Understanding the Dynamics of Gender-Based Violence in Ivory Park Policing Area, Gauteng Province, South Africa: A Comprehensive Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a pressing global concern, particularly pervasive in South Africa, where women and children often fall victim to its devastating impact. This article conducts a qualitative analysis of GBV in the Ivory Park Policing Area, utilizing a non-empirical research design through a systematic review of secondary data. The study identifies critical challenges within the criminal justice system's response to GBV and proposes key preventive measures. Recommendations include the imperative training of law enforcement officials in handling GBV cases, allocating resources to expedite case processing, and fostering stronger collaborations between the South African Police Service and various stakeholders. This research aims to contribute actionable insights for policymakers, law enforcement agencies, and community leaders to effectively combat and prevent GBV in the Ivory Park Policing Area.

Keywords**:** Gender-based Violence, Law Enforcement, Victims, Criminal Justice System, Ivory Park Policing Area, South Africa.

ABSTRAK

Kekerasan berbasis gender (GBV) masih menjadi perhatian global yang mendesak, terutama di Afrika Selatan, dimana perempuan dan anak-anak sering menjadi korban dari dampak buruk kekerasan tersebut. Artikel ini melakukan analisis kualitatif terhadap GBV di Wilayah Kepolisian Taman Gading, dengan menggunakan desain penelitian non-empiris melalui tinjauan sistematis terhadap data sekunder. Studi ini mengidentifikasi tantangan-tantangan penting dalam respons sistem peradilan pidana terhadap GBV dan mengusulkan langkah-langkah pencegahan utama. Rekomendasi-rekomendasinya mencakup pelatihan penting bagi aparat penegak hukum dalam menangani kasus-kasus GBV, mengalokasikan sumber daya untuk mempercepat pemrosesan kasus, dan membina kolaborasi yang lebih kuat antara Kepolisian Afrika Selatan dan berbagai pemangku kepentingan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyumbangkan wawasan yang dapat ditindaklanjuti bagi para pembuat kebijakan, lembaga penegak hukum, dan tokoh masyarakat untuk secara efektif memerangi dan mencegah GBV di Wilayah Kepolisian Taman Gading.

Kata Kunci: Kekerasan Berbasis Gender, Penegakan Hukum, Korban, Sistem Peradilan Pidana, Wilayah Perpolisian Taman Gading, Afrika Selatan.

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations has identified gender-based violence against women as a global health and development issue, and a host of policies, public education, and action programs aimed at reducing gender-based violence have been undertaken around the world (Russo and Pirlott, 2022). Gender Based Violence is a major problem in South Africa where women and children are being killed by people who claim to love them. The country is struggling to contain the heart-wrenching impact that GBV continues to have on individual women, children, lesbian, gay, bisexual,

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transgender, queer, intersex, asexual (LGBTQIA+) and other persons, families, communities and the society as a whole (Mofokeng and Tlou, 2022). Brown (2015: 88) noted that Gender Based Violence is still an evolving and rising term. It has been limited to male violence against women and children. Violence against women and children continue to negatively affect the fundamental rights of women and children, as compared to violence against men and boys. In most cases men are not abused like the way in which woman are being abused. People in our society suffer various kinds of violence at homes, out of homes such as in the workplaces, churches and also at the educational institutions amongst others in the society. The level of GBV in South Africa is among the highest in the world.

According to Schieber and Vegega (2001:24), a research problem statement should provide a clear and unambiguous delineation of the study's focus and objectives. This study aims to address the elevated level of reported cases of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) within the Ivory Park Cluster Policing Area in Gauteng Province, seeking insights from both police officers and victims to comprehend the reasons behind the problem and explore potential solutions. The South African Human Research Council (SAHRC, 2018) reveals alarming statistics, estimating that 21 percent of women over the age of 18 have experienced physical violence by a partner, and 6 percent have faced sexual violence by a partner. However, the pervasive issue of underreporting casts doubt on the accuracy of these figures. The persistently high rates of violence against women, coupled with systemic failures in the criminal justice system, underscore the continued influence of unequal power dynamics and patriarchy, perpetuating gender hierarchies through institutionalized notions of gender and physical/sexual violence.

Various factors contribute to the silencing of gender-based violence, such as the low status of women in communities, hindering their credibility when raising concerns. Cultural and religious practices further subjugate women and girls from a young age, with education disparities and cultural beliefs reinforcing gender-based violence (Khosa-Nkatini & Mofokeng, 2022). The burdensome judicial system often deters victims of rape due to trauma, time constraints, and financial costs, leading to case withdrawals and fears of further victimization. Shockingly, in some cultures, victims of rape are coerced into marriage, legitimizing the crime and subjecting women to enduring emotional scars (Tshoane et al., 2023). Despite efforts by the Ministry of Women Affairs and Gender and Community Development to empower women against abuse, the escalating rates of gender-based violence persist, prompting the researcher to engage perpetrators to understand the root causes and seek their input on potential solutions. Recognizing that the struggle against gender-based violence necessitates the inclusion of men, as highlighted by Babbie and Mouton (2001:98), this study views gender-based violence as a collective societal challenge and emphasizes the importance of involving men in interventions, aligning with the limited research on men's violent behaviors noted by Norman, Matzopoulos, Groenewald, and Bradshaw (2007).

The South African Police Service (SAPS) is obligated to adhere to the Domestic Violence Act (Act 116 of 1998) when handling domestic violence incidents, ensuring alignment with international standards such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This legislative framework, coupled with the endorsement of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, underscores a commitment to combatting gender-based violence (GBV) within South Africa. Despite these legal provisions, the criminal justice system has faced criticism for perceived inadequacies in effectively curbing GBV and strengthening responses.

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The period from 2016 to 2020 witnessed South Africa's emergence on the international stage due to a series of high-profile campaigns against GBV, highlighting the severity and urgency of the issue.

In recent months, the nation has experienced a tragic surge in GBV incidents, marked by the killing and injuring of numerous women at the hands of their boyfriends and husbands. This distressing escalation emphasizes the pressing need for innovative and comprehensive strategies within the criminal justice system to address the evolving landscape of GBV. The societal toll of GBV is particularly concerning as it permeates all levels of society, accentuating the imperative for novel approaches that not only respond to the immediate crisis but also address the root causes of violence against women and promote lasting societal change.

RESEARCH METHOD

This article utilised a qualitative, case study based approach. The approach is supported by analysis of primary and secondary sources such as documents from Department of Social Development, South African Police Service, academic books, articles and reports from non-governmental organisations focusing on gender-based violence. This article draws on the findings from the world on Gender Based Violence and formulate steps to overcome Gender Based Violence in Ivory Park Policing Area. This article seeks to produce wide range of methods to curb the scourge of Gender Based Violence as many women and children are abused and killed as a result of GBV and also to check other strategies or measures used in other countries around the world especially on GBV. The epistemological grounding of the project is rooted in the interpretative methodology as exemplified by Saunders, (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill ,2007)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Broader understanding of Gender Based Violence

Gender based violence refers to any damage that is perpetrated against a person's will that has a negative impact on their physical or psychological health development and identity of the person, because of their gender (Asman & Muda, 2023). This violence has its roots in the gendered power inequalities that exploit distinctions between males and females, among males and among females. Gender based violence is very complex and it manifests in many forms including physical, sexual, and psychosocial abuse (Mpani, 2015:12). According to Mcilwaine, (2015:9-10) gender-based violence is both human rights and public health issue with not effects the individual but has an impact of families and communities both in the short term and long term, the consequence of violence on the individuals include physical effects such as bruising, broken bones, chronic paints, headaches, death, miscarriage or early labour and foetal injuries in pregnant woman. Psychological consequences including depression, anxiety, suicide, hypertension, substance abuse, post-traumatic stress disorder and difficulties sleeping.

Hindin, Kishor and Ansara, (2008:45) Violence also trains woman's energies and confidence and there by undermining their full economic and social development and participation. In turn, all violence is inherently gendered, although gender-based violence is distinguished where the gender of the victim of violence is directly related to the motive for the violence, (Moser and Macliwane, 2006:93). Violence against woman in Ivory Park is a major problem due to the reason that they still believe in old ways of doing things (culture) lack of knowledge in Ivory Park Policing is one of the factors that contribute to gender based violence because they are still rooted in culture, of which they feel like if they can change

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their life and adopt the new way of living they will be neglecting their culture. The term 'violence against women' means any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (Hume, 2009:34). Cockburn (2001:4) mention that although it is acknowledged that all violence is inherently gendered and that men can be victims as well as perpetrators of violence, it is essential to recognize that women and men experience violence and conflict in different ways, as victims and as perpetrators, and for different reasons. Ivory park community fails to understand or to know gender base violence is a serious crime and it need to be reported the thing is that they still have that mentality of thinking that the abuser has inherited that behaviour from his past generation, so there is nothing they can do correct to correct him because his grandfather and his father were like that before they passed on. Gender-based violence is not only "social" in nature as is usually assumed, but it can be a form of political, institutional and economic violence. In turn, it is difficult to separate out what we can call "everyday violence", linked to delinquency, robbery, drug-related violence and intra-family violence, and that are heavily concentrated in cities of the global South, from the political violence of armed conflict. (Annisa & Tabassum, 2023; Datta, 2003). The manifestations of all these types of violence are underpinned by prevailing gender ideologies and identities that have long been known to vary across place and space (Moser, 2004:35).

The nature of Gender Based Violence in South Africa

Sexual violence research imitative(2010) state that gender based violence is a deep and widespread problem in South Africa, impacting on almost every aspect of life young or old alike, gender based violence is a complete and deeply fixed in institutions, cultures and traditions in south Africa, gender-based violence is perhaps the most widespread and socially tolerated of human rights violations, the cost to women, their children, families and communities is a significant obstacle to reducing poverty, achieving gender equality and ensuring a peaceful change for post conflict societies. As a result, gender-based violence, its root causes and myriad consequences become vitally important to tackle in any period of transition. Gender-based violence (GBV) is a global affront to human rights, a public health crisis, and a major barrier to development. Violence can happen to anyone, but some groups, such as minority women, indigenous women, refugee women, and children are especially vulnerable throughout the world to a range of violence (UNICEF, 2009). Woman and children in Africa are experiencing violence in everyday of their life, and Ivory park is one of the areas that woman and children experience gender-based violence for example if you can just take a walk during school hours you will realise that young children between the age of 9 to 10 year of age are busy rooming around the streets and their mothers are also rooming around collecting empty tins and empty boltless for survival, by that time you won't see even a single man trying to help.

Gender-based violence includes a host of harmful behaviours that are directed at women and girls because of their sex, including wife abuse, sexual assault, dowry-related murder and marital rape, selective starvation of female children, forced prostitution, female genital mutilation, and sexual abuse of female children, specifically, violence against women includes any act of verbal or physical force, pressure or life-threatening deprivation, directed at an individual woman or girl that causes physical or psychological harm, humiliation or random deprivation of liberty and that spreads female subordination, (Heise, Elisberg and Gottmoeller, 2002:55). Woman and young girls at Ivory Park suffer various consequences of gender-based violence as a result of sexual abuse and physical abuse, Ivory park policing area has many of

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informal settlement and its overcrowded that is the reason why rape is too high because the chance of a person to escape is limited.

Forms of Gender-Based Violence

Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is not determined by any single factor but is a result of several complex and interacting determinants, which can include cultural practices, gender inequality, social failure, conflict, militarized or otherwise violent masculinities, competition over resources, and an acceptance of violence in interpersonal relationships and, in some cases, poverty (Michau, 2014) Sexual violence affects women at all stages of the life-cycle, including young girls and elderly women. Although women and girls are the majority of survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, boys and men are also victims. (Heise and Manji, 2015). As the above statement indicate the factors that contribute to gender based violence, Ivory Park policing area is full of discrimination, culture, completion and violence, that is the reason why it has high rate of gender- based violence. According to Mackie (2015) sexual violence is especially pervasive in times of conflict and transition and can manifest in different ways, including rape, as a tactic in ethnic cleansing or as part of a strategy to destroy community bonds; sexual slavery, whereby women are abducted and kept to provide domestic and sexual services to armed troop, the taking of child brides, deliberate HIV infection, forced marriage or cohabitation, and forcibly impregnated girls being forced to bear 'the enemy's child. In addition, girls and women are also subject to forced prostitution and trafficking during times of war, sometimes with the complicity of governments and military authorities. (Bicchieri and Mercier .2014) Women can also resort to using their sexuality as a survival strategy, this includes commercial sex work, frequent re-marriage, sexual partnerships entered into through force or as a protection mechanism, marrying up into higher income brackets, and other arrangements where sexual favours are provided in return for physical and economic survival. In conflict situations, when deprived of their homes, separated from their families, and without community structures to protect them, women are often forced into trading sex for material goods or protection, or simply to survive (Jakobsen, 2015).

The researcher is of the view that gender-based violence is not only contributed by common people but also people with high profile, our leaders and employers, for instance on the television, newspapers and social medias woman and young girls complains about how difficult is it to get a job without contributing something, they have to exchange sex for a job. Sometimes woman is forced to engage in sexual activities not just because they want to or they are being forced, it is the issue of lack of jobs in our country, South Africa is full of unemployed youth rooming around the streets looking for something for survival, more especially in Ivory Park policing area woman are all over the street during the day and at night as sex workers. According to Valji (2007), Sexual violence against women can erode the fabric of a community in a way that few weapons can. The damage caused by sexual violence can be devastating because of the strong communal reaction to the violation and the pain stamped on entire families. (Mackie et al,2014) notes that beyond the trauma of the incidents of sexual violence in South Africa, the ongoing consequences for women have included high levels of HIV infection in a context of limited or no access to medical facilities and the responsibility for children born as a result. Their families and communities dislike many women and girls who become pregnant because of rape during conflict. UNICEF's report on the State of the World's Children (1996) notes that the breakdown of families in times of war leaves women and girls mainly vulnerable to violence, and that the 'harm inflicted on a woman by a rapist is an attack on her family and culture, as in many societies women are viewed as repositories of a community's

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cultural and spiritual values. In many cases, women are held responsible for the acts of sexual and gender-based violence perpetrated against them, and have little or no prospects of accessing justice. As it is indicated above that Ivory Park is an area full of people who lack knowledge and understating, and also an informal settlement, it is very difficult for the victim of rape to be at liberty and to socialize with others because they are always judging and condemning the victims as if is their faults, getting married from that area will be very difficult because of the stigma.

Domestic violence

According to Busby (1999), domestic violence is strongly related to the status of women in a society and to the normative use of violence in conflict situations or as part of an exercise of power. Self-destructive behaviours, including alcoholism and the boredom or frustration that accompanies an unwillingness to engage in what men consider women's work, has become increasingly common in the internally displaced camps. (Dutu, 2011) These destructive behaviours are fuelled by a context of continuing violence and frustration over the conditions in which they involuntarily live. A model of instrumental violence would again predict that an improvement in female labour market conditions could increase the prevalence of domestic abuse if male partners use violence as an instrument to frustrate their victims' employment (Anderberg et.al, 2016). The researcher is of the view that an increase of domestic violence controlled by frustration, anger and lack of confidence, men take out their anger and frustration on the population that are more vulnerable than themselves, for example women and children within their families, in most cases men are the perpetrators of domestic violence because of anger, lack of confidence, frustration and alcohol abuse.

Perhaps a surprising consequence of conflict is that women are often given the space to assume greater status and take on roles that in peacetime would have been left to the men, because of women's willingness to take on petty trade to ensure their families' survival, many have become bread winners and household heads. (Chant, 2013:12) This economic empowerment has led to women taking on stronger decision-making roles within the household, and they are no longer motivated to accept their previous minor status. In their study on a gendered approach to security, (Hamber 2020) al explain that economic security is crucial to women's re-imaginings of the concept [of security], because it is regarded as a key factor in ensuring their independence. South African government has seen the danger of empowering men than women, the decided to give woman opportunity of being leaders of the society in order to reduce gender based violence. For example, women who have economic security are more likely to enjoy physical security. Some South African women respondents (Hamber, 2020) study expressed concern that 'male resentment towards the equality agenda often manifests itself in violence against women. It must be noted, however, that this is not always the case, the relationship between female economic empowerment and domestic violence is unpredictable, complex and often individually context-specific. Despite the general perception that domestic violence is likely to increase with economic recessions, the evidence is inconclusive.

The role of Criminal Justice System in dealing with Gender Based Violence

Crimes of gender-based violence are compounded by a lack of justice for the victims, weak criminal justice systems are one of the expected consequences of long periods of political instability and conflict, in periods of transition, there are often more important crimes to prosecute for the sake of national peace, reconciliation and security, rendering gender-based violence less of a priority for the courts, the culture of

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impunity that certainly arises as a result of the mechanisms of justice not taking action against perpetrators of gender-based violence perpetuates the cycle of that violence, violence against women becomes normalised, and the cycles of gender-based violence continue long after the closure of conflicts(Sigswarth, 2008).

A weak criminal justice system is compounded by attitudes in the community and society at large that create barriers to women and men reporting incidents of gender-based violence in the first place, these barriers include, feelings of shame, self-blame, societal attitudes and discrimination against those who have been victims of sexual violence, community taboos around sexual violence; reluctance towards or threats against reporting a family member or intimate partner, discriminatory police attitudes, and the secondary victimisation experienced by sexual assault victims in the criminal justice system, (Human Rights Watch, 2003). Based on the above statement, many people are being victimised almost every day but most of them don't repot those crimes because of the attitude that they receive from the police, our police have a tendency of re victimising the victim, for example if a lady went to report case, the police will start to look at what she is wearing "then they will say look how short is you trouser or how short is your skirts, that is the reason why they have raped you or they will start to call each other to come and listen to what the lady will be saying.

The South African Department of Justice has openly described its weaknesses with huge administrative disorganisations, carelessness and not obtaining value for money for the resources it has organised, the conviction rate for sexual crimes in South Africa is between only 4% and 8% of reported cases and since many rapes go unreported, the overall conviction rate of rapists and sexual predators is much lower, in addition to the administration that characterizes South African courts, the personal beliefs of judges and police officers could also contribute to the low rate of conviction (Lacey, 2020:6).

According to Kim and Motsei (2002, 1243), the new South African government has pledged to ensure women a full and equal role in every aspect of the economy and society, yet South African women continue to face extraordinarily high levels of violence, Physical abuse and rape are the forms of such violence which have been most clearly described in South Africa. Based on the above statement I do agree that women and children continue to face gender-based violence, but we do have the police whose job is to protect them, the level of gender-based violence must not continue to rise because we do have the police in our country but instate the level of gender-based violence must decrease.

Theory of Planned Behaviour

According to Ajzen and Fishbein (1991), the theory of planned behaviour is a model to predict an individual's behaviour. This model is rooted in a framework of learning theories and is an extension of the theory of propositional control and the theory of reasoned action, Dunlany (2017). These theories are conceptually similar with only slight differences in the naming of variables, the theory of reasoned action states that behavioural intentions mediate behaviour, these intentions are influenced by the individual's attitude toward performing the act and beliefs about what behaviour is expected in the given situation. The model has been effective in predicting behavioural intention and behaviour in a variety of situations, including safer. It is believed that this theory may be useful in intervention of gender-based violence because it participates in many of the premises of learning, which may be applicable in understanding abusive behaviour of both men and women (Rotter, 1982). Robin, Nabi, Hornik (2002), under any of the circumstances that limit the willingness or ability to turn intentions into behaviours, beliefs that underlie attitudes that correlate with behavioural intentions are unlikely to correlate with the related behaviours, of the many behaviours that might be restricted by such external or internal barriers. TPB explained that

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the proximal determining factor of behaviour is the intention to involve in a behaviour. Behavioural goals are supposed to capture the motivational factors that influence a behaviour, they are indicators of how hard people are willing to try, of how much effort they are planning to exert to perform the behaviour (Ajzen, 1991: 181). The other way of investigating gender-based violence is through the use of the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1970). The theory to investigate the behaviour of the protractors of gender-based violence in ivory park behaviour (Evans and Norman, 1998; Zhou, Horrey and Yu, 2009; Xu, Li, and Zhang, 2013). the intention of gender-based violence perpetrators could be applied to alcohol and drug abuse, as these are the main contributory factors of gender-based violence such as physical abuse, emotional abuse, and some other contributing factors that are well known as the cause of gender-based violence.

Partnership Theory of Crime Prevention

Crime prevention comprises of strategies and measures that seek to reduce the risk of crimes occurring, and their potential harmful effects on individuals and society, including the fear of crime, by intervening to influence their multiple causes (Kruger, Lancaster, Landman, Liebermann, Louw and Robertshaw, 2016). Public safety partnerships are typically dominated by law enforcement agencies and tend to focus on enforcement and order maintenance strategies, with limited attention to the role of the community or other agencies in the prevention of crime (Rosenbaum, 2003: 212). Understanding the reasons why partnerships come into being will help to predict their level of success. Partnerships emerge in response to specific incidents or problems, a recognized need for community-wide or regional planning, and/or new funding opportunities (Rosenbaum, 2003: 200). The partnership is about fostering the relationship between stakeholders, to achieve some common ground and in the law enforcement field, there is also a desire for change caused by the problems of perceived lack of policing in terms of preventing gender-based violence, especially to women and children in the delivery of police services, which regularly produces a cry for better police-community partnerships (Aldrich, 1979, Alpert and Moore, 1993). The judged ineffectiveness of traditional reactive police methods, which opens the door for problem-oriented policing and prevention models; and the absence of a coordinated, criminal justice system to handle the issue of gender-based violence, has frustrated those seeking effective justice and prevention (Bailey, 1986). The Criminal justice system cannot, by itself, solve the complex problem of gender-based violence in our society. Resources from outside the system are desperately needed, as well as new ways of thinking about these problems from the inside (Lavrakas, 1985; Rosenbaum, 1986, 1988). In a nutshell, given the multiple and complex causes of gender-based violence, especially to victims and a growing chorus of scholars, a debate that a new approach is needed, one that tackles these problems from multiple angles, applying a multitude of strategies. This line of reasoning has been used to justify the creation of anti-crime partnerships or unions. A group of organizations that can bring distinctive but complementary skills and resources to the table and can produce coordinated and targeted responses to the safety of the victim problems (Rosenbaum, 2003: 174). It is important for the South African Police Service, together with all their agencies, to work together with communities to counteract this problem of gender-based violence, whereby the country has spent a lot of money on the victims of gender-based violence through rehabilitation and counselling. The issue of gender-based violence has a negative impact on the families of the affected victims as it leaves children without parents, traumatised children, people become mentally disturbed and physically unfit. This theory helps in terms of creating a working relationship between the department and its stakeholders and it must pay special attention to the inter-organizational capacity to

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respond to problems with creativity, intensity, and coordination of interventions (Rosenbaum, 2003:179). Enforcement strategies require careful planning, including community input and endorsement. To achieve this, the police and the community must have a solid working relationship built on mutual respect and trust (Ramirez *et al.,* 2000). Law enforcement efforts to encourage citizen participation are typically limited in scope. The police, when they do reach out to the community, would like citizens to serve as their eyes and ears, but not to become too serious about strategic planning or crime control initiatives (Buerger, 1994; Friedman, 1994; Rosenbaum, 1988, 1998b). Strong leadership is considered the key to successful partnerships, it also engages in a range of activities, including prioritizing and defining problems, analysing the target problem, reviewing the literature for best practices, designing new intervention strategies (action plans), coordinating the implementation of these strategies, monitoring partnership effectiveness and adjusting to feedback received from the environment (Rosenbaum, 2003: 203). Research suggests that success with implementation and group maintenance is associated with good leadership (Bailey, 1986; O'Sullivan, 1977). South Africans should feel safe and have no fear of crime. They should be safe at home, at school, at work and they should enjoy active community life, free of fear. Women should be able to walk freely in the streets and children play safely outside. The police service should be a well-resourced professional institution, staffed by highly skilled officers who value their work, serve the community, safeguard lives and property without any fear of attack from the perpetrators of gender-based violence, protect the peaceful against violence and respect the rights of all to equality and justice (National Planning Commission, 2012). The importance of well-coordinated law enforcement is vital in achieving national development plans concerning community safety. Domestic violence act plays a vital role in terms of preventing crime of gender-based violence.

Steps Leading to the Prevention of Gender Based Violence Training Of Law Enforcement Officials in Handling GBV Cases

According to Oparinde and Matsha (2021:3), in fact, gender-based violence is a pandemic that requires serious intervention. It is a very serious issue in South Africa. It will be easier to combat gender-based violence if law enforcement officials are trained on how to deal with it. The attitude and method that police officers take to cases of gender-based violence makes it very evident that they require training. In situations of murder or serious assault, the police are frequently the first to arrive, and they are in charge of gathering evidence, seeing that survivors receive medical care, and helping them find housing, but some police officials don't adequately respond to victims, they still lack committed staff members with the necessary training to handle these situations, provide victims with legal advice, and provide other forms of support, (Temba, 2020:1).

In order to guarantee that the police have the appropriate knowledge, services and ability to excellently implement risk assessment, it is essential to ensure that; all officers are required to get basic training on gender equality, which starts at police academies at the entry level and continues through all levels and stages of their careers; The institutional policy on police learning and development includes frequent, updated training for all police officers on gender-based violence; The police should adopt a systematic approach to training; Training materials should be integrated into a performance management framework to help guarantee that each police officer completes the necessary training and that performance evaluations reflect how each officer responds to gender-based violence; Effective supervision and performance management systems support and reinforce police training, and police evaluation incorporates gender components (Blumberg, Schlosser, Papazoglou, Creighton and Chuck Kaye, 2019: 5).

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In cases of gender-based violence abuse, determining the level of danger is frequently a difficult process that calls for specialized training for police in order to equip them with the knowledge and skills necessary to appropriately identify, assess, and manage risk. A key component of a successful police risk assessment is the trained practitioner's expert judgment. Improve the collecting of police data on gender-based violence, which will enable the detection of serial offenders and victims, the observation of trends, and the tracking of the advancement of cases across the system (WHO,2019).

Capacitate Criminal Justice System with resources to speed-up the cases of GBV

Around the world, there are numerous criminal justice systems that are overworked, underfunded, and understaffed (Sambo, 2023). This results in a number of problems with the justice system, such as high levels of impunity, delays in the administration of justice, an excessive use of pretrial detention, often for long periods of time, a lack of use of alternative sentencing options, overcrowded prisons that cannot perform their rehabilitative function, and high rates of reoffending (UNODC,2022). Criminal justice systems frequently experience fragmentation, a lack of integration of the various criminal justice chain's components, as well as a lack of coordination and collaboration with other sectors that are crucial to ensuring integrated responses to crime and violence, such as the health, education, and social welfare sectors (Pelser and Rauch, 2001: 23).

Criminal justice systems frequently neglect crime victims the most. To stop secondary victimization and revictimization and to increase incident reporting, it is essential to provide victim support and protection (Pelser and Rauch, 2001: 24). Women and girls of all cultures are the main targets of GBV, as are those who do not fit conventional stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. Men and boys who see the destruction it does to the women they care about are also affected. GBV affects both the wealthy and the poor, disabled individuals, and both children and adults. It's a problem that affects the entire country and won't be solved without a serious, well-funded effort that lasts years rather than months, (Sonke Gender Justice, 2014). According to UNODC (2021) the battle against gender-based violence requires the involvement of the criminal justice system significantly. Trust in the system will increase as turnover rates drop and conviction rates rise, the criminal justice system in South Africa lacks the resources necessary to combat gender-based violence, making it difficult for law enforcement to deal with the issue. In order to hold offenders accountable and ensure their rehabilitation and social reintegration while also lowering reoffending, criminal justice systems must carefully balance the needs of communities and societies for protection and safety, the needs of victims for justice and reparation, and the need to hold offenders accountable (UNODC,2022).

Strengthen partnership between South African Police Service and all major stakeholders

According to Rogers (2006:7), South African Police Services are not the only ones responsible for crime prevention. Every stakeholder should be involved at all times, but especially private organizations (such PSI, businesses, or NGOs organizations). It should begin by reporting to the police each and every crime occurrence that occurs in the neighbourhood. This is true because the crime figures that the police should make public should accurately reflect the problem of crime in the area. This will influence the strategy and planning for preventing or lessening crime in South Africa. According to Kole (2015: 1) each year, a sizable number of criminal occurrences are reported to the police in South Africa. To reduce crime, several stakeholders must collaborate in crime prevention. While the Private Security Industry (PSI) looks

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out for the interests of their paying clients, the South African Police Service (SAPS) looks out for the interests of all residents. By default, of its nature, crime prevention should be an activity that all community members engage in on a regular basis by abiding by the fundamental security and safety measures. Beginning with an individual, it continues through the institutions they are a member of (Schneider,2010:25). Farrel, Bowers, Johnson and Townsley (2007:61) explain that know-how base Knowledge and proof are the two fundamental components of crime prevention. This indicates that there is evidence of the crimes that have been committed, the crimes that have been committed are known, and the reasons of crime are known. contend that it will be challenging for those involved in crime prevention to eradicate the issue if they do not exchange information on crime in their local communities. Therefore, it follows that including the community in crime prevention would be the first step in knowledge-based crime prevention. PSI is essential because they frequently operate in places where the public police do not, which puts them in a prime position to contribute significantly to the development of evidence-based crime prevention strategies (Farrel et al ,2007:65). All parties involved should fulfil their responsibilities in order for police to be able to decrease crime in the society. Since the police will be informed of all crimes, their times, victims, suspects, and locations, they will be able to better plan their crime prevention strategies. Therefore, all crimes must always be reported to the police (Felson,2010: 138)

CONCLUSION

Gender-based violence (GBV) in South Africa, often perceived merely as a crime or an infringement on fundamental rights, demands urgent attention given its staggering scope and prevalence, making it one of the leading causes of female fatalities. Women and children bear the brunt of GBV on a daily basis, resulting in tragic deaths that underscore the pressing need for comprehensive intervention. Despite existing legal frameworks aimed at safeguarding women's rights, the misapplication and ineffectiveness of these measures call for a collective effort from the government, civil society, traditional authorities, and communities to combat GBV effectively. The appointment of qualified authorities is crucial in addressing the widespread crimes throughout the country, as there is a pervasive belief that certain police officers are abusing and even murdering women, exemplified by tragic cases like that of Lebogang Monene, a 36-year-old nurse shot and killed by her police partner at the Tembisa Hospital parking lot in February. To eradicate this deeply entrenched issue, concerted efforts are needed to enforce existing laws, enhance accountability, and foster a societal shift away from tolerance to zero tolerance for gender-based violence.

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