



Silent No More: Religion Engaging with Gender-Based Violence in South Africa: A Case Study on the “We Will Speak Out South Africa” Coalition

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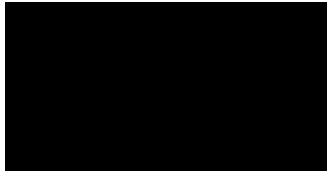
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I, Meriska Avalyn Shriduth, declare that:

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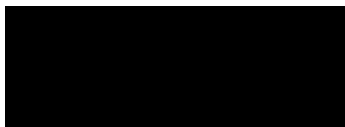


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ABSTRACT

GBV (gender-based violence) remains a pervasive and multifaceted issue globally affecting individuals across diverse socio-cultural and religious contexts. FBOs (faith-based organisations) have emerged as significant actors in combating GBV due to their influential presence and moral authority within communities. This dissertation will outline religion engaging with GBV in south Africa with a specific focus on a case study on the We Will Speak Out South Africa (WWSOSA) coalition

FBOs engage in GBV prevention and response efforts through a range of strategies, including awareness-raising campaigns, community education and the provision of support services. Their interventions often integrate theological perspectives, emphasising the principles of dignity, equality and compassion to challenge harmful gender norms and to promote respectful relationships.

However, FBO engagement in GBV work also presents challenges, including the potential for reinforcing patriarchal structures or encountering resistance from conservative interpretations of religious doctrine. Effective collaboration between FBOs and secular organisations is crucial for navigating these complexities, ensuring holistic and inclusive approaches to GBV prevention and response.

The abstract underscores the importance of recognising the diverse roles and experiences of FBOs in addressing GBV. By harnessing the moral authority and community networks of FBOs, concerted efforts can be made towards creating safer and more equitable societies for all individuals, irrespective of gender or faith affiliation.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, gender inequality, patriarchy, faith-based organisations, intersectional feminism, religion, WWSOSA coalition

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

FBO – Faith-based organisation

FGM – Female Genital Mutilation

GBV – Gender-Based Violence

SGBV – Sexual Gender-Based Violence

UN – United Nations

WHO – World Health Organisation

WWSOSA – We Will Speak Out South Africa

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

The demand for transparency within religious institutions is increasing, emphasising the importance of faith leaders to take responsibility for comprehending and addressing gender-based violence (GBV). Responding to the growing societal pressure to combat GBV and promote the empowerment of women, the foundations of the ¹We Will Speak Out South Africa (WWSOSA) coalition, consisting of numerous South African FBOs, was laid. This coalition is committed to train faith leaders in dealing with GBV to empower GBV survivors; its functions will be examined further on in the subsequent chapters.

A discussion on the background of the research problem and the motivation for writing this thesis will be provided and the key research questions are outlined. In subsequent chapters, sub-research questions that lent support to the key research question are listed, and the aims and objectives of the thesis are stated as motivation for the necessity to conduct this study. The research methodology underlined the key interventions used in this thesis. The theoretical framework in which intersectional feminism is used for this thesis and a chapter overview highlighting the contents of each chapter will be provided.

1.1 Background to the Research Problem

In 2011 the researcher was a victim of GBV. At that time, when seeking guidance from a priest, he proposed that prayer was the way to healing and closure. However, this advice required additional action and after receiving the necessary counselling, the researcher realised that far too many women face similar experiences on a daily basis in South Africa and globally. As a result, it became critical to speak out against GBV, and how faith-based organisations (FBOs) deal with this issue. The fundamental argument of this dissertation is that while it is crucial to denounce GBV, addressing this issue goes beyond the mere condemnation of the violation;

¹ Initially, it began as an informal collective, but in 2016 efforts were made to establish a formal structure, leading to WWSOSA being registered as an NPO and PBO in April 2017. A core principle for WWSOSA has been to follow the guidance of survivor voices. According to their Constitution, two seats on the Management Committee are reserved for survivor representatives to guide the coalition's leadership and ensure that survivor voices remain central to its mission.

being violated in whatever form is a profoundly traumatic experience and a violent act involves not only severe physical and psychological harm to the victim, but also a deliberate element of humiliation and domination purposefully intended by the perpetrator to exert power and control. The nature of the assault intensifies the survivor's trauma which ultimately has serious consequences for the community and society at large. For example, secondary trauma may occur in which family members may develop their own traumatic symptoms from living with and supporting the survivor. The resultant isolation, where survivors may withdraw from social circles, could lead to weakened and fractured community ties. Addressing GBV issues thoroughly necessitate a multifaceted approach, particularly when sexual violence can escalate into murder.

The historical context of GBV indicates its profound connection to culture and religion, with patriarchy playing a crucial role in reinforcing, empowering and perpetuating such violence (Riswold, 2009:18). Over time, societal norms, cultural practices and religious doctrines have been instrumental in shaping the power structures underpinning gender relations.

The WWSOSA coalition represents the collaboration of faith communities and their strategic allies, individuals affected by GBV, groups that deal with GBV and organisations that are affiliated to the WWSOSA coalition. These entities all collaborate and support one another to achieve common goals or address shared challenges (WWSOSA, 2023). These alliances are formed based on mutual interests and benefits, with each party adding its unique strengths and resources to the partnership. In various contexts, strategic allies can play pivotal roles in driving change, providing support and amplifying efforts. These allies have aligned themselves with the WWSOSA coalition and are committed to preventing and eradicating the impact of sexual (SGBV) and gender-based violence in South Africa. Serving as the South African representation of a global alliance initiated in March 2020 by the coalition, it forms part of an international effort dedicated to helping survivors of GBV, and on a global scale being part of a coalition that is steadfast in denouncing GBV and its root causes (WWSOSA, 2023).

1.2 Research Questions

In this dissertation, the primary focus was to determine how the FBOs assisted survivors of GBVs and also how religion played a role within GBV. The following research questions provide the impetus to the research:

1.2.1 Key Research Question

In what way does the We Will Speak Out South Africa coalition, being a faith-based organisation, engage and assist GBV survivors?

1.2.2 Research Sub-questions

To address the primary research question, the following sub-questions will be considered:

- a) What are the functions of the We Will Speak Out South Africa coalition?
- b) What are the theological/ religious/ ideological motivations or approaches of the We Will Speak Out Coalition?
- c) How might a faith-based coalition support GBV and augment gender justice in S.A.?

1.3 Aims and objectives of the dissertation

The above questions led to the following objectives that this study aims to achieve:

- a) To determine who and what is the We Will Speak Out South Africa coalition
- b) To analyse the ideology underpinning the We Will Speak Out South Africa coalition
- c) To investigate how faith-based organisations can contribute to the enhancement of gender justice in SA

1.4 Research Methodology

This study will utilise a qualitative research approach. As per Baxter & Jack (2015:155), qualitative research is a method of inquiry employed in various disciplines, especially in the social sciences, to explore complex phenomena within their contexts. It is used to understand how people interpret and make sense of their experiences, behaviours, interactions, and social structures. This research will gather qualitative data through semi-structured interviews conducted with stakeholders within the WWSOSA coalition in Durban, Kwa-Zulu Natal. These interviews aim to thoroughly comprehend the organisation, its fundamental principles, and the real-life experiences of individuals engaged in the coalition.

This study employed a non-probability sample design using purposive sampling to select stakeholders of the WWSOSA coalition as participants. Purposive sampling is a frequently employed qualitative sampling technique enabling the researcher to select participants with relevant knowledge or affiliation to the study topic (Etikan, Musa & Alkassim, 2016:58). While

it is often used to examine samples from small populations, it has recently been applied to study significant populations. Given the qualitative nature of this study, the sample size was deliberately limited to ensure the collection of pertinent and contextualised data. The data for this research was examined using a thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's six-step process. This qualitative research method identifies, analyses, and presents patterns (themes) within a dataset. It is often used with textual or visual data, such as interview transcripts, focus group discussions, surveys, or other qualitative materials (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis involves systematically organising and interpreting the content to uncover recurring themes or patterns that highlight essential aspects of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

1.5 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation for this research is grounded in intersectional feminism, an interdisciplinary approach within feminist philosophy that seeks to understand and address issues related to gender, sexuality and inequality. It critically examines traditional philosophical concepts and theories through the lens of feminist perspectives, aiming to highlight and rectify ways in which historical and contemporary philosophy has contributed to the marginalisation of women and other gender minorities, the prevailing argument emphasising that several intersecting systems of oppression shape women's lives. This perspective challenges the notion that the oppression of women can be adequately understood through a singular process or binary political relationship, as highlighted by antiracist feminist critiques (Davis, 2013:70).

The concept of intersectionality is recognised as the most significant contribution made by feminist studies thus far (McCall, 2005:1001). This influence extends beyond academic circles, permeating international human rights discussions, as demonstrated by its inclusion in the United Nations Beijing Platform for Action, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and the United Nations Commission on Human Rights resolution on women's human rights. These documents underscore the importance of exploring the intersection of various forms of discrimination (Davis, 2013:72).

This study employs intersectionality as both a critical analytical framework and a guiding practice, recognising the interconnected nature of oppressive systems. Consequently, the understanding of and responses to GBV, as well as strategies to address and prevent violence, are shaped by this perspective (Khan, 2020). Khan (2020) further argues that one must actualise

one's commitments to intersectionality to avoid inadvertently leading anti-violence initiatives to perpetuate harm and exclusion.

This study proposes that an intersectional approach, which considers how gender intersects with other forms of inequality, is the most appropriate way to address GBV. Employing an intersectional lens to assess the diverse layers of societal oppression that foster a culture where GBV is widespread is crucial. Women of colour, women with non-heterosexual sexualities, and women with low socioeconomic status face multiple layers of intersectional oppression that intersect with or add to their gender-based oppression. Each of these layers is vital for a comprehensive understanding of the root causes of gender violence and should not be examined in isolation (hooks, 2004).

1.6 Chapter Overview

Chapter 1 will introduce the study and provided a broad overview of the contents and the research employed to underscore the various themes addressed in the study.

Chapter 2 discoursed on the literature review which includes discussions on current literature related to the study. The literature will focus mainly on discussions concerning GBV and its effect on society, including the role of religion in the findings regarding GBV and related issues.

Chapter 3 will provide an exposition on the research methodology employed in the study: Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis to be used as the main tool for interpretation of elements such as the data and sampling. The relevance of dependability and validity to the study will be also outlined

Chapter 4 will draw on the theoretical framework of intersectional feminism; intersectional feminism is a theoretical framework and approach to feminism emphasising the interconnected nature of social categories such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation, ability, and other aspects of identity.

Chapter 5 will present the data analysis which will reveal a lacuna in the combatting of GBV as postulated by the participants in the study, that the FBOs are not effectively addressing the GBV scourge.

Chapter 6 discusses the research findings based on the researcher's position, highlighting the connections between GBV and patriarchy, and religion and GBV; the main aspects to be drawn on was the link between the WWSOSA coalition and GBV.

Chapter 7 synthesises the study and will present the conclusion regarding the study findings and addresses key recommendations for further studies in the field of GBV and religion.

1.7 Conclusion

Chapter 1 outlined the background to the research and included the motivation for this study. Reasons were provided as to why GBV was a problematic issue. The key research question and sub-questions were discussed on which detailed the WWSOSA coalition. The research methodology provided a qualitative means of analysing the data and the data was presented via a thematic analysis. The theoretical framework of intersectional feminism was also considered and lastly, each chapter was outlined detailing relevant content and context.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

GBV is a pervasive and enduring problem in South Africa, permeating nearly every facet of daily life for many. This problem is entrenched in the country's cultural norms and customs, and is often cited to rationalise acts of violence based on gender, shaping the dynamics of power and the formation of gender roles. GBV is a widespread issue that affects individuals of diverse gender identities, races, ages, sexual orientations, and religious backgrounds, both as victims and perpetrators. While GBV disproportionately impacts on women and girls, it is not confined solely to the female population; males may also experience GBV. However, for the purpose of this study, the focus will primarily focus on GBV against women. This chapter provides an overview of the GBV landscape in South Africa, introducing the concept of GBV, examining the role of FBOs, and presenting illustrative case studies supplied by the WWSOSA coalition.

2.1 Gender-based Violence in South Africa

GBV encompasses violence stemming from unequal power dynamics between genders and cultural expectations regarding gender roles (Bloom, 2008). The prevalent definition of GBV, as per the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (2015), encompasses threats of coercion or arbitrary deprivation of freedom, occurring in public or private spheres, and resulting in, or likely to cause, physical, sexual and/or psychological harm.

GBV takes place when an individual is harmed because of their biological sex or because of their gender identity (Ott, 2019:2). According to Bloom (2008), this all-inclusive phrase 'gender-based violence' is used to describe the violence that takes place due to roles typically associated with each sex and the differences between genders in the setting of a particular culture and environment.

Between April 2022 and March 2023, 53 498 sexual offences (including 42 780 rapes) were recorded nationally (South African Police Service, 2023). Releasing second-quarter crime statistics for 2023/2024, Police Minister Bheki Cele reported that South Africa recorded 10,516 rapes, 1,514 cases of attempted murder, and 14,401 assaults against female victims in July, August, and September (92 days). In the same period, 881 women were murdered (South African Government, 2023).

During the COVID-19 outbreak in 2020, President Ramaphosa referred to GBV as South Africa's second pandemic and attributed the increase in violence to high unemployment rates and financial stressors (Ellis, 2020). Despite governmental initiatives and legal changes, GBV remains a significant problem in South Africa (Graaff, 2017:89). Because of the elevated unemployment rates and the ensuing adverse economic circumstances, numerous women find themselves compelled to turn to a riskier approach of earning money to sustain themselves which often leads them into prostitution, where they are exploited for financial purposes and frequently subjected to maltreatment by male customers (Gender Studies, 2018).

Due to the exploitation of women, they often seek out safety in shelters when experiencing GBV. However, these shelters receive very little funding, relying primarily on private sector contributions and non-profit organisations. Some, but not all shelters charge women a shelter fee (Human Rights Watch, 2018). According to Roy *et al.*, (2022:184), shelters and organisations focused on preventing GBV often face significant operational challenges such as the lack of sufficient resources dedicated to addressing GBV.

2.1.1 Forms of Gender-based Violence

GBV takes many forms, each with distinct characteristics and repercussions. In order to provide insight into the prevalence, effects and underlying dynamics, the four most common types of GBV – sexual, domestic, emotional, and socio-economic violence – will be examined in this section.

2.1.2 Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is the most prevalent form of GBV, involving an array of coercive behaviours targeting an individual's sexuality. According to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2016), sexual violence refers to any sexual act or conduct that is forced onto a person by someone assuming a position of power or authority, regardless of the context. This may include rape, characterised as the forceful penetration of the vagina or anus using physical force or coercion, as well as instances of sexual harassment, exploitation, and trafficking for sexual purposes (Mathews 2010; Vetten 2003).

2.1.3 Domestic Violence

Domestic violence, also termed domestic abuse or intimate partner violence, denotes a recurring pattern of behaviours observed in relationships between married, cohabiting or dating partners. These behaviours include coercive, threatening or harmful actions of a physical,

sexual, emotional, or psychological nature directed towards another individual. Such actions aim to induce fear, intimidation, manipulation, harm, humiliation, or assign blame to the victim (UN, 2023). Domestic violence transcends demographic boundaries, affecting individuals irrespective of ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender (UN, 2023), thereby impacting on individuals from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and educational levels. Domestic violence often occurs in a context where the perpetrators assert their entitlement over a woman's body, rationalising their actions as appropriate, justifiable, or unlikely to be reported (UN, 2023).

2.1.4 Emotional Violence

Emotional violence, distinct from physical harm, inflicts psychological distress on individuals, leading to symptoms such as despondency, anxiety, suicidal ideation or behaviour and post-traumatic stress disorder. This may include verbal abuse, intimidation, and deceit to manipulate others for personal gain or to achieve specific outcomes. Emotional violence often involves tactics designed to mislead or confuse individuals, manipulating them to cooperate and subjecting them to degrading treatment, for example, compelling a spouse to engage in sexual activity against her will (DeSanctis, 2023). This scholar further asserts that emotional abuse typically unfolds as a series of behaviours meticulously aimed to undermine an individual's sense of self-esteem, dignity and belonging.

2.1.5 Socio-economic Violence

Economic violence occurs when the perpetrator exerts control over the victim's financial resources and activities (Fawole, 2013:167). This form of violence is evident when a male abuser dictates the managing and allocation of money when considering the needs of the woman, making the women entirely reliant on him (Fawole, 2013:169). Such domination may lead to men leveraging their higher income as a means of control over women. The Prince Edward Island Woman Abuse Protocols (2000) further asserts socio-economic abuse as including actions, such as appropriating the victim's money, preventing them from having independent access to it, excluding them from financial decision-making and causing damage to property.

2.2. Addressing Gender-based Violence

Addressing GBV requires a comprehensive and multifaceted response that goes beyond mere condemnation of these acts. Effective strategies include robust legal frameworks, accessible

support services, public education and societal change. Legal responses are crucial in ensuring justice for survivors and holding perpetrators accountable. Support services, such as shelters, counselling and medical care provide essential assistance to those affected, helping them rebuild their lives.

2.2.1 The National Gender-based Violence Hotline

One notable initiative is the National GBV Hotline which allows women to confidentially share details of their abuse or seek assistance regarding their experiences of abuse, and it has garnered significant attention from the public. The national GBV hotline in South Africa is a vital initiative that provides immediate, comprehensive and confidential support to victims of gender-based violence. By offering uninterrupted assistance, professional counselling and links to essential resources, the hotline plays a crucial role in addressing and mitigating the impact of GBV, empowering victims, and fostering a safer society.

2.2.2 The Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust

The Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust plays a crucial role in supporting survivors of rape and sexual violence in South Africa. Through comprehensive services that include counselling, medical support, legal assistance and advocacy, the organisation not only helps survivors on their path to recovery, but also works towards systemic and societal changes to prevent sexual violence and improve the response to it. Graaff (2017:92) emphasises the value of these partnerships in offering survivors who might not turn to law enforcement for help, these being immediate support and therapy.

2.2.3 Thuthuzela Care Centres

Another significant aspect of South Africa's response to GBV is the establishment of Thuthuzela Care Centres. The facilities are integrated into South Africa's anti-rape strategy, with the primary aim of diminishing secondary victimisation. This refers to the additional trauma that victims of a crime or traumatic event may experience due to the responses of individuals or institutions they interact with after the initial incident. By enhancing conviction rates and expediting case resolution (Thuthuzela Care Centres, 2023) and by prioritising the reduction of secondary victimisation, these centres improve access to support services such as counselling, therapy and victim advocacy, assisting survivors in managing post-traumatic challenges. Additionally, to improve conviction rates and expedite case resolution, these centres hold the National Prosecuting Authority accountable for prosecuting cases efficiently

(Thuthuzela Care Centres, 2023). However, despite all these support systems South Africa has not been successful in addressing GBV adequately. Underreporting, a lack of resources such as funding, and structural obstacles such as the lack of more hospitals are some of the issues that impede definitive efforts to hold offenders responsible and provide adequate treatment for the victims.

2.3 The #MenAreTrash Campaign

A heated discussion on social media in 2016 regarding the underlying reasons for GBV in South Africa gave rise to the #MenAreTrash narrative. (Orth *et al.*, 2020). This campaign began when some women began to use social media platforms to criticise problematic male behaviour, considering the mental and physical violence they were dealing with in their relationships. The #MenAreTrash began as a controversial and provocative social media campaign aimed at highlighting the pervasive issue of GBV and the broader systemic misogyny faced by women. The phrase referring to men as trash encapsulated the frustration, anger and pain many women felt in response to their experiences with sexual harassment, assault, and other forms of violence perpetrated by men. It was not intended to label all men as inherently bad, but rather to draw attention to the behaviours and societal structures that enabled and perpetuated violence against women (Myeni, 2016; Samanga, 2017). The campaign intended to highlight how males have contributed to dangers such as violence, discrimination, cyber harassment and stalking that many women faced daily and within the context of their experiences of GBV. The campaign encouraged many men to reassess their behaviour towards women. It shifted the discourse on masculinity and what it meant to be a man when removed from the idealised, manufactured masculine identity that elevated males over females. (Mbonambi, 2017).

Despite the hashtag campaigns and other interventions, rape, femicide and sexual assault rates are increasing. The ongoing rise in GBV cases can be attributed to a combination of factors, including persistent societal norms, systemic issues and the exacerbation of vulnerabilities due to ongoing global crises. Furthermore, the topic of violence against women does not receive adequate coverage in the media as interviews or comments are rare; most survivors find it difficult to share their stories, according to Gould (2020:56). Recounting their story of violence repeatedly re-traumatises survivors (Gould, 2020:56). It is often easier to interview activists or experts as they generally do not exhibit the sensitive tendencies that survivors might have when recounting their experiences (Gould, 2020:57). More women should be encouraged to come

forward to tell their stories as this would create a chain reaction where other women might feel comfortable to re-tell their stories and thus provide GBV with increased exposure.

2.4 Patriarchy and Gender-based Violence

Shepherd (2010:143) describes patriarchy as an unjust system that affords advantages to males over females. Within this framework, GBV serves to perpetuate and sustain gender inequality, dominance and authority in society. In countries such as South Africa, where the culture of violence is widespread and male dominance is normalised, these dynamics can be traced back to the legacies of colonisation and the increased levels of violence during the apartheid era (Shepherd, 2010:156).

The gender dynamics of traditional African communities were significantly altered by European colonisation of South Africa, where patriarchy was frequently maintained and modified to serve the needs of the colonial powers. (Cezula & Jones, 2006:52). Colonial powers reinforced and adapted patriarchal systems to align with their interests, disrupting indigenous practices and imposing new norms that often-marginalised women (Nabožny, 2020:132). The imposition of European ideologies, legal systems and socio-cultural norms often served to entrench existing patriarchal values or introduced new forms of male dominance. New forms of male dominance have emerged and evolved in response to changes in society, technology, and culture. These forms often intersect with traditional modes of dominance but are adapted to contemporary contexts, for example, males exert dominance through cyberbullying, revenge pornography, dox(x)ing (deliberately and maliciously exposing private and confidential information of an individual on the internet) and other forms of online harassment, often targeting women and marginalised groups (Yao et al, 2019). This form of dominance is facilitated by the anonymity and reach of the internet.

Many Apartheid policies in South Africa further solidified patriarchal norms and gender discrimination and often African women faced high levels of sexual violence, both from white authorities and within their communities. The state often ignored or perpetuated this violence, reinforcing a culture of impunity and patriarchal control. Additionally, reproductive health services for African women were severely limited, restricting their autonomy over their own bodies (Hassim *et al.*, 2007). Apartheid policies were inherently discriminatory, and their impact on gender relations was intensified by intersecting racial dynamics; women from differing racial backgrounds experienced varying forms of oppression.

The perpetuation of traditional gender roles and expectations are most often linked to patriarchy. These roles may confine women to domestic and caregiving responsibilities, relegating them to secondary status within families and reinforcing the notion of men as primary breadwinners and decision-makers. This unequal distribution of power not only undervalues the contributions women make, but restricts their autonomy in perpetuating gender inequality and reinforcing patriarchal structures (Jewkes, 2016:105).

For example, the male's assumption of dominance and the enforcement of gender roles underpin male supremacy. A woman's lower social status and authority in male-dominant spaces such as corporate environments further reinforce the belief in male superiority. This imbalance of power also extends to domestic decision-making.

For instance, deeply ingrained conservative gender norms and roles present in many cultures normalise and justify violence, garnering acceptance from both men and women (Mahlori *et al.*, 2018:7). The intertwined nature of these factors poses a significant challenge to effectively eradicating GBV.

Cultural and societal expectations are crucial in shaping gender roles and behaviours. Males are conditioned to be aggressive, intense, emotionless and dominant, supporting the view of dominating figures in society. Conversely, females are generally depicted as meek, maternal, submissive and emotional, reinforcing their dependency on males. (Mahlori *et al.*, 2018:10).

2.5 Factors Impacting on Gender-based Violence

2.5.1 Socio-cultural impact

2.5.1.1 Religious beliefs

The misinterpretation of religious texts has often been linked to the perpetuation and justification of GBV. Religious texts are complex and open to interpretation, with passages that can be selectively interpreted to justify the unequal treatment of women. Certain verses or teachings may be taken out of context or given undue emphasis to support patriarchal norms and practices. However, misinterpretations that support or contribute to GBV can have profoundly negative consequences. Misinterpretations of religious texts often involve patriarchal readings that reinforce gender hierarchies (Kassam, 2015:25). Some interpretations may be selective, emphasising passages that seemingly justify male authority while downplaying the principles of equality and justice.

The term 'doctrines of submission' typically refers to ideologies or interpretations that promote the submission of individuals, often women, to a perceived authority or set of beliefs (Barlas, 2002). In certain religious contexts, doctrines of submission refer to teachings or beliefs that prescribe submissive roles and behaviours for individuals, often based on gender, marital status or hierarchical structures within religious institutions. These doctrines are typically derived from interpretations of religious texts and traditions, and may vary significantly amongst different religious denominations and communities. In certain instances, misinterpretations or manipulations of religious doctrines have been used to justify or rationalise GBV. For example, in Christian doctrine some Christian teachings, particularly within conservative or traditionalist interpretations, emphasise the submission of wives to their husbands as a central tenet of marital relationships. This concept is often based on passages from the New Testament in the Bible, such as Ephesians 5:22-24, instructing wives to submit themselves their husbands, as unto the Lord. In Islamic teachings the importance of mutual respect and cooperation between spouses are emphasised, but some interpretations stress the concept of *qiwamah* (guardianship) for males which may be understood as a form of authority over women. This can be misinterpreted as mandating women's submission to their husbands. However, when misinterpreted, certain doctrines may contribute to a culture that tolerates or even encourages GBV. For example, taking religious texts too literally without considering the historical or cultural context can lead to misunderstandings (Whittaker, 2022:88). Religious traditions often evolve over time, with interpretations of sacred texts adapting to new social, cultural, and intellectual contexts. Failing to recognise the dynamic nature of religious interpretation can result in rigid or outdated understandings that do not reflect contemporary realities (Whittaker, 2022:89). Literal interpretations may overlook the symbolic or allegorical nature of specific passages. Failure to understand the historical, cultural or linguistic context of religious texts can lead to misinterpretations, as religious texts may have been written in languages that are no longer spoken or have evolved significantly over time. Without a thorough understanding of the linguistic context, readers may misinterpret the nuances of certain words or phrases, leading to incorrect interpretations of the text's meaning (Whittaker, 2022:82). The true meaning may be lost without considering the circumstances surrounding the revelation or the writings of religious scriptures.

2.5.2 Cultural Practices

The beliefs and customs upheld by community members are often passed down through generations and mirrored in traditional cultural customs (Maluleke, 2012:5). Social groups worldwide possess distinct traditional cultural practices and beliefs, some of which benefit all members, while others prove harmful to specific groups, particularly women (Maluleke, 2012:8). Several cultural practices are detrimental to women; a selection of these is outlined below.

2.5.2.1 Ukuthwala

Early and forced marriages, known as *ukuthwala* (isiZulu: seeking empowerment from an *isangoma* or diviner for (spiritual) strength /power) in its current form, traditionally involves a young man approaching the family of a young woman to express his intentions of marriage (Russell, 2009). However, *ukuthwala* has been misappropriated and used to justify forced or coerced marriages, particularly involving underage girls, which constitute a violation of both human rights and South African law (Klaasen, 2016:200). While *ukuthwala* may have traditional roots, it has been widely condemned as it often involves coercion and abduction in forced marriages. Initiatives have been undertaken in recent times to address this tradition and safeguard the rights of young women. Additionally, other traditional South African practices such as virginity testing and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) continue to infringe on human rights in many parts of Africa and elsewhere.

2.5.2.2 Virginity Testing

Virginity testing is a practice that involves the examination of a female's hymen or other physical features to determine whether she is a virgin, meaning she has not engaged in sexual intercourse (Zulu, 2017:23). In a religious context in some cultures, virginity testing is part of coming-of-age ceremonies that mark the transition from girlhood to womanhood (Olson & García-Moreno, 2016). These ceremonies can include rituals that emphasise purity and readiness for marriage. In a social context, the family may use virginity testing to enhance the marriage prospects of their daughters, ensuring they are considered desirable and respectable by potential suitors and their families (Olson & Garcia-Moreno, 2016).

In certain countries, social norms closely associate a family's "honour" with the virginity of an unmarried girl before marriage (Rigon, 2018). In these societies, rape survivors may endure additional layers of violence: beyond the sexual assault, they might be blamed for the incident,

disowned by their families, shunned by the community, subjected to physical abuse, or, in the most extreme cases, killed in the name of "honour" (Rigon, 2018).

Virginity testing feeds into gender stereotypes and patriarchal conventions, sustaining the belief that a woman's worth is determined by her sexual purity (Swaartbooi-Xabadiya & Nduna, 2017). The practice reinforces the expectation that females must remain modest and chaste until marriage, which is not similarly imposed on males, highlighting a double standard in societal expectations (Zulu, 2017:25). Virginity testing supports traditional gender roles where females are expected to be submissive and compliant, particularly in sexual matters, while males are afforded more freedom and control.

Activism against virginity testing emerged due to a combination of human rights advocacy, public health concerns, gender equality movements, and the recognition of the harmful impact of this practice (Jhoshi, 2021:91). The practice invades the privacy and dignity of women and girls, treating them as objects to be scrutinised rather than individuals with inherent rights. Activism in this area is often driven by a desire to empower women and girls, allowing them to take control of their bodies and lives without the fear of being judged or controlled based on their sexual history (Jhoshi, 2021:96).

2.5.2.3 Female Genital Mutilation

According to the WHO (2023:26), 'Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) encompasses all procedures that involve the partial or complete removal of the external female genitalia or other forms of injury to the female genital organs, for reasons unrelated to medical necessity.'

Culturally, FGM is frequently regarded as a ceremonial transition marking the entry into womanhood, symbolising purity, chastity, and readiness for marriage (UNICEF, 2013). It is deeply rooted in specific cultural traditions and norms. In some communities, women who have undergone FGM may be considered more desirable as wives or may be better integrated into social networks (Proudman, 2022). FGM is deeply rooted in cultural, social, and economic contexts that perpetuate its practice. Despite being a severe violation of human rights with significant physical and psychological consequences, it is often upheld due to beliefs about morality, social cohesion, marriageability, and conformity to gender norms (Proudman, 2022). Understanding these motivations is crucial for developing effective interventions and education campaigns to combat FGM and support women's rights and health. It is important to note that major religions, including Islam and Christianity, do not support FGM.

2.6 Stigma and Shame

The stigma and shame linked to GBV can aggravate the profound impact this has on survivors, exacerbating the harm caused by the violence. Many survivors refrain from disclosing their experiences due to the fear of judgment and societal stigma associated with being a victim of GBV, thus creating a significant barrier to seeking help (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002).

Victim blaming is a common indicator of stigma, unfairly assigning responsibility to victims for the violence they have experienced. This contributes to a culture of silence, as survivors fear being judged and held accountable for their perpetrator's actions. Stigma arises from stereotypes portraying GBV victims as weak or vulnerable, leading to feelings of inadequacy or reluctance to seek help (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002).

Survivors may internalise the blame, questioning if they somehow provoked or deserved the abuse. This internalised guilt contributes to feelings of shame, impeding the survivor's ability to seek support and heal from their experiences.

2.7 Lack of Education

According to the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (2023) low levels of education in some men is often associated with an increased likelihood of this cohort committing violence against women. This connection stems from the conviction that education provides individuals with the knowledge and skills essential to confronting detrimental gender norms and behaviours.

When access to education is restricted, women become more susceptible to different forms of violence (UNICEF, 2023). Education empowers women by providing knowledge, skills, and confidence. Without access to education, women may lack the ability to advocate for their rights, make informed decisions and resist oppressive conditions, making them more susceptible to exploitation (World Bank, 2023). Women with limited access to education may be unaware of their rights, making it easier for perpetrators to engage in various forms of violence with impunity.

Education often opens doors to economic opportunities, allowing women to be financially independent. Women who lack education may become economically dependent on others, which makes it more difficult to escape from abusive relationships and increases their vulnerability to financial exploitation (International Labour Organization, 2022).

A noteworthy impact of higher education is the delay in marriage. Education often becomes a priority for women, leading to a delay in entering marital unions. Delayed marriage can significantly reduce the risk of abusive relationships. It empowers women to make informed decisions regarding their partners and situations, thereby decreasing the probability of being pressured into early or forced marriages which are frequently associated with abusive circumstances (The Sexual Violence Research Initiative, 2023).

2.8 Socialisation

Socialisation begins early in life, with individuals being exposed to gendered norms and expectations from a young age (Bandura, 1977). Socialisation is the process by which individuals learn and internalise the values, norms, and behaviours considered appropriate in their society (Darmon & Garnier, 2024). It plays a crucial role in shaping gender identity and expectations. As children are frequently socialised into specific gender roles, these early lessons may reinforce traditional power dynamics and set the stage for unequal relationships later in life (Darmon & Garnier, 2024).

Socialisation processes can inadvertently contribute to normalising aggressive behaviours, especially among males. Messages that encourage males to be dominant and discourage the expression of vulnerability can foster an environment where aggression is perceived as an acceptable means of asserting control (Darmon & Garnier, 2024).

Traditional media holds significant power as a tool for socialising young people, particularly through its portrayals of toxic masculinity (Trültzsch-Wijnen, 2020). Television shows, movies, advertisements, and other forms of mainstream media often depict narrow and harmful representations of masculinity, glorifying traits such as aggression, emotional suppression, and dominance over others (Trültzsch-Wijnen, 2020).

Moreover, the pervasive nature of traditional media means that these messages are continuously reinforced, affecting how young people perceive themselves and interact with others (Trültzsch-Wijnen, 2020). Over time, this can lead to the internalisation of harmful stereotypes, perpetuating cycles of GBV, discrimination, and inequality.

In the context of GBV, socialisation emerges as a significant factor. It is the process through which individuals internalise social and cultural norms, values, expectations and behaviours that can contribute to the perpetuation of GBV (Jewkes et al, 2015). Societal norms and stereotypes often socialise individuals into rigid gender roles related to power dynamics

(Jewkes, 2020). Additionally, males are taught to conform to traditional notions of masculinity, which prioritises being tough, dominant, and aggressive.

2.9 Faith-based Organisations

FBOs are institutions shaped by religious principles, values, or beliefs often founded by religious communities or individuals who share a common faith. Involved in diverse activities spanning from charitable projects to community upliftment. FBOs infuse their religious convictions into their various endeavours and operate according to specific religious or faith traditions (Daly, 2014). They are characterised by their shared religious values and beliefs, which shape their missions and activities.

As Sider and Unruh (2004) noted, FBOs are characterised by a unique set of principles governing their operations and distinct positions within communities and society, even though they share many qualities, strengths and weaknesses with secular, non-government organisations (NGOs).

2.9.1 Characteristics of Faith-based Organisations

Characteristics of faith-based organisations can vary widely, based on their specific religious context, denomination and organisational structure. However, several general characteristics are often associated with FBOs as follows:

- *Religious Foundation*: The central attribute of all FBOs is their religious or faith-based orientation. Their activities and missions are guided by their spiritual principles, teachings and values (Ebaugh *et al.*, 2003:411).
- *Compassion and Service*: FBOs are motivated by compassion and a commitment to aiding others, particularly those in need. They perceive their work as a tangible expression of their faith (Ebaugh *et al.*, 2003:411).
- *Diverse Activities*: Faith-based organisations engage in a broad spectrum of initiatives, from providing humanitarian assistance and healthcare to delivering educational services and supporting community development projects (Ebaugh *et al.*, 2003:412).
- *Community centred*: FBOs are often closely integrated with their local communities, and their services are specifically designed to address local needs. They often serve as trusted community institutions (Ebaugh *et al.*, 2003:412).

- *Religious Identity*: FBOs may maintain distinct affiliations and rituals that shape their organisational culture. They frequently incorporate religious practices into their work (Ebaugh *et al.*, 2003:412).

In this study, the WWSOSA coalition will be examined, considering its involvement with GBV issues.

2.10 The We Will Speak Out South Africa Coalition

The ²WWSOSA coalition, founded in 2013, is devoted to identifying and combatting Sexual and Gender-based Violence across all communities (WWSOSA, 2023). Its primary vision and mission is to break the silence surrounding GBV, dispel misconceptions about its impact on the victims, and provide a safe space for survivors to share their stories. Comprising leaders, organisations, and individuals from intersecting religious communities, the coalition is dedicated to eliminating SGBV and promoting a society founded on equality, safety, and respect for all (WWSOSA, 2023).

Initially established in the United Kingdom, the We Will Speak Out coalition has expanded into a global network with members spanning multiple countries (WWSOSA, 2023). Through engagement with approximately 200 survivors in the Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal provinces, the coalition aims to improve the survivors' quality of life by ensuring their immediate safety, which may involve relocation, obtaining restraining orders, or accessing safe housing options. They also collaborate with law enforcement to guide survivors through the legal process, providing information about their rights and the legal procedures (WWSOSA, 2023). These initiatives stem from the needs and issues identified by survivors during a needs assessment carried out in June 2013. Survivors highlighted the importance of safe places of worship and called upon religious leaders to take a moral stand against GBV (WWSOSA, 2023).

Collaborative organisations such as Religions for Peace South Africa, the Kwa-Zulu Natal Inter-Religious Council, the African Women of Faith Network, the Mercy and Peace Foundation, and the Global Network on Religion and Children have partnered with the WWSOSA coalition (WWSOSA, 2023).

WWSOSA's transformative approach includes providing ongoing support to families, children, youth, and the unemployed through a range of sustainable activities (WWSOSA, 2023). These

² <https://www.wwsosa.org.za>

activities span various domains, including sports, arts, extra lessons, empowerment workshops, interfaith prayers, study groups, support groups, music, drama, and dance, to empower women and contribute to ending violence against them. Additionally, periodic celebrations, talent shows, and community picnics facilitate progress and strengthen the community's resolve against violence (WWSOSA, 2023).

A webinar hosted by the WWSOSA coalition in 2022 highlighted that the GBV pandemic requires engagement from all sectors of society (SABC News, 2022). The discussion underscored the need to create safe spaces for survivors and engage in multi-stakeholder collaborations. It reaffirmed the collective responsibility to build safer and healthier communities, including prosecuting offenders and ensuring survivors have respectful access to support as they embark on their recovery journey (SABC News, 2022).

2.11 The Interaction between the Law and Gender-based Violence

All policy and legislative frameworks enacted in South Africa are derived from the Constitution, the country's highest law (Price, 2017). As a result, all South African citizens are afforded comprehensive protection by the Constitution, with Section 9 explicitly ensuring equal safety and prohibiting unfair discrimination on multiple grounds, including that of gender (Cassim & Mabeka, 2019:18).

Due to increased GBV, three laws have been gazetted in South Africa to protect women and girls from violence, including GBV (Mboyisa & Chelin, 2020). These laws include the Domestic Violence Act of 2003, which endorses issuing protection orders against domestic violence. Moreover, aside from the Domestic Violence Act of 2003, the Sexual Offences and Related Matters Act of 2007 strives to provide victims of sexual offences with the most extensive and least distressing legal protection. Its goal is to institute measures that empower state authorities to effectively enforce its provisions, with the aim of addressing and ultimately reducing the relatively high incidence of sexual offences in South Africa. The Sexual Offences Act, 2007 and the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Bill impose more stringent guidelines for issuing bail and sentences. These laws outlaw GBV and everyone's rights being upheld in South Africa (Klugman, 2017).

The Domestic Violence Act has also been amended to include sexual violence in its definition (Domestic Violence Act, 2003) and offer protection for female victims in court. Survivors can testify via closed-circuit television, preventing them from seeing their abuser again. Recognition of rape within marriage which the Domestic Violence Act recognises and, most

recently, propose alternatives to the confrontational criminal trial for prosecuting cases of sexual violence which means that a case of sexual violence can take place where a survivor would feel comfortable giving their testimony which now can take in a room rather than in an open court (Domestic Violence Act, 2003)

Numerous demonstrations have taken place because GBV is on the rise, and the administration of the government has been challenged to explain why sexual assaults and murders continue to occur in a democracy.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter has offered insights into the context of GBV in South Africa, emphasising the urgency for action. While responses to GBV have traditionally been reactive, there is a growing acknowledgment of the necessity for preventive measures. The chapter investigated the background of GBV, including its various manifestations and prevalence, and identifies contributing factors such as socio-cultural, economic and political influences. The role of FBOs in addressing GBV was examined and their significance in confronting this issue. Chapter 2 concluded with a discussion on the efforts of the WWSOSA coalition in supporting GBV survivors whilst also advocating for a violence-free society.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The research methodology undertaken in this study is ³qualitative as it enables the researcher to understand the findings of the study. This chapter outlines the research design in which a case study analysis was used to identify the WWSOSA coalition. Sampling was conducted using a non-probability sampling method for this study. The sample of the population size was also outlined, leading to the data collection method whereby semi-structured interviews were used. The method of data analysis was also established and ethical considerations were allowed for.

3.1 Research Methodology

3.1.1 Research Design

Holloway (1997) maintains that qualitative research is a social science method that centres on the effort of individuals to understand their experiences, assign meaning to these and interact with the world they inhabit. ⁴Qualitative research is a fundamental method in the social sciences focusing on exploring the perceptions of others and their interaction with their social contexts. Unlike quantitative research which seeks to quantify variables and establish statistical relationships, qualitative research aims to delve into the complexities of human behaviour, motivation and social phenomena (Creswell & Clark, 2023). The primary objective of this approach is to understand a person's social reality.

This research employed a case study design following Creswell's (2014) comprehensive definition of the qualitative method. Case studies involve an in-depth investigation into a programme, event, activity, process or individual(s). These investigations are characterised by time and activity and entail gathering comprehensive data through diverse data collection techniques over an extended period.

³ Qualitative research is often criticised for being subjective, as the researcher's interpretations and perspectives can influence the data collection and analysis. If the researcher's bias is not acknowledged or managed, it may lead to skewed findings

⁴ Critics like Mohajan (2018) argue that qualitative studies lack the objectivity found in quantitative research, making it difficult to generalize findings beyond the study sample.

In the context of this study, the WWSOSA coalition was selected as the subject of the case study due to its capacity to highlight the relationship between GBV and its repercussions for the victims. The coalition's activities, initiatives and responses to instances of GBV were considered instrumental in uncovering the complex dynamics of such violence. This case study aimed to offer a nuanced understanding of how the intervention strategies and survivor support mechanisms intersect, shedding light on the immediate and long-term effects of GBV on individuals. This method made it possible to investigate the wider socioeconomic ramifications of GBV.

Furthermore, the study interviewed key individuals within the organisation. These participants were deliberately selected for their extensive knowledge of the day-to-day operations of the coalition, ensuring that the study benefitted from these valuable insights.

3.2 Sampling

This study utilised the purposive sampling method, also referred to as judgment sampling deliberately selecting participants based on specific characteristics. This approach is valuable for investigating smaller samples within hidden populations, as only five participants took part in this study. Given the qualitative nature of the research, a decision was made to maintain a small yet focused sample size to gather in-depth and contextualised data.

Purposive sampling allows the researcher to avoid the limitations of pre-determined theories or fixed participant numbers. Essentially, the researcher identifies the required information and actively seeks individuals with the necessary knowledge or experience willing to contribute (Bernard, 2020). This method involved identifying and selecting individuals or groups knowledgeable on the phenomenon of interest (Cresswell, 2011:58). The study aimed to select five willing participants with a comprehensive understanding of and expertise within the WWSOSA coalition.

The coalition members were interviewed and suitable stakeholders were selected. This approach, known as snowball sampling, involves initially selecting participants who subsequently help identify and recruit additional participants (Heckathorn,1991:174). Snowball sampling begins with a small number of initial participants, known as 'seeds' who match the study's inclusion criteria. These participants in turn suggest other potential subjects who also meet the criteria (Zhang, 2021). This referral process is repeated, with each new participant recommending additional participants, gradually expanding the sample size. The

individuals were selected based on their experience in the field of GBV and their collective knowledge in the activities of the coalition or similar organisations; their background as gender-based activists proved invaluable to this research.

3.3 Population of the Study and Sample Size

The population of this qualitative research consisted of members of the WWSOSA coalition. The sample size was determined in accordance with Dworkin's (2012:1319) recommendation, which suggests a participant range of five to fifty individuals for qualitative studies. A sample represents a subset of a larger group or population from which insights, data or concepts about the entire group can be inferred (Olofinbiyi & Steyn, 2018:129).

The decision to select five participants was based on the composition of WWSOSA. The study commenced with an interview with the participants who were considered pivotal figures due to their extensive experience in dealing with GBV issues. It is important to note that all the participants were females between the age group of thirty to sixty and that this selection was not deliberate. Similarly, all the participants identified as Christian although this was not a defining criterion for inclusion in this study. ⁵The participants were identified as key stakeholders within the organisation.

3.4 Method of Data Collection

In qualitative research, the primary objective of data collection is to gather substantiating evidence for the research subject. To achieve this objective, the researcher collected insights from individuals associated with WWSOSA through interviews. As Creswell and Poth (2016) highlighted, interviews facilitate conversations with individuals on specific subjects. Utilising interviews as a research method extends beyond mere data collection, fostering dynamic and in-depth conversations where participants can articulate their thoughts, experiences and perspectives in a contextually rich manner (Creswell and Poth, 2016). The interview setting becomes a crucial space where researchers can delve into the intricacies of the chosen topic, moving beyond the superficial to understand the deeper underlying meanings, emotions, and intricacies embedded in the participants' responses.

⁵ To ensure the anonymity of participants their specific roles within the coalition could not be disclosed.

However, due to the constraints imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, conducting face-to-face interviews was not feasible. As a result, the interviews were conducted using the Zoom platform and audio recordings of these sessions were made for subsequent analysis.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

This study employed thematic analysis as the preferred approach for data analysis. Thematic analysis, considered an independent qualitative descriptive method, involves identifying, examining, and presenting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This foundational qualitative descriptive method provides researchers with essential skills for conducting various qualitative analyses.

The researcher approached the data analytically, critically and inquisitively. Analysing the data involved reviewing it multiple times to identify emergent themes. After each interview session, the data was promptly transcribed to facilitate analysis.

Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasise the need to assess themes to guarantee the consistency and understandability of the data. This process ensures that each theme's data is distinct and warrants separate classification.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are essential to research as they uphold values crucial to the cooperative efforts and guarantee the integrity and credibility of the research process (Creswell, 2017). These standards promote accountability, trust, mutual respect and fairness among researchers and participants, creating an environment conducive to knowledge acquisition.

To uphold ethical norms, participants in this study were engaged independently and given comprehensive information regarding the study's objectives, methods and possible consequences. To protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants, pseudonyms were used and their identities and personal information were kept confidential.

Prior to data collection, a gatekeeper's letter was obtained from the WWSOSA Chairperson, who ensured the study's authorisation. Participants received a detailed report and were assured of absolute confidentiality and autonomy. Informed consent was obtained, allowing participants to contribute to the study without fear of repercussions. They were also given the option to choose whether the interview could be recorded or not. Participants were guaranteed

that their information would be solely used for academic purposes and that they could withdraw from the research at any time. Original data would be stored in a locked file under password protection on the researcher's laptop and access to the information was restricted to the researcher and supervisor.

3.7 Validity

Validity in research is essential in establishing the credibility and reliability of study outcomes as it ensures that the research effectively measures the concepts it aims to explore (DeVellis, 2016). Validity directly influences the trustworthiness and applicability of the research findings.

Content validity was used in this research, focusing on the extent to which the research instrument, such as a questionnaire or survey, accurately represented the domain it intended to measure. (DeVellis, 2016). This form of validity ensured that the items included in the instrument were relevant and comprehensive in capturing the content under investigation.

In this study, content validity was ensured through expert judgment and content analysis, which involved whether the questionnaire adequately represented the content domain of interest. The questionnaire was designed to accurately assess the participant's feelings and perceptions on specific aspects related to the research topic.

3.8 Dependability

Dependability in research refers to the reliability and consistency of research methods and findings, ensuring that results remain consistent, stable and devoid of bias or error (Shetan, 2004:25). It is a critical aspect of research quality, essential for establishing confidence in the credibility and trustworthiness of research conclusions (Patton, 2014).

Consistency in data collection and analysis was maintained throughout the research process to ensure the dependability of their findings. Dependability contributes to the establishment of credible knowledge in academic and practical contexts.

3.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter provided an overview of the research methodology used in this dissertation. It emphasised adopting a case study approach, focussing on the WWSOSA coalition to examine the dynamics of GBV interventions. Purposive sampling was chosen to

ensure that experienced participants were included in the study and snowball sampling was used. Data was collected through Zoom interviews, allowing in-depth discussion while abiding COVID-19 restrictions. Thematic analysis, following the framework by Braun and Clarke, was used to analyse the data, identifying patterns and themes from the responses. Ethical considerations were observed to protect the confidentiality and well-being of the participants. By aligning the research methodology with the study's objectives, the researcher aimed to generate meaningful and valid findings that address the research questions effectively, thereby contributing to advancing knowledge in GBV interventions and support.

CHAPTER 4

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

4.0 Introduction

Intersectional feminism is a dynamic and transformative framework essential for navigating the complexities around social inequalities. This chapter explores intersectional feminism from its origins and core principles, and critically examines the relationship between gender and diverse social identities. When addressing GBV, an intersectional feminist approach is crucial as this perspective acknowledges that individuals experience violence differently, based on their intersecting identities. By understanding and addressing these intersecting layers of oppression, more effective and inclusive strategies to combat GBV can be created.

The chapter also examines the WWSOSA coalition's commitment to recognising and responding to intersecting oppressions, illustrating why intersectional feminism forms the theoretical framework of this research.

4.1 Intersectional Feminism

4.1.1 Definition of Intersectional Feminism

In 1989, Kimberlé W. Crenshaw, an African-American lawyer, introduced the term 'intersectionality' into feminist discourse. By consolidating and organising black feminist critiques of dominant feminist theory, Crenshaw (1989:138) aimed to 'address the limitations of an existing paradigm that represented women as a homogenous group, focussing on issues of white, middle-class women.' By doing this, she not only coined but also presented intersectionality as a unique perspective for analysing the intricate intersections and amplification of different forms of inequality (Crenshaw, 1989:141).

Fundamentally, intersectional feminism acknowledges the overlap between individuals' social identities and promotes inclusion. This approach seeks to elevate the voices of those experiencing several forms of oppression and provides a comprehensive understanding of their unique experiences. Furthermore, intersectional feminism acknowledges the historical context and institutional biases perpetuating significant disparities. These variations stem from individuals' diverse experiences and challenges at the intersections of different social categories (Peter, 2021).

4.2. History of Intersectional Feminism

Intersectional feminism has become a critical tool for analysing and advocating social justice. By promoting inclusivity and addressing systemic issues that perpetuate inequality, intersectional feminism emphasises a comprehensive and empathetic approach to activism, ensuring that the struggles of all individuals, particularly the marginalised, are recognised and addressed (Williams, 2012:1114).

In addition to addressing the fundamental concerns of difference and diversity in social stratifications, intersectionality upholds the traditional feminist objective of formulating theories applicable to the challenges faced by women (Williams, 2012:1115). Furthermore, it offers a framework that any feminist researcher can utilise, provided they are willing to leverage their position as a resource for analysis, rather than mere identification.

Intersectionality transformed feminist studies uniquely by connecting the critical approach of postmodern feminist theory with the viewpoints of critical feminist theory (Duhacek *et al.*, 2019:75). Intersectionality supports postmodern feminism by emphasising the diversity of women's experiences, influenced by multiple, intersecting social identities. It introduces more complex narratives into feminist discourse, challenging monolithic representations of women's issues and highlighting the variations within gender experiences.

The intersectional approach focuses on understanding the unique experiences of oppression and privilege individuals face due to belonging to multiple social categories (Saraswati *et al.*, 2018). This approach enables the recognition and combatting of discrimination faced by marginalised individuals, addressing the overwhelming impact of oppressive systems such as patriarchy (Saraswati *et al.*, 2018).

Intersectional theory looks at that which makes people who they are, like their identities, their place in society and any unfair treatment they might face. It helps people understand the complex parts of society by examining different groups, how they are labelled, and how they are treated unfairly (hooks, 2004). By pointing out and addressing the tendency to overlook certain identities, intersectionality ensures the recognition of diversity within each group and the unique situations of individuals at these intersections, helping them gain their rights.

4.3. Core Principles of Intersectional Feminism

Intersectional feminism offers a nuanced understanding of oppression by highlighting the interconnectedness of power dynamics and advocating for a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of inequality. The core principles of intersectional feminism shape its perspective on social issues and are outlined as follows:

Intersectional feminism begins with the recognition that everyone has multiple identities that shape their experiences. These identities include, but are not limited to race, gender, sexuality, class, and ability (Lorde, 2007). Each person's unique combination of these identities affects how they experience the world and how they are treated by others.

One of the main principles of intersectional feminism is understanding that different forms of oppression can overlap. For instance, sexism, racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination can combine in complex ways. This means that addressing only one form of discrimination without considering the others is not enough to achieve true equality.

Intersectional feminism emphasises the importance of inclusion and representation of all groups within feminist movements (Mohanty, 1988:65). It aims to ensure that the voices of marginalised individuals are heard and that their experiences are considered when creating policies and advocating for change. This principle challenges the mainstream feminist movement to be more inclusive of diverse perspectives.

While equality means treating everyone the same, equity means giving everyone what they need to be successful. Intersectional feminism focuses on equity, recognising that different people need different resources and opportunities to overcome their unique challenges (McCall, 2005:1572). This principle acknowledges that achieving fairness sometimes requires treating people differently based on their specific circumstances.

While these principles provide a framework for addressing complex issues related to gender, race and other social issues, intersectional feminism is a dynamic field that evolves through scholarly inquiry and activist engagement (Peter, 2021). Activists contribute significantly to its evolution by bringing attention to emerging issues and advocating for more inclusive and intersectional approaches to dismantling systems of oppression (Davis, 1984; Lorde, 2007). This collaborative process of learning from academic research and lived experiences ensure the resilience and adaptability of intersectional feminism in advancing social justice agendas.

4.4 Gender and Intersectional Feminism

When exploring gender through the lens of intersectional feminism, it becomes clear that women's experiences defy simple categorisation. Bilge (2010:27) emphasises the need to consider factors such as socioeconomic status, social hierarchy, religious affiliation, and national identity to fully understand GBV's complexities. McCall (2005:1581) further emphasises intersectionality as a crucial advancement in feminist thought, providing deeper insights into gender dynamics.

Intersectionality as defined by Shields (2008:85), 'highlights the interconnections between various social identities, revealing the interplay of power dynamics inherent in gender dynamics. This highlights the significance of analysing gender within intersecting social identities, as these factors heavily influence individuals' perceptions and experiences with gender (McCall, 2005:1487).

A key notion in feminist theory, is that social identities influence each other. This approach has changed the approach to gender by focusing on how social identities affect the views and interactions with gender. To understand gender, one needs to recognise the power dynamics within social identities (Collins, 1990).

4.5 Gender-Based Violence and Intersectional Feminism

GBV intersects with various forms of oppression, as Damant *et al.* (2008:52) argue, 'stressing the importance of intersectional feminist perspectives in understanding complexities. Intersectionality reveals how oppressions and privileges intertwine, exacerbating one's vulnerability to violence.' Individuals facing multiple forms of marginalisation may be at a higher risk of experiencing various forms of GBV due to the compounding impact of systemic discrimination (Damant *et al.* 2008:58). Because it can understand these complexities, intersectionality is the best approach for studying how GBV treatments are provided, especially in the WWSOSA coalition's humanitarian and developmental work.

Employing an intersectional perspective is crucial when examining the societal factors contributing to a culture wherein GBV thrives. Women of colour, non-heterosexual individuals and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds face intersecting forms of discrimination and disadvantage, compounding their challenges (Peter, 2021). These individuals may encounter simultaneous obstacles on various fronts, acknowledging the need for intersectional analysis.

Many organisations, including the WWSOSA coalition, come from social justice, feminist, and anti-racist movements. The people in these organisations are deeply involved in social justice work and are dedicated to helping women and girls facing violence. Their teamwork and solidarity are guided by the unique needs and experiences of marginalised women, shaping their goals, objectives, and methods.

4.6 Intersectionality: Addressing Disparities

Even though women make up half of the world's population, they still face major inequalities in healthcare, education, employment and social status. These disparities stem from social, cultural and economic factors, impacting on women of different ages, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds (Peter, 2021).

In terms of health, women often encounter disparities, ranging from limited access to reproductive healthcare services to inequities in the identification and management of specific medical ailments. Cultural norms and societal expectations can influence a woman's health-seeking behaviour, leading to delays or inadequate medical attention (Peter, 2021). Educational disparities persist as well, resulting in unequal access to quality education, higher dropout rates, and restricted opportunities for advanced studies and professional development for women. Societal expectations and gender stereotypes play a role in shaping women's choices regarding their education and career paths, limiting their options.

Regarding employment, gender-based wage gaps, occupational segregation and barriers to career advancement continue to hinder the economic empowerment of women as highlighted in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report (2021). Discriminatory practices and biases in hiring and promotion processes contribute to these disparities, reinforcing gender imbalances in the workforce.

Women also face social status inequalities, including discrimination, violence, and limited representation in decision-making. Deep-rooted cultural norms and gender roles limit women's independence and prevent them from fully participating in social, economic and political areas.

Women from racial and ethnic minorities often face additional challenges, including systemic racism and disparities in healthcare (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, 2023). Limited access to healthcare facilities, language barriers and implicit biases within the healthcare system contribute to reduced healthcare outcomes for these women. These disparities can lead to delays in diagnosis and treatment as well as disparities in preventive

care, maternal health, and access to reproductive services. For example, an African woman may face not only gender-based violence but also racial discrimination, and a transgender woman may encounter both gender-based and transphobic violence.

The multifaceted disparities among women underscore the importance of collective efforts of NPOs such as the WWSOSA coalition in striving for gender equality.

4.7 Challenges and Critiques of Intersectionality

By recognising the complexity inherent in intersecting identities, intersectional feminism grapples with ⁶several limitations and controversies. There is the challenge of encompassing the diversity of identities and experiences within this framework, as acknowledged by Crenshaw (1989).

Moreover, conflicts may emerge within the ⁷broader feminist movements due to divergent goals, priorities, and strategies (hooks, 2015). While intersectional feminism emphasises acknowledging, various intersecting identities and manifestations of oppression, differing priorities among feminist groups can lead to conflicts over resource allocation and efforts.

Critics maintain that intersectionality might place too much focus on identity and victimhood, which could detract from important aspects of feminism such as empowerment and agency. They believe that intersectionality sometimes overemphasises differences between social groups, which can create divisions and reduce solidarity among feminists. There are concerns that excessive reliance on intersectionality could foster a culture where people view themselves as victims of systemic oppression. Downing (2018: 47) contends that,

intersectionality places excessive emphasis on group identities, potentially overlooking the individuality of a person. This lack of attention can lead intersectionality to generate oversimplified interpretations and mistaken presumptions regarding the formation of an individual's beliefs and viewpoints.

⁶ Critics like Corradi (2017:14) argue that intersectional feminism's focus on multiple, intersecting identities can make it difficult to apply in practice. The complexity of analyzing numerous intersecting factors can lead to challenges in creating clear and actionable social policies.

⁷ The emphasis on intersectionality can sometimes lead to fragmentation within the feminist movement, as different groups may prioritize different aspects of intersectionality (e.g., race vs. sexuality vs. disability), potentially weakening the collective power of the movement.

According to Corradi (2017:12),

attempting to conceptualise or examine a collective becomes impractical due to the intricate, individualised, and dynamic blend of identities each person holds, which are perpetually evolving and always different from any other individual in existence.

Also, intersectional feminism's focus on personal experiences and identities might not work well in all cultural and social settings. Since it comes from Western feminist ideas, intersectionality may not fully understand the complexities of gender dynamics in non-Western cultures, where norms, values, and power structures are very different. This limits its effectiveness in addressing global gender inequalities.

4.7.1 Engaging with Opposing Views of Intersectional Feminism

Lhamon (2018:24) argues that 'emphasising identity-based categories in intersectional feminism can lead to essentialism, reducing individuals to their group identities and oversimplifying the complexity of individuals' experiences. Opponents such as Brah state that 'intersectional feminism contend that not all individuals within a particular identity category share the same experiences or perspectives' (Brah, 1996:18).

Furthermore, critics suggest that intersectional feminism perpetuates a victimhood narrative, portraying women and marginalised individuals as perpetual victims, which hinders empowerment and agency (Hirshman, 2005). Nash (2008) recommends that implementing intersectional feminist principles in policy and activism can be challenging due to the framework's complexity, sometimes resulting in impractical solutions for addressing social inequalities.

4.8. Conclusion

In conclusion, intersectional feminism emerges as a crucial and transformative framework for understanding and addressing the complexities of social justice. By acknowledging the interconnectedness of diverse social identities and power structures, intersectional feminism transcends simplistic approaches, recognising individuals' unique struggles at the intersections of different forms of oppression.

This framework illuminates the multifaceted nature of discrimination and equips researchers with a critical lens to critique systemic inequities. Emphasising inclusivity in advocacy, intersectional feminism urges us to address the intersecting challenges of marginalised individuals and dismantle the interconnected systems of oppression that perpetuate inequality.

From healthcare and education to employment and social status, intersectional feminism underscores its relevance across multiple domains. It impels researchers to adopt a holistic understanding of gender-based issues and address gender disparities but also, the complex interplay of race, class, sexuality, and other factors that shaping individual experiences.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS

5.0 Introduction

Thematic analysis was utilised as a method of analysing data to identify, analyse and present patterns or themes within a dataset, such as interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It involves systematically organising and interpreting data to uncover meaningful patterns and insights. Therefore, Braun and Clarke's six-phase methodology was used to interpret the data presented.

5.1 Six-phase Methodology

The six-phase methodology was applied to a comprehensive data analysis in this study.

The following outlines the six-phase methodology:

Phase 1: Familiarising yourself with the data

Phase 2: Generating codes

Phase 3: Searching for themes

Phase 4: Reviewing themes

Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

Phase 6: Producing the report / manuscript

These steps will assist the researcher conceptualise the data that was provided by the participants. It will also allow the researcher to systematically analyse the data presented.

5.1.1 Phase 1: Familiarise yourself with the data

Familiarisation with the data, the foundational first phase in Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis methodology, centres on immersing oneself in the qualitative data to establish a comprehensive understanding. This phase involves thoroughly and repeatedly engaging with the data to become intimately acquainted with its contents.

Initially, the researcher engaged in data immersion which involved immersion in unprocessed data comprising transcripts, notes, and audio recordings. Second, multiple engagements occurred when the researcher engaged with the data multiple times to go beyond surface-level observations. Each subsequent reading or listening session revealed new insights and details

that might have been overlooked initially, and note-taking was used whereby the researcher took detailed notes of the transcripts, capturing initial impressions, key observations and any emerging ideas or patterns.

Familiarisation with the data phase established the foundation for the entire analysis by fostering a connection with the content and laying the foundation for the subsequent phases of thematic analysis.

5.1.2 Phase 2: Generating Codes

The researcher systematically deconstructed the qualitative data into smaller, meaningful units by assigning initial codes to capture key concepts, themes, or patterns embedded within the data. This critical step in thematic analysis involves identifying and labelling segments of significance within the data. Each unit is given a concise code that captured the essence of the content. This could be a word or a phrase. The following initial codes were identified:

- The WWSOSA coalition
- The ideological beliefs that inform the coalition
- Gender justice in South Africa
- The challenges faced by patriarchy

5.1.3 Phase 3: Developing Themes

Themes represent meaningful and noteworthy aspects of the data that enhance comprehension of the research question or phenomenon being explored (Braun & Clarke, 2006). They evolve from initial observations, refining and expanding as the analysis progresses. This involves further sub-categorisation, exploring the inter-theme relationships, or considering the implications of the findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Throughout the process, the researcher refined and improved the thematic framework, ensuring that it accurately captured the nuances within the data. As the analysis progressed, themes underwent revisions, combined, or expanded to capture the complexity of the research material. This iterative approach aligned with the ongoing development and refinement of the themes throughout the research process.

The researcher revised the emergent themes by systematically analysing the data represented. Themes identified were:

- Understanding the WWSOSA Coalition
- Faith-based organisations and GBV
- Patriarchy in South Africa

5.1.4 Phase 4: Reviewing the Themes

In thematic analysis, researchers evaluate the identified themes for coherence, relevance, and consistency (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This crucial phase ensures that the themes accurately reflect the patterns observed in the data and contribute meaningfully to understanding the research question. The researcher conducted the evaluation and assessed the coherence of each theme, to ensure that the codes grouped under a theme were logically connected and formed meaningful patterns.

In addition, the reviewing process involves assessing the depth of analysis within each theme. The researcher assessed whether the themes provided a nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study. Table 1 below presents a summary of the primary themes alongside their respective sub-themes.

MAIN THEMES	SUB-THEMES
Understanding the WWSOSA coalition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defining the WWSOSA coalition • The ideological foundations of the coalition • A collaborative initiative with a partner in enhancing gender justice in South Africa
Faith-based organisations and GBV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underperformance in combating GBV in the faith-based sector
Patriarchy in South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patriarchal influences in religious contexts

Table 1: Summary of the primary themes (Compiled by Author: 24/8/23)

5.1.5 Phase 5: Defining and naming Themes

The definitions were brief yet succeeded in capturing the depth and intricacy of the subject. The primary objective was to convey the essence of communicating the theme effectively. The definitions reflected the participants' perspectives and were grounded in the data and resonated with the experiences and voices of those being studied (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Each interview was transcribed verbatim to ensure this process was followed.

Naming and defining themes should be sensitive to the data's cultural, social, or contextual nuances. This approach ensures that the analysis is culturally competent and contextually relevant. The researcher remained neutral throughout the interview, weighing all factors before assigning names to themes. The themes were defined and named after transcripts were analysed thoroughly. Every time a word or phrase reappeared it was highlighted which led to naming the themes.

5.1.6 Phase 6: Producing the Report

The analysis was transformed into a comprehensible written document connected to the central themes, primary research inquiry, and existing literature. Chapter 6 will expand on the findings from the researcher's standpoint.

5.2. Identification of Themes

5.2.1 Theme 1: Understanding the We Will Speak Out South Africa Coalition

WWSOSA was inaugurated on November 25, 2013 by Archbishop Thabo Makgoba of Cape Town, who pledged the Anglican Communion's commitment to addressing GBV in South Africa, by breaking the silence surrounding it (WWSOSA, 2023). Subsequently, various activities and events have taken place. Mary Adonis (pseudonym) outlines how the WWSOSA coalition was initiated and their concerns:

When survivors were interviewed, they said that at a time when you've suffered sexual violence is the time when the first person you want to speak to is your faith leader or somebody from your faith community, and for them, from their church in this case and they said that that often was the last place they got the support that they needed. A study was presented to a number of church leaders during the sixteen days' campaign in 2013, I think it was November 27th, anyway. And, and it was agreed there that it was important to form, some sort of, network of, more progressive, church leaders and activists within the churches that would support survivors and would also, together with the survivors, so

advocacy within the churches for them to understand the damage that they have done and that they can do and what, the, what, what survivors actually need. So that's how it started.

Other participants concurred that the WWSOSA coalition was created because:

We felt that there were too many women stuck in abusive relationships not knowing what to do and the churches were not and are still not addressing the issues that need to be addressed so we felt that it that was our call that to teach churches and faith leaders and support the women on this issue as we know now is also a second pandemic in our country.

GBV has been an enduring challenge in South Africa, and the COVID-19 pandemic served to exacerbate the situation. The pandemic intensified pre-existing social and economic disparities, leading to an increase in GBV cases. Lockdown measures implemented to control the spreading of the virus created environments where individuals, particularly women, found themselves at a higher risk of experiencing violence within the confines of their homes.

The South African government and various organisations at the time strove to address this dual crisis by implementing interventions, providing support services and raising awareness on the intersection of GBV and the pandemic. Despite these efforts, there was little improvement, and GBV continued to rise. Without significant change, many women remain trapped in abusive relationships, lacking the necessary resources and support to seek help.

The main concern for the coalition is that women do not have access to safety after experiencing GBV, leaving them destitute. This lack of refuge is concerning because, without a safe space, survivors have nowhere to turn, forcing them to remain in abusive relationships. This perpetuates the vicious cycle of GBV, putting women at risk of further abuse.

Recognising this critical need, the coalition was established to provide survivors with a haven and support. Furthermore, there was a need for church leaders to be more involved in addressing GBV. Church leaders have a moral responsibility to support survivors within their communities. Many view it as their moral duty to address issues of injustice and suffering, seeing GBV as a significant violation of human rights and dignity. Through proactive involvement in this matter, religious leaders have the potential to significantly contribute by providing support, advocacy, and establishing secure environments for survivors, with the goal of ending the cycle of violence.

Overall, the involvement of church leaders in cases of GBV is essential for fostering safer, more supportive communities where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

Survivors of GBV are key allies in the coalition's work. Their voices and experiences help the coalition understand what more needs to be done to eradicate GBV in the community. By acknowledging that more efforts are needed to safeguard women against GBV, the coalition can improve its strategies and interventions. At present, the coalition collaborates with close to 200 survivors across the Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal provinces, offering mentoring and support aimed at enhancing their quality of life (WWSOSA, 2023).

The insight and first-hand knowledge of survivors are invaluable. Their experiences highlight individual difficulties and hurdles in similar circumstances, offering a critical perspective that can inform more effective intervention strategies. Sharing their stories empowers other survivors to speak out, seek help and access support services. Survivors can also offer invaluable peer support to others, providing empathy, understanding, and encouragement. This support creates a secure environment where survivors feel comfortable expressing their emotions and recounting their experiences without fear of criticism or societal shame.

5.2.1.1 Sub-theme 1: Defining the WWSOSA Coalition

The WWSOSA coalition was established to support survivors of GBV and is committed to ending sexual violence in South Africa and beyond. Jane Ellis (pseudonym), articulates the coalition's dedication:

We as the We Will Speak Out is a coalition committed to demonstrating, mobilising, and leadership to end the pain of sexual violence across the world. We recognise that together, we need to speak out against sexual violence and break the silence that exists. Let us join hands and work together to change this story forever.

Despite ongoing efforts to speak out against GBV, much more needs to be done, such as implementing new policy changes and governmental measures crucial in dealing with GBV appropriately. Deeply entrenched beliefs persist in viewing GBV as a minor concern, however, the rising number of cases of GBV as evident in police and statistics reports underscores the urgency for action.

Breaking the silence around GBV is a positive step, but is not sufficient on its own. While organisations such as the WWSOSA coalition strive to curb GBV, their efforts alone are insufficient. A cooperative strategy involving multiple stakeholders is imperative. This strategy

should include the government implementing and enforcing effective policies, law enforcement ensuring justice and protection for survivors, and community leaders promoting awareness and cultural change.

A critical issue is the lack of faith in the criminal justice system. Many GBV cases go unprosecuted or are withdrawn due to public distrust in the justice system. This distrust often forces survivors back into the cycle of abuse, making it difficult to break.

5.2.1.2 Sub-Theme 2: The Ideological Foundations of the Coalition

The WWSOSA coalition is guided by a set of ideological values that shape its vision and actions. Elizabeth Tanner (pseudonym) outlines these values:

So our vision is of transformed, just and reconciled communities. So, our vision is not just that, there is less GBV, but it's a much broader vision, in terms of, peace and, and harmony but that can't happen without justice. So our understanding is that we cannot address issues of GBV without addressing issues of gender justice. And that's, I think, also what makes us different from many other faith-based, formations to address GBV— which might have practical programmes to deal with GBV but they don't necessarily try and tackle the underlying ideological drivers in the church and in other faith, institution, that drive male dominance and female submission and, and, the kinds of inequalities and differential value given to men versus women boys versus girls and heterosexuals versus, those who are non-conforming.

The participant's statement is reinforced by the WWSOSA (2017) in their constitution, which highlights the coalition's primary goals: to enhance support for survivors, reduce stigmatisation, and foster stronger collaboration between faith leaders and other stakeholders in prevention initiatives and survivor assistance at provincial and local community levels. The crucial aspect is translating these written objectives into tangible actions. Often, mandates remain texts and are not put into action; this should not be accepted in the case of GBV because of the increased number of incidents that occur daily.

Elizabeth Tanner (pseudonym) went on to mention additional ideologies:

Do no harm. That it's important to ensure that no harm is brought to individuals and communities in all that we do and that is also linked to our next one, which is equality and inclusivity. That we embrace diversity and we seek to treat all individuals with respect and dignity. And so we also respect that, and I don't know if it's here anywhere, that, gender conscientisation is a journey. And so we can't, in our training programmes,

in our, our work with church leaders, and survivors and, allies and so on, we can't declare that we have the ultimate truth and we know exact what all the answers are.

Collaborative efforts from various religious organisations, including Religions for Peace South Africa, the KZN Inter-Religious Council, the African Women of Faith Network, the Mercy and Peace Foundation, and the Global Network on Religion and Children have joined forces with We Will Speak Out South Africa and other partners. They represent the unified voice as a compassionate family dedicated to the well-being of the vulnerable (Fudu, 2021). GBV, femicide, and all other forms of abuse and injustice contradict the principles of all religions. By standing together and taking local action, offering concern as citizens and support as caring family members, individuals of faith may transform society towards a more peaceful existence (Fudu, 2021).

Many survivors find it difficult to come out to their families and religious institutions about their experience with GBV because of the sensitive nature of what has happened to them. Not all families are caring and willing to accept that a member of their family has been a victim of GBV. In many instances families choose to rather overlook what happened than become involved, perpetuating the silence and stigma prevalent in many families.

This section outlined the core ideologies of the coalition: doing no harm, promoting equality and inclusivity and striving for transformation and reconciliation of communities.

5.2.1.3 Sub-Theme 3: A Collaborative Initiative with a Partner in Enhancing Gender Justice in South Africa

Gender justice in South Africa involves addressing equality, rights, and opportunities for people of all genders. Despite significant strides in promoting gender equality, challenges persist. Some key aspects of the collaborative initiatives between WWSOSA and their faith-based partners in enhancing gender justice in South Africa, according to Jane Ellis (pseudonym) are as follows:

August 2019, we worked with UKZN, in Maritzburg, gender-religion, gender-religion, we had a, an event at the university called Unsilencing the Silence. And it comprised a conference as well as a day of complete silence, and we taped up our mouths with rather vicious tape, and the whole day. There was a lot of work of listening to survivors, also student survivors and different kinds of survivors and also addressing conversations with church leaders, and then some academics and students of the university and then we had a, a silent march, Golf Road to the Methodist thingy, uh, what's it called, seminary, and then

we had a service there, and it was quite controversial actually. Some of the survivors were deeply offended at some of the language used and so on and it was quite a learning curve. But what we also did in that... on that day of silence, we made it also a healing day so I think we had two or three days of conference. And then we had the one day of silence.

The 'Unsilencing the Silence' event provided a safe platform for women and survivors of abuse to share their experiences and break their silence. It was a poignant space, allowing their voices to be heard and validated. However, the event raised important questions, such as how to respond to these narratives. Further concerns were the environments these survivors returned to after sharing their truths, as it was possible that some could face further violation and victimisation upon returning home. This event highlights the importance of creating ongoing support systems and safe environments for survivors, ensuring that their bravery in sharing their experiences is met with sustained action and protection. Collaborative efforts like these between WWSOSA and faith-based partners are crucial in addressing and enhancing gender justice in South Africa.

5.2.2 Theme 2: Faith-Based Organisations and Gender-based Violence

While some FBOs actively engage in efforts to combat GBV, there are significant challenges and criticisms, suggesting that these organisations may need to do more. Jane Ellis (pseudonym) highlights these challenges:

Senior faith-based leaders want to get involved and there are a number of reasons some of them are perpetrators themselves so they become very uncomfortable with the conversations and how they treat their own wives the way they treat people around them again and again I refer to the systems so entrenched in our churches and secondly I also think that the majority of faith leaders are men and they have this bro club mentality and I honestly don't think that they do justice to our scriptures and they don't relate the brokenness.

Specific religious interpretations or traditional beliefs may contribute to the perpetuation of gender inequalities or tolerance of harmful practices. In many religious traditions, scriptures are interpreted in ways that assign different roles, rights, and responsibilities to males and females. These interpretations often prioritise patriarchal values, portraying males as leaders and females as subordinates. This reinforces gender inequalities and justifies discriminatory practices, especially in religious spaces. For example, women may be barred from leadership positions or excluded from certain religious ceremonies, perpetuating discrimination.

Resistance to challenging traditional interpretations may stem from the desire to maintain religious orthodoxy or social order. Faith leaders, adhering strictly to specific interpretations, may be slow to adapt to evolving social norms on gender equality and women's rights. They wield considerable influence in shaping the beliefs and viewpoints of their congregations and their strict adherence can provide stability and continuity, but conversely also create resistance to change (Castelli, 2007). Balancing tradition with the need to address contemporary issues requires a proactive approach, including reinterpretation of texts, inclusive leadership and open dialogue (Crisp, 2017).

It is essential to recognise the diversity of attitudes within religious communities. While many faith leaders actively promote gender equality and challenge harmful practices, a few still choose to ignore GBV, emphasising the need for education on how to openly address these issues within their faith communities.

As society progresses and awareness of gender equality grows, there is a movement within various religious communities to re-examine interpretations that contribute to discrimination or harmful practices (Castelli, 2007). By challenging long-standing interpretations and practices, these communities are working to create more inclusive and equitable environments. Efforts to balance tradition with contemporary values of equality demonstrate the potential for religious traditions to evolve and contribute positively to broader social change (Crisp, 2017). Some faith leaders are embracing a more inclusive and progressive understanding of their religious teachings, aligning them with contemporary values of equality and justice (Castelli, 2007). This journey requires the instruction and guidance of religious leaders committed to fostering a more equitable and just society.

5.2.2.1 Sub-Theme 1: Underperformance in Combating Gender-based Violence in the Faith-based Sector

Some faith traditions often struggle to combat GBV effectively due to adherence to traditional gender roles and cultural roles. These roles often perpetuate harmful attitudes and behaviours, inhibiting progress in addressing GBV.

Nora Jones (pseudonym) explains how traditional gender roles inhibit FBOs from effectively combating GBV:

Traditional gender expectations often assign specific tasks and roles to individuals based on their gender. For example, certain religious beliefs may stipulate that men should primarily take on provider and decision-making roles, while women are

expected to prioritise household responsibilities. These established gender norms can potentially create unequal power dynamics between men and women. When a religious community reinforces the idea that men should exclusively hold authoritative positions and decision-making authority, it can perpetuate a societal environment where women face marginalisation and disempowerment. Furthermore, in some instances, adhering to traditional gender roles may normalise or tolerate various forms of violence. If a society embraces the belief that men inherently possess greater dominance or entitlement, it may contribute to the justification or trivialisation of violence against women.

Pitcher and Bowley (2002) affirm this, noting that these norms traditionally prescribe that women undertake domestic roles while men fulfil the role of providers through employment. Furthermore, these norms stipulate that women should be submissive to their husbands, while men are expected to hold the primary decision-making authority

Nora Jones further states:

The church holds a crucial position in addressing GBV because of its significant influence within communities. Inadequate education and training on GBV issues may leave church leaders unprepared to effectively address these challenges. A lack of understanding about the dynamics and consequences of GBV can hinder the development of appropriate responses and supportive mechanisms.

Choi (2017:400) states that religious leaders show a willingness to actively participate in preventing and responding to GBV once they are informed about its prevalence as a community issue. However, they express a need for additional training to address GBV effectively. Comprehensive training and support are necessary for religious leaders to engage with issues related to GBV adequately, potentially changing their perspectives and making them more supportive of women who have experienced violence.

Despite the reluctance of FBOs to openly address GBV due to concerns of reputational damage or discomfort with sensitive discussions, they should not ignore the reality of GBV. Women often turn to their religious institutions for support when facing GBV, making it imperative for FBOs to acknowledge and address the issue

Elizabeth Tanner (pseudonym) supports this by stating:

FBOs, as entities, may be apprehensive about potential harm to their reputation if allegations of GBV become public. There could be a concern that openly addressing the issue might result in unfavourable perceptions of the organisation, impacting its credibility and its capacity to attract and retain members.

5.2.3 Theme 3: Patriarchy in South Africa

Efforts to confront patriarchy in South Africa require a multifaceted approach encompassing legal reforms, grassroots activism and cultural transformation. Legislative measures, including laws combating GBV and policies promoting gender equality, aim to address systemic issues. Social movements and advocacy groups, including those spearheaded by women, actively challenge patriarchal norms, striving for a more inclusive and just society.

Thandi Zoleka (pseudonym) asserts that:

There's a strong belief that because of patriarchy, most of these issues around GBV and, you know, and the violence against women is drawn by power – which is, underpinned by the patriarchal system that exist.

Indeed, power dynamics lie at the core of GBV. The patriarchal system concentrates power primarily in the hands of the male, creating an environment where the misuse of power becomes a tool of control. Within this framework, violence against women emerges as a manifestation of the power imbalances perpetuated by patriarchal norms. Males, operating within a system that privileges their authority, might resort to violence to establish and maintain dominance. Addressing this issue requires challenging the underlying power and privilege structures perpetuating GBV. It involves advancing gender equality, dismantling patriarchal beliefs, and establishing mechanisms of accountability for perpetrators of violence. Furthermore, providing comprehensive support and resources for GBV is essential in breaking the cycle of abuse and cultivating a culture of respect, equality, and non-violence.

According to the participants, the only way to end a patriarchal society is by:

Fundamental to breaking the cycle of violence is the empowerment of women within the context of dismantling patriarchy. This entails offering women economic opportunities, education, and a nurturing social environment that encourages independence and autonomy. By questioning conventional gender roles and empowering women, it becomes feasible to disrupt the power imbalances that form the foundation of GBV.

Access to quality education plays an essential role in empowering women. It enables them to pursue diverse career paths, challenge societal expectations and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Education fosters critical thinking and empowers women to advocate for their rights. Moreover, it serves a preventive function by raising awareness about GBV, its repercussions and the available support systems.

5.2.3.1 Sub-theme 1: Patriarchal Influences in Religious Contexts

Patriarchy within religious contexts encompasses entrenched structures and interpretations that uphold male dominance and authority, consequently limiting women's participation and perpetuating gender hierarchies.

Nosipho Dlamini (pseudonym) notes the historical interpretations of religious texts that endorse patriarchal convictions often depicting God using male terms and endorsing gender roles where males hold authority. According to Dlamini,

Historically, interpretations of numerous religious texts have tended to support patriarchal conventions. This is evident in the depiction of God or deities using male terms, and in the understanding of certain passages as endorsing gender roles where men hold positions of authority.

Participants in the study echoed the sentiment that the historical interpretation of religious texts have perpetuated patriarchal values, thereby reinforcing traditional gender hierarchies. One notable aspect is 'the depiction of the divine using male-centric language, inadvertently associating power and authority with masculinity' (Ortner, 2011:22). Additionally, males have historically held leadership roles across various traditions such as priests, pastors, imams and other religious authorities, while females have mostly been marginalised or excluded from these positions.

This historical trend was confirmed by Lilly Evans (pseudonym), who stated:

Historically, men have mainly been designated for roles in religious leadership, steering the spiritual course of communities, providing interpretations of sacred texts, and overseeing religious ceremonies. Consequently, a gendered power structure has emerged, wherein men are frequently seen as the principal intermediaries connecting the divine and the community.

The significant role of males as intermediaries within religious communities underscore the entrenched gender dynamics within religious contexts. Males have traditionally been regarded

as the primary intermediaries bridging the gap between the divine realm and the believers' everyday lives, encompassing responsibilities such as interpreting religious teachings, conducting rituals, and guiding the community in matters of faith and morality (Witherington, 2003).

While the prominent roles of males in religious leadership as intermediaries within religious communities is closely intertwined with notions of authority and spiritual guidance, their influential position grants them significant power and responsibility in shaping believers' religious beliefs, practices, and identities. However, it is important to acknowledge that gender roles within religious contexts are evolving, with increasing recognition of the contributions of women and other marginalised groups in religious leadership and interpretation. Efforts to promote gender equality and inclusivity within religious institutions are vital for creating more equitable and just religious communities.

The designation of males as religious leaders is deeply rooted in cultural and historical contexts where patriarchal norms have profoundly influenced societal structures. These norms often shape the interpretation of sacred texts and the organisation of religious institutions, historically reserving leadership roles for males and reinforcing broader gender hierarchies within religious and societal frameworks (Witherington, 2003).

Although patriarchal connotations have existed for centuries; it is imperative to challenge these norms and customs to empower women and create more equitable religious communities.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter discussed Braun and Clarke's six phases of thematic analysis employed in this study. Three themes were identified, the first being was understanding the WWSOSA coalition through their values outlined in an attempt to ensure gender justice through collaborative initiatives. The second theme dealt with FBOs and GBV. Breaking the silence surrounding GBV within FBOs requires a shift in mindset, a commitment to empathy and understanding, and the recognition that addressing this issue is fundamental to promoting justice, compassion, and the well-being of all community members.

The third theme focussed on patriarchy in South Africa. In summary, the link between patriarchy and gender-based violence in South Africa is deeply rooted in power dynamics, traditional gender roles and the reinforcement of societal norms. Addressing this issue requires

a multifaceted approach that challenges the existing power structures and promotes a more equitable and just society for all genders.

Chapter 6 presents a discussion on the research findings based on the researcher's point of view. The discussion will entail analysing religion and GBV, outlining the WWSOSA coalition and what it means to challenge patriarchy within our society.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the findings will be discussed based on Chapter 5 from the researcher's position. In this chapter, it was important to note the emphasis placed on the WWSOSA as a coalition, following an in-depth discussion on this FBO as it was an essential theme in this study. The theme of faith-based organisations was also established, including their underperformance in combating GBV, due to their inability to deal with the GBV cases. The concluding theme discussed patriarchy in South Africa; this theme provided reasons for the existence of patriarchy in the South African context and why it continues to be a problem.

6.1 Theme 1: Understanding the We Will Speak Out South Africa Coalition

6.1.1 Discussion on the Findings

The We Will Speak Out South Africa coalition comprises an alliance of organisations focussed on supporting GBV survivors and groups dedicated to this cause. It extends support to initiatives that challenge the existing GBV norms and collaborates closely with other FBOs (WWSOSA, 2023). As an FBO itself, the coalition aims to address the needs of GBV survivors. The primary purpose of its existence is to cater to the needs of survivors by offering counselling and a safe environment where they can share their narratives. Adopting a survivor-centric approach to broader social justice issues means prioritising the experiences, needs and perspectives of survivors at the forefront of advocacy and policy initiatives. By centring survivors' voices creates platforms and opportunities for survivors to share their stories and experiences, thus involving survivors in decision-making processes and consultations for policy development. Ensuring that survivors' voices are heard respects their agency and provides insights into the real-world impact of policies and practices on their lives. It ensures that initiatives are grounded in the lived realities of those directly affected by violence and injustice.

This approach acknowledges the unique challenges faced by individuals who have survived different forms of injustice, emphasising the importance of intersectionality in understanding how these overlapping identities and experiences shape their lives and needs. By positioning survivors in the conversation, the goal is not only to address immediate concerns, but also to foster systemic change and promote a more just and equitable society. This survivor-centric

approach ensures that policies and initiatives are informed by those most affected, leading to more effective and relevant solutions. Furthermore, it highlights the need for comprehensive reforms that will address the root causes of injustice, ultimately contributing to the creation of systems and structures that support the dignity, rights, and well-being of all individuals.

Recognising the important role of the faith sector in combatting SGBV and GBV, the coalition holds that over 85% of South Africans are religious. This high prevalence of religious affiliation means that faith leaders and religious communities hold significant influence over societal values, behaviours, and attitudes (WWSOSA, 2013). Given the influential impact of religion on people's attitudes, it can play a significant role in changing social norms and eradicating GBV. Places of worship in both urban and rural communities are seen as crucial in preventing GBV in helping survivors. The interfaith organising team has adopted a research-driven approach as research helps to highlight the intersectional nature of SGBV and GBV, revealing how factors such as race, socioeconomic status and sexual orientation intersect with gender to exacerbate violence. This understanding is essential for developing inclusive strategies that address the needs of affected individuals, emphasising mutual learning and prioritising survivor-led proposals and actions (WWSOSA, 2023). They acknowledge that vigorous debates and varying opinions are likely to give rise to diverse beliefs among participants; openly acknowledging that debates and differing opinions are expected, encourages honest and transparent discussions. This frankness can lead to a deeper understanding of different perspectives and more robust, well-rounded solutions to the problems of SGBV and GBV.

However, it is felt that while the coalition is doing their part to try and eradicate GBV, some aspects may need to be reviewed to more effectively respond to the demands of GBV. The continual escalation of GBV cases indicates the need for FBOs to play a more definitive role in combatting this issue. When a case of GBV is reported, individuals require secondary care from their FBOs to help them through the criminal proceedings. FBOs should also be safe places where women can report GBV and receive the necessary care and support in the form of counselling and medical treatment to assist them through the ordeal. Currently this is not the case and should be taken more seriously.

The coalition was established to challenge the issues around GBV to change, stop, raise the concerns, and speak out against GBV. The mandate of the coalition comes from those who have suffered the most, in this case, the survivors, particularly those with the least resources to

cope with their experience (WWSOSA, 2023). Applying intersectionality to the WWSOSA coalition highlights the diverse and complex identities that individuals hold within religious contexts, denoting that people from all faiths who have experienced GBV are acknowledged by the coalition. Addressing the intersecting factors is vital for creating inclusive spaces and effectively address social justice issues. The coalition regularly reviews and updates organisational policies to ensure they are inclusive and equitable. They also ensure diverse representation at all levels of the coalition, particularly in leadership and decision-making roles. Partnerships are built on mutual respect, allowing for differing views as long as they align with the core principles of WWSOSA. Accountability and integrity are paramount; they strive to embody the values and principles they aim to instil in both personal and professional lives. Holding the coalition accountable means being open to feedback and continuously striving for improvement. By regularly evaluating programmes and practices, the coalition can identify areas for growth and refine their strategies to better serve survivors and advance social justice goals. They recognise that the means that they employ are as crucial as the desired outcomes.

6.1.2 Implication of the Findings on the We Will Speak Out South Africa Coalition

Many survivors turn to the organisation for help once they have experienced GBV. The organisation offers them a safe place where they can tell their story without the fear of stigma and shame. The coalition often carries out programmes where they teach religious leaders how to deal with GBV survivors. They often go into communities where they teach people about GBV. The WWSOSA coalition often represents Kwa-Zulu Natal at larger gatherings such as the Summit against GBV that is held once a year in Parliament. They represent the survivors of GBV and advocate for their rights, gathering narratives through written records or visual media, thus capturing the essence of both individual experiences and collective endeavours within WWSOSA's faith community. These narratives serve as tools for mutual learning, empowering them to impact on others and catalyse positive change by sharing their experiences. Men and boys actively participate as supporters alongside women and girls in the fight against SGBV and GBV.

6.2 Theme 2: Faith-based Organisations and Gender-based Violence

6.2.1 Discussion of the Findings

The discussion surrounding FBOs and GBV is complex, encompassing various challenges and opportunities in addressing this pervasive issue within religious communities.

Negative publicity can have severe consequences for faith-based organisations, impacting on their reputation, funding, membership and overall effectiveness. For example, the global revelations in the Catholic Church and the Clergy Sexual Abuse Scandal which revealed sexual abuse by clergy members, particularly in the United States and Ireland, severely damaged the reputation of the Catholic Church (Bastien, 2021). The Church was criticised not only for the abuse but also for the subsequent cover-ups (Bastien, 2021). This scandal led to a significant loss of trust and credibility among congregants and the wider public. Many people left the Church, its moral authority was questioned and the Church subsequently faced legal and financial repercussions, including substantial settlements and legal fees (Bastien, 2021).

Educating religious leaders on GBV is necessary in fostering frank discussions and promoting awareness within faith communities. FBOs can provide essential support and healing for survivors of GBV within their communities. By creating safe spaces and offering counselling and support services, FBOs can empower survivors to seek help and healing.

FBOs have the potential to promote gender equality and challenge patriarchal interpretations of religious teachings. Embracing inclusive and progressive understandings of religious principles can help align faith communities with contemporary values of equality and justice.

While there are challenges and complexities in addressing GBV within faith communities, FBOs also can play a significant role in promoting gender equality, supporting survivors, and fostering open discussions on GBV. By acknowledging and addressing internal issues, FBOs can work towards creating safe and supportive environments for all members of their communities.

FBOs often derive their moral authority from their commitment to protecting the vulnerable and advocating for justice. If survivors of GBV fear revealing their experiences due to potential judgment, stigma or inaction from FBOs, this undermines the FBOs' moral responsibility. By contrast, when FBOs actively support GBV survivors, they reinforce their role

as protectors of the vulnerable, thereby strengthening their moral authority. An example would be the South African Council of Churches having taken a strong stance against GBV, advocating for the rights of the victims and offering support (Bam, 2020). This proactive stance enhances their moral authority by demonstrating a commitment to justice and protection.

FBOs often operate with limited resources. Addressing GBV requires significant investment in training, support services and advocacy efforts. Resource constraints can limit the ability of

FBOs to implement comprehensive GBV programmes. Long-established institutions can be slow to change. Within FBOs, there may be institutional resistance to adopting new policies or practices related to GBV, especially if these are viewed as controversial or disruptive.

If FBOs find it difficult to discuss GBV openly due to cultural, theological or institutional barriers, survivors may not have access to the necessary support services. This can lead to survivors feeling isolated and unsupported. An example would be that the lack of confidential counselling services within FBOs would mean survivors may avoid seeking help due to fear of exposure or gossip. Theological and cultural barriers might lead FBOs to reinforce harmful norms that blame or stigmatise survivors, thereby exacerbating their trauma and discouraging others from coming forward. Religious teachings interpreted in ways that emphasise submission and silence may prevent survivors from speaking out and seeking justice.

Balancing transparency with concerns about reputation and public perception requires careful ethical consideration. FBOs must prioritise the welfare and confidentiality of survivors, maintain organisational integrity, and build trust through honest communication. While managing public relations and community reactions is important, ethical leadership demands that FBOs remain committed to their core values and moral responsibilities. By navigating these considerations thoughtfully, FBOs can effectively address GBV while maintaining their credibility and ethical integrity.

6.2.2 Implications of the Findings of Gender-based Violence for Faith-based Organisations

GBV poses significant implications for FBOs, including:

Moral and Ethical Responsibility: FBOs often have a moral and ethical obligation to address issues of justice and human rights, including GBV. Failing to address GBV conflicts with their principles of compassion, dignity and respect for all individuals.

Crisis Response and Support: FBOs may be called upon to provide immediate crisis response and support services to survivors of GBV within their communities. This can include offering shelter, counselling, legal aid, and other forms of assistance.

Education and Awareness: FBOs can play a crucial role in educating their congregations and communities about the root causes and consequences of GBV, challenging harmful gender norms, and promoting healthy relationships based on mutual respect and equality.

Safe Spaces: FBOs are expected to be safe spaces for all individuals, including survivors of GBV. Creating an environment where survivors feel supported and empowered to seek help is essential.

Reconciliation and Healing: FBOs may facilitate reconciliation and healing processes for survivors and their families, guided by the principles of forgiveness, restoration and reconciliation.

Prevention and Advocacy: FBOs can engage in prevention efforts by promoting gender equality, advocating for policies and laws that protect against GBV, and addressing systemic factors that perpetuate violence within their communities.

Leadership and Accountability: FBO leaders are responsible for modelling respectful and non-violent behaviour, holding perpetrators accountable for their actions, and addressing any instances of GBV within their own institutions.

Partnerships and Collaboration: Collaboration with other stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs and civil society organisations, is essential for a comprehensive response to GBV. FBOs can leverage their networks and resources to strengthen partnerships and maximise impact.

By actively addressing GBV within their communities and institutions, FBOs can create safer, more inclusive and just societies where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

6.3 Theme 3: Patriarchy in South Africa

6.3.1 Discussion of Findings

The system of patriarchy is deeply ingrained in many societies worldwide and manifests in various ways across different cultures and contexts.

Patriarchy establishes a hierarchy where men hold primary positions of power in political, economic, social and familial spheres. Women are often relegated to subordinate roles, with limited access to decision-making and resources. Patriarchal societies prescribe rigid gender roles and expectations, dictating how men and women should behave, based on societal norms and traditions (Quek, 2019). Men are typically expected to be assertive, dominant, and financially responsible, while women are often expected to be nurturing, submissive, and focused on domestic duties.

Patriarchy sustains a culture of authority and supremacy, resulting in diverse manifestations of violence against women, encompassing physical, sexual, emotional, and economic exploitation. This violence frequently serves to uphold power dynamics and enforce adherence to gender standards. Patriarchy intersects with other oppressive structures like racism, classism, ableism, and homophobia, exacerbating discrimination and marginalisation for individuals subjected to multiple forms of oppression.

While patriarchy is deeply entrenched in many societies, there are ongoing efforts to challenge and dismantle it. Feminist movements, advocacy for gender equality and changes in social attitudes have led to progress in challenging patriarchal norms and promoting gender equity. It is essential to recognise that patriarchy also negatively affects men by enforcing rigid expectations of masculinity, limiting emotional expression, and perpetuating harmful stereotypes on male behaviour.

Traditional cultural norms in many South African communities reinforce patriarchal values, which prescribe specific roles and behaviours for men and women. These norms often place women in subordinate positions within the family and society. These gender roles limit women's autonomy and reinforce male dominance, making it difficult for women to assert their rights or escape abusive situations.

Patriarchy manifests in various forms of violence against women in South Africa, perpetuating gender inequality and reinforcing power imbalances between men and women. Patriarchal norms perpetuate the belief that men have the right to exert control over women's bodies and actions. This sense of entitlement contributes to high rates of domestic violence and sexual assault.

Patriarchal norms and expectations have a profound impact on men's lives and identities in South Africa, shaping their behaviours, attitudes and experiences in various ways (Quek, 2019). While patriarchy often benefits men in terms of social, economic and political power, it also imposes rigid gender roles and harmful expectations that can be restrictive and damaging.

Patriarchal norms dictate that men should conform to traditional masculinity ideals, which include traits such as strength, dominance, emotional stoicism, and provider roles.

Men may feel under pressure to conform to these rigid gender roles, leading to a suppression of emotions, reluctance to seek help or express vulnerability, and a focus on demonstrating strength and control. Patriarchal norms discourage men from expressing emotions such as

sadness, fear or vulnerability, as these are often perceived as signs of weakness. Men may struggle with mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and substance abuse due to the inability to express and address their emotional needs openly.

6.3.2 Implications of Patriarchy

The implications of patriarchy are wide-ranging and profound, affecting various aspects of the lives of individuals, social structures and institutions. Some critical implications include:

Gender Inequality: Patriarchy perpetuates gender inequality by reinforcing traditional gender roles and expectations that prioritise men's supremacy and privilege over women. This results in unequal access to opportunities, resources, and decision-making between genders.

Violence Against Women: Patriarchal norms often condone or normalise violence against women, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and harassment. This perpetuation of violence serves to maintain control and dominance over women, furthering gender-based power imbalances.

Economic Disparities: Patriarchy contributes to economic disparities between genders, with women often experiencing lower wages, limited access to economic resources, and greater financial dependence on men. This economic inequality reinforces gendered power dynamics and limits women's economic autonomy.

Political Underrepresentation: Patriarchal systems limit women's political participation and representation, leading to the underrepresentation of women in political leadership positions and decision-making bodies. This lack of representation hinders efforts to address gender-related issues and perpetuates male dominance in governance.

Health and Well-being: Patriarchy can have detrimental effects on an individual's mental and physical health, particularly for women. The pressure to conform to gender norms and expectations, along with experiences of discrimination and violence can lead to increased stress, anxiety, and poor health outcomes.

Interpersonal Relationships: Patriarchal attitudes and behaviours can negatively impact on interpersonal relationships, leading to unequal power dynamics, communication barriers and conflict within relationships and families. This can contribute to emotional distress and instability for both men and women.

Cultural and Social Norms: Patriarchal ideologies are often deeply embedded in cultural and social norms, perpetuating gender inequality across generations. These norms shape societal attitudes and behaviours, influencing how individuals perceive themselves and others based on gender.

Resistance and Change: Despite the pervasive influence of patriarchy, there are ongoing efforts to challenge and dismantle its harmful effects. Movements for gender equality, advocacy for women's rights, and changes in social attitudes are gradually challenging patriarchal norms and fostering more significant gender equity.

Overall, the implications of patriarchy extend far beyond individual experiences, shaping social structures, institutions and cultural norms.

The patriarchal system, deeply ingrained in societies worldwide, has long perpetuated inequality, discrimination, and oppression. To challenge patriarchy is not merely an act of rebellion; it is a necessary step towards creating a world where gender equality thrives.

Patriarchy's roots extend through centuries, deeply entrenched in the historical structures of power and dominance. Traditional societies often assigned specific roles to men and women, reinforcing a hierarchical order (Sen, 2009). This is confirmed by Bhopal (2019) where he states traditional societies assigned specific roles to men and women, reinforcing hierarchical orders that positioned men as dominant and women as subordinate. These assigned roles were deeply entrenched in cultural norms, religious beliefs, and social structures, shaping identities, behaviours, and interactions within communities. While traditional gender roles have been challenged and transformed over time, their legacy continues to influence contemporary gender dynamics and power relations in societies around the world. Legitimised by religious, cultural, and legal norms, this power dynamic perpetuated the belief in male superiority (Sen, 2009). Dodge & Kahn (2020:25) emphasise that in religious ceremonies, rituals, and practices often reinforce traditional gender roles and hierarchies. These cultural norms may portray men as spiritual leaders and decision-makers, while women are expected to fulfil supportive and submissive roles. Challenging the patriarchy involves questioning these historical foundations and dismantling structures sustaining gender-based inequalities for generations.

Patriarchy manifests in various aspects of life, influencing social, economic, and political systems. Traditional gender roles dictate social expectations and behaviours, perpetuating limiting stereotypes (hooks, 2004). Economic spheres feature gender wage gaps and underrepresentation for women in leadership positions, reflecting systemic biases. In politics

women are often marginalised, hindering their full participation and decision-making (hooks, 2004). Ford (2018) also proposes that women are often underrepresented in political leadership positions such as heads of state, government ministers, and parliamentary leaders. This underrepresentation limits their ability to influence policy decisions and shape political agendas. Recognising these manifestations is crucial for understanding patriarchy's multifaceted and devising effective strategies for challenging it.

Challenging patriarchy is an ongoing, essential endeavour requiring collective effort and commitment to dismantling ingrained power and privilege structures. Understanding its historical roots, recognising its manifestations and supporting feminist movements, can pave the way towards creating a more equitable and inclusive future. Gender equality involves not only challenging oppressive norms, but also reimagining a world free from the constraints of patriarchal systems, enabling everyone to reach their full potential.

6.4. Religion and Gender-based Violence

The intersection of religion and GBV is intricate, necessitating thorough investigation. While many religious traditions emphasise love, compassion, and justice, instances of GBV persist worldwide.

Religious texts, revered as sacred and authoritative, significantly shape beliefs and practices within religious communities. Some interpretations of these texts have been manipulated to justify and perpetuate gender inequalities and violence (Ruether, 1993; Hadebe, 2016). While religious teachings may promote principles of justice, compassion and equality, interpretations that prioritise patriarchal norms or hierarchies can contribute to the marginalisation and oppression of women within religious communities and societies. It is essential to critically examine religious interpretations and challenge those that perpetuate harmful gender norms or justify violence, while also promoting interpretations that affirm the dignity, rights, and equality of all individuals, regardless of gender. However, interpretations can vary widely, with many religious scholars and practitioners offering readings that promote gender equality and condemn violence.

As influential social structures, religious institutions shape norms and behaviours within communities. Traditional hierarchies and patriarchal structures in many religious institutions contribute to the perpetuation of GBV (Beattie, 2019). The exclusion of women from leadership roles and restrictive gender roles can create environments tolerating or overlooking

violence against women (Beattie, 2019). However, some religious institutions are actively challenging these norms, advocating for gender-inclusive practices and policies.

6.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter has outlined the three themes presented in Chapter 5, albeit from the researcher's point of view. Each theme included a discussion on the findings and the implications posited by the findings. The link between religion and GBV was also considered and that religious doctrine often dominated the interpretation of GBV.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

7.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the findings from chapters one to six and lays the foundation for further research on the study topic. This study was based on a case study of the WWSOSA coalition and its operations within the coalition. The theoretical framework for this study was intersectional feminism. Striving towards gender equality, intersectional feminism is a reminder that efforts must be inclusive and equitable, ensuring that no one is left behind. It calls for a critical examination of societal structures and the power dynamics perpetuating inequality. By embracing intersectionality, more effective and comprehensive strategies can be developed to address systemic discrimination and work towards for a more just and inclusive society. Braun and Clarke's six-step data analysis was used in the research methodology and the research design was qualitative. This study examined the ideological underpinnings of the coalition, their mandate and their organisational identity whilst placing the focus of this study on GBV. Addressing GBV requires a multifaceted approach involving legal, social, educational and economic interventions. Strengthening legal frameworks to protect survivors, ensuring access to justice, and holding perpetrators accountable are crucial steps. Equally important are efforts to transform cultural norms and attitudes through education and community engagement, promoting gender equality and empowering individuals to challenge and change harmful behaviours and beliefs.

7.1. Summary of the Findings

This study found that GBV left indelible physical and psychological scars on the survivors; the repercussions extending beyond individuals affecting families and their communities. Recognising these far-reaching consequences underscores the urgency of comprehensively addressing GBV.

This research encompassed power dynamics and inequality; GBV is often rooted in power imbalances, where one gender exerts control over another. Addressing these dynamics requires dismantling societal structures that perpetuate inequalities and discrimination.

Inequality leads to patriarchy, and unravelling patriarchy requires a comprehensive and sustained effort. By challenging cultural norms, promoting education, leveraging media influence; fostering collaboration across genders, society can and must work towards

dismantling patriarchal structures and encouraging a more equitable future. Embracing diversity, empowering women and promoting inclusive policies are essential in achieving genuine gender equality.

The WWSOSA coalition were underperforming when dealing with GBV and stated that this underperformance in dealing with GBV underscores the need for introspection and reform within these institutions. Addressing this issue requires a commitment to challenging patriarchal norms, providing gender-sensitive training, fostering open dialogue and collaborating with external organisations. By actively engaging in efforts to combat GBV, the WWSOSA coalition can play a significant role in creating safer and more supportive environments for their communities.

Participants also agreed that there is often a lack of comprehensive gender sensitivity training within FBOs. Clergy and leaders may not be adequately equipped to recognise and address GBV, leading to a failure to provide appropriate support and intervention..

The mandate of the coalition is aimed at survivor support. It aims to create a collaborative space and supporting coalition members, ensuring access to support and healing for survivors and their communities. It will also assist in developing and implementing strategies, the outcomes of which will include survivors of SGBV or mutual support. They are supported as they amplify their voices through pertinent advocacy efforts. Faith leaders are prompted and empowered to denounce sexual and GBV. Within faith communities, the environments become safer for survivors of sexual and GBV. Efforts also actively involve men and boys as supporters in the battle against sexual violence and GBV.

Survivors often sustain immediate physical injuries, ranging from bruises and cuts to fractures and internal injuries. In severe cases, GBV can result in permanent disabilities or even death. Long-term physical health problems such as chronic pain, gastrointestinal disorders and gynaecological issues can arise from GBV. Survivors may experience ongoing health complications that require continuous medical attention. Sexual violence can lead to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies and complications during pregnancy and childbirth. These health issues can have lasting effects on the survivors' reproductive health and overall well-being.

GBV survivors are at risk of developing mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and suicidal ideation, as the trauma of violence can lead to long-term psychological distress. Survivors often experience feelings of shame, guilt, fear

and helplessness; these emotions can undermine the self-esteem and self-worth of the individual, making it difficult to rebuild their lives. Trauma can result in changes in behaviour, including substance abuse, self-harm and withdrawal from social interactions. These behaviours can further isolate survivors and exacerbate their mental health issues.

The interconnectedness of power dynamics, inequality and patriarchy creates a complex web that perpetuates GBV. Addressing GBV requires dismantling these underlying structures through comprehensive reforms and empowerment as discussed earlier. By challenging and transforming the power imbalances and societal norms that sustain GBV, one can move towards a more equitable and just society free from violence and oppression.

Robust legal frameworks are essential to protect survivors and hold perpetrators accountable. Laws against domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking and other forms of GBV provide a basis for prosecuting offenders and deterring future violence.

Empowering women and marginalised groups economically can reduce their vulnerability to GBV. Initiatives that provide education, vocational training and access to financial resources can help individuals achieve independence and reduce economic disparities that contribute to violence.

Community-based organisations and grassroots movements play a vital role in addressing GBV at local levels. FBOs, WWSOSA and such groups often have a better understanding of the specific needs and challenges within their communities; they could and should, provide more targeted support and advocacy.

Global advocacy efforts can influence policy and drive legislative change. International campaigns and coalitions can put pressure on governments to prioritise GBV and commit to implementing and enforcing laws and policies that protect survivors and prevent violence.

7.2 Identified Challenges and Gaps

The underperformance of faith-based organisations in addressing GBV is influenced by theological, cultural, resource, and organisational challenges. Addressing these shortcomings requires a multifaceted approach, including reinterpreting religious texts to promote gender equality, enhancing training and awareness among faith leaders, improving collaboration with specialised agencies and developing clear policies and consistent practices. By acknowledging and addressing these issues, FBOs can better fulfil their potential as powerful allies in the fight

against GBV, providing critical support to survivors and promoting safer, more equitable communities.

Many faith leaders and members of FBOs lack a sound understanding of gender dynamics and the root causes of GBV (Beaumont & Cloke, 2012). Without comprehensive gender sensitivity training, they may not recognise the subtle and systemic ways in which gender inequality manifests and leads to violence. Gender sensitivity training equips individuals with the skills to respond empathetically and effectively to the victims of GBV. This includes understanding the psychological impact of trauma, offering appropriate support and making informed referrals to specialised services. The absence of such training can result in inadequate or harmful responses to survivors.

Many religious communities place a high value on family honour and community reputation. This cultural emphasis often discourages individuals from speaking out against GBV, as doing so might be seen as bringing shame to the family or community. Victims often face victim-blaming attitudes, where they are held responsible for the violence they endure. This can lead to intense feelings of shame and guilt, further silencing them.

Many FBOs lack the resources to provide comprehensive GBV services such as counselling, legal aid, medical care and safe shelters (Torry, 2014). External organisations often have the specialised resources and expertise to fill these gaps. FBOs may operate on limited budgets, restricting their ability to support GBV survivors effectively. Collaboration with external agencies can augment this situation and bring in additional funding and resources.

7.3 The Way forward for Research

This dissertation is only one of the many attempts by researchers to address the multi-layered issues inherent in GBV. There is a need to take this research further, especially in studying faith-based organisations and how they deal with GBV survivors. There is also a need to understand GBV from an intersectional approach, which needs more study as there is a paucity of information and research on this aspect.

Further investigation into the dynamics of GBV within the WWSOSA coalition is crucial for developing effective interventions and support mechanisms. By exploring theological interpretations, organisational structures, community norms, collaboration, policies, training and the impact of intervention and survivor support access, researchers can provide valuable insights to augment the ability of the WWSOSA coalition to combat GBV effectively. It is

hoped that this research will contribute to creating safer and more supportive environments within religious communities, ultimately reducing the prevalence of GBV and improving the lives of survivors.

An extensive database needs to be established so that when questions are asked regarding GBV, the information can be accessed directly. In Kwa-Zulu Natal, this database is beginning to take shape, but to a researcher, the greater concern is what survivors could do in the interim, and perhaps be left more vulnerable to GBV. Thus, there is a need to encourage Parliament to attend to these issues. As correctly pointed out by the President quoted earlier, GBV is indeed South Africa's 'second pandemic'.

Advocacy efforts can amplify the voices of survivors and ensure that their perspectives inform policy and programming decisions. This includes creating opportunities for survivor leadership and participation in advocacy initiatives. Policy initiatives can strengthen legal protections for survivors, including measures to prevent retaliation and ensure access to safe reporting mechanisms

Survivors of GBV require a safe space to recover once they have experienced GBV, and since the country has many faith sectors, that is, many people are religious and there are many churches the survivors should be able to turn to for help and spiritual support. The church should have access to adequately trained congregants, counsellors or religious leaders who are able to assist victims in matters of GBV.

7.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has attempted to place the focus on GBV and the survivors through analysing the WWSOSA coalition; its primary goal being that to assist GBV survivors throughout their journey of healing. Their stated objective is to become more inter-faith than intra-faith; this will enable them to reach people from all walks of life, as inter-faith initiatives bring together diverse religious groups to address GBV collectively. Such collaborations can amplify efforts to combat violence and promote gender justice on a larger scale.

This dissertation has also drawn on links between religion and GBV. Religion plays a significant role when dealing with GBV due to the doctrine of submission and the misinterpretation of scriptural texts, which should be addressed as a future concern. The theoretical framework of intersectionality revealed that any woman, regardless of her class, race or other attributes could potentially become a victim of GBV. The data has shown that

GBV continues unabated and currently has one of the highest occurrence rates in South Africa. The intersection of religion with other social factors, such as ethnicity, class, and sexuality, adds complexity to addressing GBV, hence an approach that considers these intersections is crucial for effective intervention.

Religious teachings can play a definitive role in cultural transformation by challenging harmful norms and promoting gender equality. When religious leaders advocate against GBV, they contribute to changing attitudes and behaviours within their communities. Religion can be a powerful tool for education and raising awareness about GBV through education on the rights of women and the importance of preventing violence.

7.5 Final Reflection

Research is an effective means for advancing the fight against GBV. By generating knowledge, informing interventions, shaping policies, mobilising advocacy, empowering survivors, engaging communities and monitoring progress, research drives social change and promotes the continued quest for a more just, equitable and violence-free world. It is essential for, inter alia, researchers, practitioners, policymakers, activists and communities to collaborate and prioritise research as a critical component of comprehensive GBV prevention and response strategies.

For the purposes of this research and to confront GBV head-on, community outreach programmes should be established, whereby FBOs actively go out into the community and confront the community with the truths and the consequences of GBV. This can be made more effective by making information sheets and pamphlets available at a wide range of distribution points such as churches, shopping centres, waiting rooms, and other community focal points. Second, religious leaders should actively engage in conversations with their parishioners and the attending youth regarding GBV in their sermons to maximise the impact within their communities. Third, when women who have been victims of GBV arrive at police stations, government hospitals and clinics, they should be attended to immediately, with empathy and respect, and not left unattended for long hours, as is often the case. Fourth, more effective legislation and policies should be considered to protect the rights of women more comprehensively. Fifth, women must be made aware organisations such as the WWSOSA coalition that are ready to assist them, instead of remaining in abusive relationships. Victims of domestic violence should be discouraged to retracting their statements or case once it is

reported to the authorities. And finally, GBV needs to be incorporated into school subjects such as the Life Orientation to make the youth aware of the true nature of GBV.

The urgency of addressing gender-based violence in South Africa cannot be overstated. It is a multifaceted crisis that threatens the safety, health, rights and well-being of many individuals, families and communities. Immediate and concerted action is needed from all sectors of society, including government, civil society, the private sector, the survivor and the communities themselves, to prevent violence, support survivors and build a society based on equality, dignity and respect for all. Failure to act decisively perpetuates injustice, perpetuates inequality, and denies countless individuals the opportunity to live free from fear and violence.

Collaboration brings together expertise from diverse sectors such as government agencies, healthcare, law enforcement, civil society organisations and the private sector. This collaborative approach will ensure that survivors receive comprehensive support, including medical care, legal assistance, counselling, shelter and economic empowerment. By working together, different sectors can collaborate and coordinate their efforts to provide integrated services that address the complex needs of survivors. This will prevent duplication of services, ensure efficient resource allocation and maximise the impact of the interventions.

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APPENDIX 1: Gate Keeper's Letter



coordinator@wwsosa.org.za

 WeWillSpeakOutSA

 @wwso_sa

184-700 NPO

Tel. +27 (0)84 581 0622; (0)724537502;

<http://www.wwsosa.org.za>

Meriska Shriduth
Student number: 211531826
University of KwaZulu Natal
Gender and Religion Programme
Pietermaritzburg

Dear Meriska

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AS PART OF A MASTERS PROJECT

Thank you for your interest in the work of We Will Speak Out South Africa. Of course, I give permission for you to access WWSOSA's archives and will be very happy to talk with you.

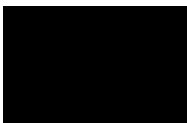
I am intrigued by your Working Title: **Silent No More: Religion Engaging with GBV in South Africa: A Case Study on the We Will Speak Out S.A. Coalition.**

I am excited about your research, as I expect it will offer a valuable learning experience for us as well and will hopefully contribute to us improving our own practice and how we operate as a coalition.

In fact, this is exactly the kind of relationship between academia and the activist world that contributes to creating a better society in the long run!

We will cooperate with you in whatever ways needed to make your research a success.

Yours sincerely



Ms Daniela Gennrich, Coalition Coordinator

Management Committee: Acting Chair: Rev Bafana Khumalo; Treasurer: Mr Simon Read; Members: Ms Pontsho Segwai, Ms Patricia Sibanyoni, Ms Saydoon Sayed Nisa, Ms Esperande Bigirimana (Survivor Organisation Representative), Ms Lihle Cwinya-Ai (Survivor Organisation Representative), Mr Vedhan Singh, Ms Ntwenhle Majosi, Rev Desmond Lesejane. Coordinator: Ms Daniela Gennrich.

APPENDIX 2: Ethical Clearance Letter



25 March 2022

Meriska Avalyn Shriduth (211531826)
School Of Rel Phil & Classics
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear MA Shriduth,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00003824/2022
Project title: Silent no more: Religion Engaging With Gender-Based Violence: A case study on the “We Will Speak Out South Africa” movement
Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Full Committee Reviewed Protocol

This letter serves to notify you that your response received on 11 September 2020 to our letter of 28 January 2022 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

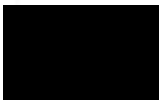
This approval is valid for one year until 25 March 2023

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours faithfully



.....
Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Tel: +27 31 260 8350 / 4557 / 3587
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

INSPIRING GREATNESS

APPENDIX 3: Interview Schedule

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PARTICIPANTS

The aim and purpose of this research is to gather data on how religion engages with gender-based violence.

Method may be adapted to suit current regulations around Covid-19. Interview schedule may be adapted and sent via email for participants to respond

Time	Theme	Questions/Line of Inquiry
10 Min	Consent and Rapport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review information on study and sign informed consent for individual - Consent for audio recording sought - Do you have any objections to your name being used in this study? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - YES - NO - Would prefer if a pseudonym is used <p>-To begin: Respond to questions about the study</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How long have you been with the WWSOSA coalition? 2. what sparked your interest in the WWSOSA organisation?
40 Min	Interview Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Who is the WWSOSA coalition? 2. What is their mandate? 3. What are the ideological underpinnings of the organisation? 4. What are some collaborative initiatives between WWSOSA and their faith-based partners in enhancing gender justice in SA? 5. How was the coalition formed? 6. Do you think that the faith-based organisations affiliated to the WWSOSA coalition are doing enough in the fight against GBV? 7. What have been some of the key areas of development since the organisation began? 8. What is the vision for the future of the WWSOSA? 9. How do you think religion engages with GBV in regards to the broader vision of the WWSOSA? 10. What are your thoughts on patriarchy in South Africa?

10 min	Close	Review content of the interview with the participant and seek clarity on any unresolved areas of questioning -Invite participants to ask questions regarding the interview, content of discussions and the research study - Thank the participant for their time, contribution to the study, and end the interview
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INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR MEMBERS OF THE COALITION

The aim and purpose of this research is to gather data on how religion engages with gender-based violence.

Method may be adapted to suit current regulations around Covid-19. Interview schedule may be adapted and sent via email for participants to respond

Time	Theme	Questions/Line of Inquiry
10 Min	Consent and Rapport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review information on study and sign informed consent for individual interviews - Consent for audio recording sought - Do you have any objections to your name being used in this study? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - YES - NO - Would you prefer if a pseudonym is used? -To begin: Respond to questions about the study <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How long have you been with the WWSOSA movement? 2. what sparked your interest in the WWSOSA organisation?
40 Min	Interview Questions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why was the WWSOSA coalition created? 2. Do you think that that the WWSOSA coalition is effective as a faith-based organisation to deal with GBV? 3. Do you think that faith-based organisations are doing enough to combat GBV? 4. How has the WWSOSA evolved over the last 10 years? 5. Does WWSOSA represent each race equally? 6. What makes the WWSOSA a faith-based organisation? 7. Are faith-based organisations the only tool used within the organisation or are there other methods used within the coalition? 8. How does faith play a role within the coalition? 9. Does the organisation consider itself to be secular in nature? 10. What is the process when a person contacts the coalition for help? 11. How do you think faith-based organisations within the organisation contribute to combating GBV? 12. What are your thoughts on patriarchy in South Africa?
10 min	Close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review content of the interview with the participant and seek clarity on any unresolved areas of questioning -Invite participants to ask questions about the interview, content on what was discussed, and the research study - Thank the participant for their time, contribution to the study, and end the interview

APPENDIX 4: Informed Consent Letter

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL For research with human participants

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Note to researchers: Notwithstanding the need for scientific and legal accuracy, every effort should be made to produce a consent document that is as linguistically clear and simple as possible, without omitting important details as outlined below. Certified translated versions will be required once the original version is approved

There are specific circumstances where witnessed verbal consent might be acceptable, and circumstances where individual informed consent may be waived by HSSREC.

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in the Research

Research Title: Silent no more: Religion Engaging with GBV in South Africa: A case study on the We Will Speak Out S.A coalition

Date:

Dear Participant

My name is Meriska Shriduth a student at UKZN currently doing my Masters in Theology, with a specific focus on Gender, Religion and Health. You are invited to consider participating in a case study that involves research on how religion engages with Gender-based Violence (GBV). The aim and purpose of this research is to gather data on how religion and gender-based violence intersect. The study is expected to enrol five participants. Should you agree to participate in the study, you will be invited to participate in the following ways: agree to be interviewed either personally or via Zoom, telephonically or complete the interview schedule electronically; participants will be requested to provide consent for the researcher to use their comments in the study; the duration of your participation is expected to be one hour.

The study may involve the following risk and/or discomfort, in that some questions may be sensitive. The study will provide no direct benefits to the participants. This study will contribute to the on-going research surrounding GBV and will set a landscape of how faith-based organisations, with the assistance of the We Will Speak Out South Africa Coalition, manage GBV.

Participation in this research is voluntary and participants may withdraw at any point, and that in the event of refusal/withdrawal of participation the participants will not incur any penalty or loss of treatment or other benefit to which they are usually entitled to.

No costs will be incurred by participants as a result of participating in the study.

Should the participant wish to withdraw from the interview they may do so at any time. In this study all participants who wish to remain anonymous may do so. Should the participants feel that their mental health has been compromised during the process of the interview, they will be encouraged to contact a counsellor from the 'Grace Counselling' organisation. The researcher will provide the contact details for the organisation mentioned above.

All data collected will remain confidential and no direct reference to any person will be published; only pseudonyms will be used.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (Approval number: 00003824/2022).

In the event of any problems or concerns/questions, you may contact the researcher via email: [REDACTED] or the UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, contact details as follows:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557- Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

CONSENT

I (Name) have been informed about the study entitled Silent no more: Religion Engaging with GBV in South Africa: A case study on the We Will Speak Out S.A. Coalition by the researcher Meriska Shriduth.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

I have been given an opportunity to answer questions about the study and have received answers to my satisfaction.

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

I have been informed about any available counselling if injury occurs to me as a result of study-related procedures.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher via email ([REDACTED])

If I have any questions or concerns about my rights as a study participant, or if I am concerned about an aspect of the study or the researchers then I may contact:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview / focus group discussion YES / NO

Consent for the use of comments in the study YES / NO

Complete interview: PERSONALLY VIA ZOOM / ELECTRONICALLY / TELEPHONCALLY

Signature of Participant

Date

**Signature of Witness
(Where applicable)**

Date

**Signature of Translator
(Where applicable)**

Date

APPENDIX 5: Title Change Approval Letter



06 November 2023

Meriska Avalyn Shriduth (211531826)
School Of Rel Phil & Classics
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear MA Shriduth,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00003824/2022

Project title: Silent no more: Religion Engaging with GBV in South Africa: A case study on the "We Will Speak Out S.A." movement.

Amended title: Silent no more: Religion engaging with gender based violence in South Africa: A case study on the "We will speak out South Africa" coalition

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application and request for an amendment received on 16 November 2023 has now been approved as follows:

- Change in title

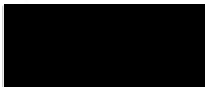
Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form; Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully








.....
Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

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