sexual risk behaviour, after their participation in a youth development programme in a selected community in the Eastern Cape. *etd.uwc.ac.za*. [online] Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/11394/9137> [Accessed 5 May 2023].

Mamabolo, S.N. (2022). *Exploring the perceptions of community members on contributing factors to rape in selected Mankweng Communities*. [online] *ulspace.ul.ac.za*. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10386/3927> [Accessed 5 May 2023].

Managa, L., shitangano , T., Mashau N, N. and Olaniyi FC, F. (2022). *Mapping strategies to empower women against intimate partner violence occurrences in Limpopo province, South Africa: scoping review*. [online] *Gender & Behaviour*. Available at: https://journals.co.za/doi/epdf/10.10520/ejc-genbeh_v20_n3_a22 [Accessed 5 May 2023].

Mantler, T., Wathen, C.N., Burd, C., MacGregor, J.C.D., McLean, I. and Veenendaal, J. (2022). Navigating multiple pandemics: A critical analysis of the impact of COVID-19 policy responses on gender-based violence services. *Critical Social Policy*, [online] 43(1), p.026101832210884. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/02610183221088461>.

Manzoor, A. (2017). *Strategic University Leadership for Aligning the Worlds of Academia and Business*. [online] www.igi-global.com. Available at: <https://www.igi-global.com/chapter/strategic-university-leadership-for-aligning-the-worlds-of-academia-and-business/173626> [Accessed 20 Jun. 2023].

Maphanga, C. (2020). *Pretoria woman killed in yet another incident of gender-based violence*. [online] www.bing.com. Available at: <https://www.bing.com/ck/a?> [Accessed 29 Aug. 2022].

Mathivha, F. (2015). *REFLECTIONS OF RAPE MYTHS: A DISCURSIVE ANALYSIS OF THE JACOB ZUMA RAPE TRIAL 1 CORE* View metadata, citation and similar papers at core.ac.uk provided by Wits Institutional Repository on DSPACE. [online] DSPACE. University of WITS: MA Research Report. Available at: <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/188775155.pdf> [Accessed 26 May 2022].

McCain, N. (2021). *Limpopo police launch manhunt after girl, 15, stabbed to death, dumbled in bushes*. [online] News24. Available at: <https://www.bing.com/ck/a?> [Accessed 30 Aug. 2022].

Mkhonto, R. (2022). *Lived Experiences of Police Officers Dealing with Domestic Violence Matters in Mankweng Township, Limpopo Province*. Dissertation . pp.38–70.

Mlaba, K. (2022). *4 Marriage Customs That Infringe on Women's Rights*. [online] Global Citizen. Available at: <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/marriage-customs-harmful-to-womens-girls-rights/> [Accessed 28 May 2022].

Mohammad, M.R. (2019). *Semi-Structured Interview: A Critical Analysis*. [online] Research Gate. Available at: <https://www.bing.com/ck/a?> [Accessed 8 Jun. 2022].

Mohapatra, P. (2021). *What is a dowry and the terms similar to it?* [online] Study.com. Available at: <https://study.com/learn/lesson/what-is-dowry-bride-price.html> [Accessed 15 Feb. 2023].


Mongare, J.K., Obonyo, J. and Parsitau, D. (2018). Impact of Gender-Based Violence towards Men in Kenya: The Case of Men in Kiambaa Sub County, Kiambu. *International Journal of Current Aspects in Public Policy Administration and Development*, [online] 2(1), pp.18–25. Available at: <http://www.ijcab.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Impact-of-Gender-Based-Violence-towards-Men-in-Kenya-The-Case-of-Men-in-Kiambaa-Sub-County-Kiambu.pdf> [Accessed 18 Sep. 2022].

Montle, M., E (2020). CONCEPTUALISING LOBOLA AS A PERPETUATOR OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA THROUGH INTSIK. *Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, [online] 17(07), pp.160–168. Available at: <http://journalarticle.ukm.my/16995/1/42975-138186-1-SM.pdf> [Accessed 18 Oct. 2022].

Morgan, S.J., Pullon, S.R.H., Macdonald, L.M., McKinlay, E.M. and Gray, B.V. (2016). Case Study Observational Research: A Framework for Conducting Case Study Research Where Observation Data Are the Focus. *Qualitative Health Research*, [online] 27(7), pp.1060–1068. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316649160>.

Mshweshwe, L. (2020). Understanding Domestic Violence: Masculinity, Culture, Traditions. *Department of Sociology*, [online] 6(10). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2020.e05334>.

Msweli, S.N. (2020). I-lobola in contemporary South Africa: perspectives and experiences of young people. *core.ac.uk*. [online] Available at: <https://core.ac.uk/display/491675953?source=2> [Accessed 17 Oct. 2022].

Nakano, D.N. and Muniz, J. (2018). (PDF)  *Writing the literature review for empirical papers*. [online] ResearchGate. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323558574_Writing_the_literature_review_for_or_empirical_papers [Accessed 25 May 2022].

Ndayambaje, S. (2020). *Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights: - A catalysis to combat Gender-based violence in South Africa?* [online] DIVA. Available at: <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A1436267&dswid=5248> [Accessed 18 Oct. 2022].

Ndlovu, S., Mulondo, M., Tsoka-Gwegweni, J. and Ndirangu, J. (2022). COVID-19 impact on gender-based violence among women in South Africa during lockdown: a narrative review. *African Journal of Reproductive Health*, [online] 26(7), pp.59–71. Available at: <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/ajrh/article/view/229785> [Accessed 26 Aug. 2022].

Nduna, M. and Tshona, S.O. (2021). Domesticated Poly-Violence Against Women During the 2020 Covid-19 Lockdown in South Africa. *Psychological Studies*, 66(3). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12646-021-00616-9>.

Nkanjeni, U. (2022). *Women's Month: 5 gender-based violence cases that made headlines in 2022*. [online] TimesLive. Available at: <https://www.bing.com/ck/a?> [Accessed 30 Aug. 2022].

Oparinde, K. and Matsha, R.M. (2021). Powerful Discourse: Gender-Based Violence and Counter-Discourses in South Africa. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 8(1), p.1911035. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2021.1911035>.

Pahwa, A. (2019). *Questionnaire: Definition, Types, Examples & How To Design*. [online] Research Gate. Available at: <https://www.bing.com/ck/a?> [Accessed 8 Jun. 2022].

Perrin, N., Marsh, M., Clough, A., Desgropes, A., Yope Phaniel, C., Abdi, A., Kaburu, F., Heitmann, S., Yamashina, M., Ross, B., Read-Hamilton, S., Turner, R., Heise, L. and Glass, N. (2019). Social norms and beliefs about gender based violence scale: a measure for use with gender based violence prevention programs in low-resource and humanitarian settings. *Conflict and Health*, [online] 13(1). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1186/s13031-019-0189-x>.

Phasha, M.J. (2021). *Exploring domestic violence : a case study of the victimisation of women and children in Mankweng Policing Area, Limpopo Province, South Africa*. [online] ulspace.ul.ac.za. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10386/3628> [Accessed 5 May 2023].

Piedalue, A., Gilbertson, A., Alexeyeff, K. and Klein, E. (2020). Is Gender-Based Violence a Social Norm? Rethinking Power in a Popular Development Intervention.

Feminist Review, [online] 126(1), pp.89–105.
doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0141778920944463>.

Protsenko, A. (2020). COMBATING VIOLENCE IN SOUTH AFRICA. [online] pp.170–172. Available at:
https://scholar.googleusercontent.com/scholar.bib?q=info:FVVtOrJD8hMJ:scholar.google.com/&output=citation&scisdr=Cm2CFtXeENPZtw__RIY:AGIGAw8AAAAAZJH5XlbMAQvwd_I2-UgBnrIWCAk&scisig=AGIGAw8AAAAAZJH5XuixkY9QZhpvNiicoKzk9b0&scisf=4&ct=citation&cd=-1&hl=en [Accessed 20 Jun. 2023].

Qing, S. (2020). Gender role attitudes and male-female income differences in China. *The Journal of Chinese Sociology*, 7(1). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40711-020-00123-w>.

Rahman, M., Ahmed, R., Moitra, M., Damschroder, L., Brownson, R., Chorpita, B., Idele, P., Gohar, F., Huang, K.Y., Saxena, S., Lai, J., Peterson, S.S., Harper, G., McKay, M., Amugune, B., Esho, T., Ronen, K., Othieno, C. and Kumar, M. (2021). Mental Distress and Human Rights Violations During COVID-19: A Rapid Review of the Evidence Informing Rights, Mental Health Needs, and Public Policy Around Vulnerable Populations. *Frontiers in Psychiatry*, [online] 11. doi:<https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsy.2020.603875>.

Rapanyane, M.B. (2021). Women in Trouble? A Critical Reflection on the Major Hindrances to Addressing Gender Based Violence in South Africa. *African Journal of Gender, Society and Development (formerly Journal of Gender, Information and Development in Africa)*, [online] 10(4), pp.209–225. doi:<https://doi.org/10.31920/2634-3622/2021/v10n4a10>.

Rass, N.J. (2020). *Exploring the counter-narratives of women living in domestic violence shelters in the Western Cape*. [online] repository.nwu.ac.za. Available at: <https://repository.nwu.ac.za/handle/10394/36554> [Accessed 20 Jun. 2023].

Ratan, S.K., Anand, T. and Ratan, J. (2019). Formulation of Research Question-Stepwise Approach. *Journal of Indian Association of Pediatric Surgeons*, [online] 24(1), pp.15–20. doi:https://doi.org/10.4103/jiaps.JIAPS_76_18.

News24 (2022). *Premier steps in after pictures emerge indicating woman shot 9 times was possible GBV victim.* [online] News24. Available at: <https://www.news24.com/news24/southafrica/local/mthathaexpress/premier-steps-in-after-pictures-emerge-indicating-woman-shot-9-times-was-possible-gbv-victim-20220522> [Accessed 28 May 2022].

Roberts, S.T., Flaherty, B.P., Deya, R., Masese, L., Ngina, J., McClelland, R.S., Simoni, J. and Graham, S.M. (2018). Patterns of Gender-Based Violence and Associations with Mental Health and HIV Risk Behavior Among Female Sex Workers in Mombasa, Kenya: A Latent Class Analysis. *AIDS and Behavior*, 22(10), pp.3273–3286. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10461-018-2107-4>.

Rua, T., Aytug, Z., Simarasl, N. and Lin, L. (2020). How traditional gender roles hurt both women and men: negative processes and outcomes in mixed-gender negotiations. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 36(2), pp.271–293. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1108/gm-05-2019-0065>.

Sabri, B. and Granger, D.A. (2018). Gender-based violence and trauma in marginalized populations of women: Role of biological embedding and toxic stress. *Health care for women international*, [online] 39(9), pp.1038–1055. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/07399332.2018.1491046>.

Schenck, C., Grobler, L., Viljoen, K., Blaauw, D. and Letsoalo, J. (2021). Double Whammy Wicked: Street Vendors and Littering in Mankweng Township and Paarl, South Africa—Towards People-centred Urban Governance. *Urban Forum*. [online] doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s12132-021-09455-3>.

Schuster, M. and Dwyer, P.A. (2020). Post-traumatic stress disorder in nurses: An integrative review. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 29(15-16). doi:<https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.15288>.

Shaw, J. (2017). */gender-and-violence-feminist-theories-deadly-economies-and-damaging-discourse*. [online] Anon. University of SUssex: Google.co.za. Available at: <https://www.e-ir.info/pdf/71346> [Accessed 11 Nov. 2022].

Sherman, A.D.F., Allgood, S., Alexander, K.A., Klepper, M., Balthazar, M.S., Hill, M., Cannon, C.M., Dunn, D., Poteat, T. and Campbell, J. (2021). Transgender and Gender Diverse Community Connection, Help-Seeking, and Mental Health Among Black Transgender Women Who Have Survived Violence: A Mixed-Methods Analysis. *Violence Against Women*, 28(3-4), pp.890–921. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/10778012211013892>.

Sibanda, N. and Msibi, T. (2016). *Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in South Africa: A Brief Review violence violence violence violence violence ide Acknowledgments*. [online] CSV. Pretoria, South Africa. Available at: <https://www.csvr.org.za/pdf/Gender%20Based%20Violence%20in%20South%20Africa%20-%20A%20Brief%20Review.pdf> [Accessed 24 May 2022].

Silva, T.C. (2021). Assessment of Credibility of Testimony in Alleged Intimate Partner Violence: A Case Report. *Journal of Forensic Psychology Research and Practice*, [online] 22(01), pp.1–29. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1080/24732850.2021.1945836>.

Sinko, L. and Saint Arnault, D. (2019). Finding the Strength to Heal: Understanding Recovery After Gender-Based Violence. *Violence Against Women*, 26(12-13), pp.1616–1635. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801219885185>.

Speed, A., Thomson, C. and Richardson, K. (2020). Stay home, stay safe, save lives? An Analysis of the Impact of COVID-19 on the Ability of Victims of gender-based Violence to Access Justice. *The Journal of Criminal Law*, [online] 84(6), p.002201832094828. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022018320948280>.

Stafford, L. and Kuiper, K. (2021). Social Exchange Theories. *Engaging Theories in Interpersonal Communication*, pp.379–390. doi:<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003195511-33>.

Surugue, L. (2016). *microsoft - Search*. [online] www.bing.com. Available at: <https://www.bing.com/ck/a?> [Accessed 8 Jun. 2022].

Terrell, S. (2012). Mixed-Methods Research Methodologies. *The Qualitative Report*, [online] 17(1), pp.254–280. Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ973044.pdf> [Accessed 28 May 2022].

The Constitution (1996). *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*. [online] justice.gov.za. Available at: <https://justice.gov.za/legislation/constitution/> [Accessed 2 Jul. 2023].

the Constitution (1996). *The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996*.

The World Bank Report (2018). *Public Disclosure Authorized*. [online] *South African Economic Update*. Available at: <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/798731523331698204/South-Africa-Economic-Update-April-2018.pdf>.

Thobejane, T. (2019). Effects of Gender-Based Violence Towards Young Females: The Case of Vhufuli Village in Thohoyandou, Limpopo Province-South Africa. *Journal of Reviews on Global Economics*, 8, pp.53–62. doi:<https://doi.org/10.6000/1929-7092.2019.08.06>.

Tonsing, J.C. and Tonsing, K.N. (2017). Understanding the role of patriarchal ideology in intimate partner violence among South Asian women in Hong Kong. *International Social Work*, 62(1), pp.161–171. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0020872817712566>.

Turnell, A.I., Fassnacht, D.B., Batterham, P.J., Calear, A.L. and Kyrios, M. (2019). The Self-Hate Scale: Development and validation of a brief measure and its relationship to suicidal ideation. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 245, pp.779–787. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2018.11.047>.

Van Hout, M.C. and Chimbaga, D. (2020). *TACKLING THE INTERSECTIONALITY OF DRUG OFFENCES, GENDER BASED VIOLENCE AND VICTIMISATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM: LEVERAGING FOR GREATER IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TOKYO RULES WITHIN A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA*. [online] *Research online*. Clarion, Pennsylvania: Clarion University of Pennsylvania. Available at: <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/798731523331698204/South-Africa-Economic-Update-April-2018.pdf>.

Wanjiru, Q. (2021). CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE. A CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW. *Journal of Gender Related Studies*, [online] 2(1), pp.43–53. doi:<https://doi.org/10.47941/jgrs.742>.

Webster, M. (2022). *Policy Definition & Meaning*. [online] www.bing.com. Available at: <https://www.bing.com/ck/a?> [Accessed 20 Jun. 2023].

Werft, M. (2017). *11-Year-Old Forced to Marry Rapist in Florida Inspires Legal Action to End Child Marriage*. [online] Global Citizen. Available at: <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/child-marriage-rape-florida-us/> [Accessed 28 May 2022].

Wight, D., Sekiwunga, R., Namutebi, C., Zalwango, F. and Siu, G.E. (2022). A Ugandan Parenting Programme to Prevent Gender-Based Violence: Description and Formative Evaluation. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 32(4), pp.448–464. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/10497315211056246>.

Wirtz, A.L., Poteat, T.C., Malik, M. and Glass, N. (2018). Gender-Based Violence Against Transgender People in the United States: A Call for Research and Programming. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, [online] 21(2), p.152483801875774. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838018757749>.

World Health Organization (2019). *Gender and health*. [online] World Health Organization. Available at: https://www.who.int/health-topics/gender#tab=tab_1 [Accessed 15 Feb. 2023].

Yin, N. (2018). The influencing outcomes of job engagement: an interpretation from the social exchange theory. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 67(5), pp.873–889. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1108/ijppm-03-2017-0054>.

Zea, M.C., Barnett, A.P., Río-González, A.M. del, Parchem, B., Pinho, V., Le, H.-N. and Poppen, P.J. (2021). Experiences of Violence and Mental Health Outcomes among Colombian Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) and Transgender Women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 37(13-14), p.088626052199744. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260521997445>.

Zhang, R., Qiu, S., Dooley, L.M. and Choudhury, T. (2020). Managerial aspiration: do gender and gender role identity make a difference in the Chinese context? *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 36(2), pp.189–204. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1108/gm-11-2019-0221>.

APPENDIX A: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION AND ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS GUIDELINE

Introduction

Hello, my name is Matshidiso Caroline Ngwepe, and I am currently pursuing a Master's degree at the University of Limpopo. My research project is centred around the "Implementation of Gender-Based Violence Policy Framework in Mankweng Township." Your participation in this focus group discussion is highly valuable to my research, and I genuinely appreciate your time and insights.

Duration

The focus group discussion is expected to take approximately one hour and thirty minutes. I understand that your time is precious, and I assure you that we will respect the allotted time.

Confidentiality

Please rest assured that any personal information you share during this discussion will be kept strictly confidential. Your privacy and anonymity are of the utmost importance. Your input will be used exclusively for academic research purposes and will not be disclosed to any third parties.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this discussion is entirely voluntary. At no point will you be pressured or coerced into taking part. If you feel uncomfortable or wish to withdraw from the discussion for any reason, you are free to do so, and there will be absolutely no consequences.

Information Sharing

I want to emphasize that your contributions are invaluable to this research. By participating, you are helping to advance our understanding of gender-based violence and its implications in Mankweng Township. Your insights and experiences are crucial in shedding light on this important issue.

Study Results

If you are interested in knowing the results of this study, please feel free to inform me. I would be more than happy to share a copy of the research findings with you after the final submission to my supervisor. You can request the study results by emailing me at ngwepematshidiso@gmail.com.

Discussion Topics

The focus group discussion will explore the following key topics:

- **Drivers of Gender-Based Violence:** We will discuss the underlying factors that contribute to gender-based violence in Mankweng Township.
- **Challenges Faced in Tackling Gender-Based Violence:** We will examine the difficulties and obstacles encountered when addressing and combatting gender-based violence.
- **Effects of Gender-Based Violence:** We will explore the various repercussions and impacts of gender-based violence on individuals and the community.
- **Preventing Gender-Based Violence:** We will delve into strategies and measures for preventing gender-based violence and promoting a safer environment.
- **Policy Framework Implementation:** We will discuss why the policy framework designed to address gender-based violence may have fallen short of its intended goals in Mankweng Township.

Your input on these topics will provide valuable insights that can contribute to a deeper understanding of gender-based violence and inform potential solutions. Thank you once again for your time and contribution; it is highly appreciated.

Participant's Signature

.....

Date

.....

APPENDIX B: CONSENT FORM

Research Project Title: The Implementation of Gender-Based Violence Policy Framework in Mankweng Township.

Project Leader: Matshidiso Caroline Ngwepe

I,....., hereby voluntarily give my consent to take part in the research project titled: The Implementation of Gender-Based Violence Policy Framework in Mankweng Township.

I confirm that:

1. I have given my consent to participate in the study project.
2. I understand the purpose and scope of the research.
3. I understand that the information I provide will be treated with strict confidentiality.
4. I am aware that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time if I feel uncomfortable or uneasy.
5. I understand that my personal identification will be kept anonymous throughout the entire research process.
6. I understand that audio recordings may be used for the purpose of data collection.
7. I understand that the information I provide will be used solely for academic purposes.
8. I am aware that the information I provide may be used for future references or publications.
9. The researcher will be available to clarify any doubts and answer questions that may arise during the study.
10. I acknowledge that my participation in this study is voluntary, and no threats or coercion have been used to influence my decision.
11. I agree to actively participate in this study.

Participant's Signature:

Date:

Researcher's Signature:

Researcher's Contact Details:

- **Phone:** 064 762 0120
- **Email:** ngwepematshidiso@gmail.com

Supervisor's Contact Details:

- **Phone:** 0739014675
- **Email:** Xolani.thusi@ul.ac.za

Co-supervisor's Contact Details:

- **Phone:** 0715015895
- **Email:** martinus.selepe@ul.ac.za

APPENDIX C: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participants,

I hope this letter finds you well. My name is Matshidiso Caroline Ngwepe, a student at the University of Limpopo pursuing a Master of Public Administration and Management at the Faculty of Management and Law, School of Economics and Management. I am conducting a study titled "The Implementation of Gender-Based Violence Policy Framework in Mankweng Township," under the supervision of the University of Limpopo.

I am reaching out to you to kindly request your participation in this research study. The purpose of this study is purely academic, aimed at gaining insights into the implementation of the gender-based violence policy framework in Mankweng Township. Your input and opinions are highly valued, and your participation will greatly contribute to the findings of this research. I assure you that your participation will be treated with utmost respect and confidentiality. To ensure your anonymity and to prevent any direct link to your participation, your identity will remain anonymous throughout the study. Your privacy and personal information will be always protected.

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any time without providing a reason. Your decision to participate or withdraw will not have any negative consequences or impact on your relationship with the University or any other entity involved in this research. To indicate your consent and permission to participate in this study, kindly sign and return the enclosed consent letter. Your signature will confirm that you understand the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of your participation, and your rights as a participant.

If you have any questions, comments, or require further clarification about the study, please feel free to contact me. You can reach me at the following contact details: Phone Number: 064 762 0120 Email: ngwepematshidiso@gmail.com

Yours sincerely,

Matshidiso Caroline Ngwepe

SECTION A

1. Biographical information

1.1 Age:

1.2 Gender:

1.3 Occupation:

1.4 Education Level:

SECTION B

2. INTRODUCTION

1. Familiarity with GBV Policy Framework: How familiar are you with the GBV policy framework in Mankweng Township?

.....
.....
.....
.....

2. Personal Experiences with GBV: Have you personally experienced or witnessed gender-based violence in Mankweng Township? If yes, briefly describe.

.....
.....
.....
.....

3. Understanding of GBV: In your own words, what does "gender-based violence" mean?

.....
.....
.....

4. Perceptions of GBV Causes: What do you think are the main causes or factors contributing to gender-based violence in Mankweng Township?

.....
.....
.....
.....

5. Effectiveness of GBV Policy Framework: How effective do you believe the GBV policy framework is? Can you provide examples?

.....
.....
.....
.....

6. Challenges in Implementation: Can you identify challenges hindering the effective implementation of the GBV policy framework? How do these impact survivors and the community?

.....
.....
.....
.....

7. Strengths and Weaknesses of the Policy Framework: What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the current GBV policy framework? Are there areas that need improvement?

.....
.....
.....
.....

8. Role of Stakeholders: How do you perceive the role of different stakeholders (government, NGOs, community organizations) in addressing GBV in Mankweng Township?

.....
.....
.....
.....

9. Factors Influencing Survivor Help-Seeking: What factors influence survivors' willingness to seek help in the community? How do these affect the support available?

.....
.....
.....

10. Effective Awareness Strategies: What strategies or approaches have effectively raised awareness about GBV and the policy framework in Mankweng Township?

.....
.....
.....
.....

11. Impact of the Policy on Community Safety: How do you think the GBV policy framework has impacted the safety and well-being of the community? Have you observed any changes?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your time and valuable input.

**APPENDIX D & E: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHIC COMMITTEE (TREC)
CERTIFICATE AND GATEKEEPER'S PERMISSION TO CONDUCT
RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER**

Disclaimer

The ethical clearance certificate and the gatekeeper's permission to conduct research approval letter have the old supervisor's details. Please don't be alarmed by this change.

I want to assure you that the research has continued under the guidance and supervision of my current supervisor Dr Thusi and co-supervisor Dr Selepe.

The ethical clearance certificate and gatekeeper's permission to conduct research approval letter, albeit with the previous supervisor's details, will be attached to this document.

Your understanding in this matter is greatly appreciated.



University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: tukiso.sewapa@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING: 26 SEPTEMBER 2023

PROJECT NUMBER: TREC/1541/2023: PG

PROJECT:

Title: Implementation of gender-based violence policy framework in Mankweng Township
Researcher: MC Ngwepe
Supervisor: Dr E Zwane
School: Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership
Degree: Master of Public Administration

PROF D MAPOSA
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: REC-0310111-031

Note:

- i) This Ethics Clearance Certificate will be valid for one (1) year, as from the abovementioned date. Application for annual renewal (or annual review) need to be received by TREC one month before lapse of this period.
- ii) Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee, together with the Application for Amendment form.
- iii) PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.



**University of Limpopo
Office of the Registrar**

Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa

Tel: (015) 268 2407, Fax: (015) 268 3048, Email: Kwena.Masha@ul.ac.za/Retha.Balie@ul.ac.za

05 October 2023

MC Ngwepe

Email: ngwepematshidiso@gmail.com

Dear MC Ngwepe,

GATEKEEPER PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

TITLE: IMPLEMENTATION OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE POLICY FRAMEWORK IN MANKWENG TOWNSHIP

Researcher: MC Ngwepe
Supervisor/s: Dr. E Zwane
Co-Supervisor/s: N/A
School: Turfloop Graduate School of Leadership
Degree: Master of Public Administration

Kindly be informed that Gatekeeper permission is granted to you to conduct research at the University of Limpopo entitled: **"Implementation of gender-based violence Policy Framework in Mankweng Township"**.

Regards,

PROF. JK MASHA
UNIVERSITY REGISTRAR

Cc. Prof. RJ Singh: Deputy Vice-Chancellor; Research, Innovation and Partnerships
Prof. RN Madadzhe: Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Teaching and Learning
Dr. T Mabila, Director: Research Development and Administration
Prof. D Maposa – Chairperson: Research and Ethics Committee
Dr. T Sewapa, Ethics Officer
Ms. M Hutamo – Assistant: Ethics Secretarist
Ms. C Ngobeni – Research Administration and Development