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*An exploratory study on the perceptions and experiences the of young males about gender-
based violence in their families and communities.*

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i. Abstract

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a global phenomenon that affects many women and children across all cultures, races, and socio-economic circumstances. This phenomenon also impacts survivors' physical and psychological wellbeing as a direct result of the abuse and as the body responds to the trauma. Understanding the context in which young males recognise and view GBV is important as it will refine the effectiveness of intervention programmes so that these youths' worldview can be shifted despite the fact that society often expects that males use violence as part of conflict management in social settings. Framed through the lens of the social constructionist view of gender and the ecological systems theory, the study is aimed at understanding how socialisation takes place in families and communities play a role in shaping young men's views and perceptions about GBV. The study sampled 16 young males aged between 18 and 25 years from various townships in Gqeberha.

Using the qualitative exploratory approach, a semi-structured interview schedule was utilized, leading to the rich collection of data. All interviews were transcribed manually using Microsoft Office. During data analysis, 3 major themes emerged: *contributing factors of gender-based violence in the household, the effects of gender-based violence on individuals, families and communities, and proposed intervention plans*. Results indicated that young males realise that GBV is a form of cruelty against humanity. Factors impacting the perpetrator including violent socialisation, violent coaching by peers, the use of substances and their emotion regulation thereby impacting their personality traits. The results further indicated that communities have accepted violence as a part of their daily lives, and this has created a despondence in efforts to reducing violence. Proposed interventions included addressing gender inequality, the establishment of supportive social systems for both perpetrators and survivors, and community education to assist in maintaining the change.

Keywords

Gender-based violence, violence, socialisation, social constructionist view of gender, ecological systems theory, young males, survivors

1 Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In this section the following will be discussed; statement of the problem, problem context, rationale of the study, aim of the study, research topic, main research questions, main assumptions, research objectives, clarification of concepts, and main ethical considerations.

1.2 Background

Enaifoghe, Dlelana, Abosedo, Dlamini (2021) propose that gender-based violence is a global phenomenon that impacts on all aspects of life, across all cultures, racial classes, environments, and socio-economic statuses and has an impact on the physical and psychological health of survivors (Wilson, 2012; World Health Organisation [WHO], 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women; Montserrat, Garcia-Molsosa, Plana-Llado, & Soler-Maso, 2022). Artz, Meer, and Müller (2018) simply describe GBV as gendered practices and experiences that are discriminatory in nature. A more detailed definition of GBV will be provided in chapter 2. Buiten and Salo (2011) and Graaff and Heinecken (2017) stated that males are the main perpetrators of violence, sometimes against other males. Literature has evinced that it is mostly females who are more likely to be survivors of GBV (Courtenay, 2000). Additionally, Reed, Raj, Miller, and Silverman (2010) have found that females are more likely to be subjected to genocide at the hands of males which implies historical trauma.

Apartheid is suggested to be the main reason for high incidences of violence in South Africa due to the militarised violence that occurred during that time (Wilson, 2012; Enaifoghe et al., 2021) which subsequently led to a normalisation of violence in the present day (Buiten and Salo, 2011; Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). Hoosen, Adams, Tiliouine and Savahl (2022) go on to say that South African history is entrenched in violence. Dibakwane (2019) describes apartheid as an oppressive technique that the South African government utilized with the aim to separate whites from non-whites and further create a divide amongst black Africans with the intention to reduce likely resistance and political power. During this time, non-whites were subjected to crimes like unfair arrests, torture, and even murder with no legal assistance available to them (Dibakwane, 2019). The brutality experienced over decades (Dibakwane, 2019) influenced many of the social realities that exist in South Africa as well (Holtzhausen & Campbell, 2023). The consequence of this normalisation, post-apartheid era, is that it fuels an acceptance of violence in society as Debowska, Boduszek, Jones, Willmott and Sherretts (2021) and Rivas-Rivero and Bonilla-Algovia (2022) opine that violence is a widely tolerated phenomenon.

Whilst Graaff and Heinecken (2017) rightfully say; as more people witness, experience, and speak about violence the more it becomes accepted as a way of life.

Gender and income inequality in South Africa have been noted to be contributing factors for high GBV incidences in society (Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). This implies that often GBV occurs in marginalised communities where gender inequality, poverty, and violence are rife, and where the financial aspects that signify masculinity are difficult to attain and/or maintain (Graaff & Heinecken, 2017).

The aim of this study is to explore the perceptions and experiences of young males about GBV in their families and communities in the townships of Gqeberha, Eastern Cape. In this study the researcher argues that the exposure and experiences that young males face have a significant contribution to future perpetration, during their childhood and when they become adults, which impacts negatively on many people's lives, and the cycle of violence remains uninterrupted (Ronzon-Tirado et al., 2023; Basto-Pereira, Gouveia-Pereira, Pereira, Barrett, E. Lawler, Newton, Stapinski, Prior, Costa, Ximenes, Rocha, Michel, Garcia, Rouchy, Shawi, Sarhan, Fulano, Magaia, El-Astal, Alattar, Sabbah, Holtzhausen, Campbell, Villanueva, Gomis-Pomares, Adrian, Cuervo, & Sakulku, 2022; Cichetti, 2016). The researcher realises that males are significantly impacted by GBV, although society shields their expression of feelings by emphasising masculinity (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009; Graaf & Heinecken, 2017). The researcher also believes that this is suggestive of poor familial connections.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Violence against females is a prevalent phenomenon that affects many across the globe (Wilson, 2012; WHO, 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women; Peacock & Barker, 2014; Graaff & Heinecken, 2017; Artz et al., 2018; Montserrat et al., 2022). GBV is rooted in rigid cultural practices that aim to demean females' societal value (Wilson, 2012). As a result of socialisation, many biased and rigid perceptions about gender norms exist relating to what roles males and females should assume in the home and in society (Peacock & Barker, 2014) and Reed et al. (2010) opine that this forms the foundation of the current problem of GBV. In conjunction with this, having experienced violence in childhood and exposure to substance abuse, contribute significantly to the problem, with Jewkes et al.'s (2011) study revealing those who had sexually violated a female having consumed high levels of substances during the commission of the crime (Peacock & Barker, 2014; Graaff & Heinecken, 2017).

Montserrat et al. (2022) opine that GBV is a social ill that impacts young people, and they should be viewed as social agents and for them to be empowered through engagement and by understanding the problems they are faced with within their families and communities.

Violence in schools reflects inequality practices that stem from cultural beliefs and attitudes regarding gender roles (Wilson, 2012). This implies that young males observe and display the same patterns of behaviour being perpetrated by older males in their social settings.

Wilson (2012) conducted a study that revealed that sexual violence, for instance, against young females is prevalent in schools and compromises their safety and that schools in many countries turn a blind eye to the complaints brought forward by school going females in the school environment. The researcher believes this could potentially be as a result of normalizing violence and young males displaying learnt behaviours in the social settings (Peacock & Barker, 2014; Reed et al., 2010).

A study conducted by Peacock and Barker (2014) revealed that the primary contributing factor towards GBV perpetration was having witnessed violence during childhood, being perpetrated against their mothers. This was also reiterated by Graaff and Heinecken (2017) in their study. The study further revealed that young males are likely to commit violence in their adulthood, and young females are likely to be at the receiving end of violence (Peacock & Barker, 2014; Lundgren & Amin, 2015; Debowska et al., 2021; Forke, Myers, Fein, Catalozzi, Localioa, Wiebea, Grissoh 2018). This is significant as it suggests to the researcher that there is a developmental trajectory, accompanied by risk factors, that is likely to result in males committing violence against females in future.

This requires the exploration of how young males are socialised and whether they have witnessed and/or experienced violence in childhood and in other social settings (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell, & Dunkle, 2011; Peacock & Barker, 2014; Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). This is likely to provide an indication of future perpetration, allow the researcher to identify markers of possible perpetration, and provide protective factors that can remedy and provide resiliency against this surge of GBV perpetration. The researcher believes that this, in no way strips males of the perceived responsibility towards the GBV problem, but rather is in agreement with Peacock and Barker (2014) when they state that males have strong motivations to end GBV as many have suffered directly from the phenomenon. The researcher supposes the primary reason why young males become violent towards females later in life, could be the same reason to not be violent against females.

1.4 Problem context

The research site were townships of Gqeberha in the Eastern Cape, which allowed for an array of participants for the study, as there are many schools, non-governmental organisations, and skills development centres from which the researcher could seek participants from. Gqeberha was colonised in the early 1900's and mainly consisted of European immigrants, coloured and Indian people (Frescura, 2023 [viewed online]). The economic of the city started strengthening and this saw black Africans relocating to and seeking employment in Gqeberha (Frescura, 2023 [viewed online]). Townships that emerged during the apartheid era were firstly Bethelsdorp in the late 1800's, New Brighton in the early 1900's, Kwazakhele and Zwide in the 1950's and 1960's respectively, and because of the increased levels of urbanisation, Motherwell was established in the 1980's (Frescura, 2023 [viewed online]). Some of the members of these communities were forcefully removed from urban areas to live in townships (Frescura, 2023) and as emphasised by Dibakwane (2019) many of those living in these segregated communities were subjected to this state violence. With Gqeberha listed as one of the most violent cities in the world, ranking 23rd place (BusinessTech, Cape Town, Joburg, Durban and Gqeberha among the most violent cities in the world. 2022 [viewed online]) and GBV being a global phenomenon (WHO, 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women), as a means to break the cycle of young males perpetrating violence, the researcher believes that it is important to explore the perceptions and experiences of young males about GBV so that these heinous crimes can be eradicated, or at least minimised.

Research evinced that eight out of ten young males commonly view females as the cause of sexual violence perpetration (Wilson, 2012). This highlights the distortions held by males about females which are generally cultivated through socialisation. It is not surprising then that literature states that about 30% of adolescent females are raped within schools' proximity (de Lange et al., 2012). With children spending the most part of their lives in school, GBV perpetration is one of the reasons that schools are believed to be unsafe (de Lange, Mitchell, & Bhana, 2012).

A multi-country study conducted by WHO (2012) revealed that about 60% of survivors had been subjected to physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner, almost 60% had been sexually violated, and about 75% had experienced emotional abuse. In South Africa, it was reported that over 40% of young females between the ages of 13 and 23 had experienced physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner (WHO, 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women). In a South African study conducted in 2013 across four

provinces, it was revealed that all participants had experienced some form of gendered violence (Enaifoghe et al., 2021).

1.5 Rational of the study

This study aims to explore the perceptions and experiences of young males about GBV in their families and communities. This will contribute towards a child-centred approach as suggested by Montserrat et al. (2022) as GBV within families and in communities impacts children a great deal (Montserrat et al., 2022).

Wilson (2012) is of the view that with the increase of violence in society, this has seen an increase in school related GBV. The researcher is interested in exploring the perception and experiences of young males about GBV in their families and communities as well as the social settings that this learnt behaviour is observed and subsequently rewarded. Within the school environment, GBV manifests in the form of bullying, physical, verbal, and sexual abuse which place adolescent females and female teachers at risk (de Lange et al., 2012). As a means to reduce these vulnerabilities, young males ought to be engaged about a matter that directly affects them.

This study will benefit professionals within social services, psychology, education, and policy development spaces in gaining an insight of the views and experiences of young males and equally provide awareness to parents and society at large about the impact GBV has on young males. Employing a victim centred perspective does little to understand and address the delinquent behaviour (Jewkes et al., 2011).

1.6 Aims of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe the perceptions and experiences of young males about GBV in their families and communities in the townships of Gqeberha in the Eastern Cape.

1.7 Research topic

An exploratory study on the perceptions and experiences of young males about GBV in their families and communities in the townships of Gqeberha in the Eastern Cape.

1.8 Main research questions

- What does GBV entail?
- What is the understanding of the reasons of GBV in families and communities?
- Why does GBV persists in families and communities?
- What should be done to reduce the perpetration of GBV in families and communities?

1.9 Main assumptions

Considering the problem presented in this study, the researcher agrees with literature that GBV is a phenomenon that places young people at risk of being abused and becoming the perpetrators or survivors of GBV later in life. The researcher believes that young males should be engaged because literature suggests that they will be future perpetrators of GBV (WHO, 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women; Graaff & Heinecken, 2017; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022). In support of the argument made earlier, the researcher is of the opinion that the combination of exposure to GBV and misogynistic gender norms are the catalyst to high prevalence rates in South Africa and globally.

1.10 Research objectives

- To explore the perceptions of young males about GBV in their families and communities
- To understand the experiences of young males about GBV perpetration in this community
- To identify markers that increase the level of risk of GBV perpetration
- To generate recommendations based on the perceptions, views and experiences of young males about GBV in their families and communities

1.11 Clarification of concepts

Gender can be understood to be a social construction that bestows the expected roles an individual is to perform in any given context, often learned through socialisation (Courtenay, 2000; Graaff & Heinecken, 2017).

Young males can be understood to be any male individual older than 18 years (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996, s28(3)). The researcher is particularly interested in those aged 18-25 years.

1.12 Main ethical considerations

Strydom (2021) describes ethics as a guiding code of principles and standards of conduct that provide rules for acceptable conduct when implementing research. Creswell (2014) and Strydom (2021) are of the view that researchers have the responsibility to predict the ethical challenges that may arise during the study and develop ways in which these can be addressed in a practical manner. By the mere fact that social research makes use of human participants, ethical considerations ought to be upheld so that the study is not to the detriment of participants (Strydom, 2021). Therefore, it is the duty of the researcher to protect the research participants

from any anticipated harm (Creswell, 2014). The researcher commits to conducting the study in a respectful, non-discriminatory, non-exploitative way and in a manner that upholds the integrity of social research (American Educational Research Association [AERA], 2011).

The main ethical considerations that were upheld in this study were as follows; avoidance of harm, voluntary participation, informed consent, protection of privacy/anonymity/confidentiality, and debriefing participants.

1.12.1 Avoidance of harm

AERA (2011) describes the avoidance of harm in social research as a process of minimizing unforeseen negative consequences that are due to the study. The researcher committed to providing participants with a brief background of the study. This allowed participants to weigh the potential impact the study may have on their wellbeing (AERA, 2011; Strydom, 2021).

As a means to protect the physical and emotional wellbeing of participants, the researcher committed to negotiating a neutral and safe interviewing place (Strydom, 2021). The researcher acknowledges that the topic being explored may affect emotional discomfort and thus committed to exercising attentive listening during interviews. In the event of emotional discomfort being displayed during an interview, the researcher was to pause the interview and attend to the wellbeing of the participant. The researcher has to ask the participant if he would like to continue with the interview, reiterating that his participation is completely voluntary. Fortunately, no interview was interrupted as a result of emotional distress.

1.12.2 Voluntary participation

Participants were informed that continued participation in the study is voluntary (AERA, 2011; Strydom, 2021), and participants were notified of their voluntary participation in a language that they understood prior to the interview commencing so that they were clear of what is requested from them (Arifin, 2018). The researcher provided participants with a summary of the research study, clarified questions that participants had and allowed them to make a decision whether or not to voluntarily participate in the study.

1.12.3 Informed consent

In the process of providing informed consent, participants were notified of the goal, advantages and disadvantages, duration etc., before they fully agreed to be part of the study (Strydom, 2021). This ethical consideration also makes provision for participants to ask questions that they need clarified (Strydom, 2021). Strydom (2021) adds that complete and accurate information must be provided to participants so that they are able to make an informed decision regarding their participation in the study, that which the researcher did. This reinforces participants' right to self-determination (Strydom, 2021), and the researcher honoured this right.

AERA (2011) recognizes that participants may experience pressure to participate in the study. The researcher continuously emphasised voluntary participation throughout the engagements with participants. Participants were informed that they are free to withdraw their consent before or during the interview (Strydom, 2021).

Participants were approached through gatekeepers i.e., schools, non-governmental organizations, and skills development organizations. The researcher also approached suitable potential participants individually (Arifin, 2018). The role of gatekeepers was to link the researcher to young males that meet the criteria of inclusion. Where there were more than one interested participants, the researcher requested a private and quiet room for interviews so that the researcher could share the particulars of the study. During all interviews, the researcher outlined the research goal, aims and objectives, as well as emphasised the sensitive nature of the topic so that all participants were aware of what they would potentially be going to be a part of.

The researcher provided participants with a written consent form detailing all particulars of the study. The participants were provided with adequate time to familiarise themselves with the form and were required to indicate consent to be part of the study, for the researcher to record the interview, and for the supervisor to have access to the data as he forms part of the research team. The forms were kept in a secure and lockable cabinet, only accessible to the researcher (Strydom, 2021).

Considering that the participants had reached the age of maturity, as constituted in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996, s28(3)) this implies that the young males would be capable of providing consent (Arifin, 2018). Considering that the subject matter is a sensitive topic, should a participant have displayed emotional distress during data collection, the interview would not

be included in the final report. Fortunately, no participant displayed emotional distress, and interviews were uninterrupted.

1.12.4 Protection of privacy/anonymity/confidentiality

The researcher protected the identity and privacy of all participants (Strydom, 2021) by ensuring that interviews were conducted in a safe and secure place, where their identity was not known to anyone. The researcher requested a private and quiet room in the premises of the gatekeepers (Arifin, 2018). No identifying information was included in the research findings as the researcher committed to using pseudonyms. Once interviews were conducted, the data was stored on an online platform that is password protected.

The combination of privacy and confidentiality aided in ensuring participant anonymity as it implied non-disclosure of sensitive, personal, and identifying information of those who participated in the study (AERA, 2011; Research Ethics Board, 2017) to unresearcherized personnel. This implies that the likelihood to associate the data collected or personal identifiers with any particular participant are low (Research Ethics Board, 2017). The researcher anonymised participants' names by giving them pseudonyms (Badamupudi, Fotrousi, Cartaxo, & Usman, 2022) and this encouraged participants to share their experiences freely (Novak, 2014).

Confidentiality limits other people's access to information as it is privileged information (AERA, 2011; Strydom, 2021). It implies that the researcher protects the identity of participants by all means necessary (Badamupudi et al., 2022) by undertaking precautionary measures in protecting participants' personal and identifying information (AERA, 2011). All data collected was concealed (Novak, 2014). All transcripts were redacted so that no identifying information was available as suggested by (Badamupudi et al., 2022). All participants were informed that the interview recordings will be kept confidential through storing them on a safe online password protected platform and grant the supervisor access if required.

Any admin work (appendices) was kept in a secure and lockable cabinet, only accessible to the researcher (Strydom, 2021).

1.12.5 Debriefing

Debriefing is an activity that is conducted once the participant has exhausted their participation in the study and is aimed at participants sharing their experiences and feelings, outside of the study (Strydom, 2021). It aims to minimise the impact that the interview may have had on the

participants' wellbeing (Strydom, 2021). The researcher allowed participants to reflect on the interview by asking them about their thoughts and feelings towards the interview (Strydom, 2011). As suggested by Strydom (2021), the researcher was to eliminate any myths or errors that were a part of participants' world view. Alternatively, participants would be referred (Strydom, 2021) to FAMSA at 62 Western Road, where unemployed therapy seekers have access to 6 free sessions.

1.13 Conclusion

For any study, it is important that a foundation from which the study departs is laid in detail. This chapter outlined the statement of the problem, provided the problem context and the rationale of the study. The aims of the study, research topic, main research questions, main assumptions, and research objectives were also indicated. Concepts were clarified and main ethical considerations discussed.

2 Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to explore and gain a better understanding of the literature that already exists regarding the impact of GBV perpetration globally and mainly in South Africa. A review of literature will be discussed, outlining; the impact and prevalence of GBV, gender inequality, and the impact GBV has on young males. The theoretical frameworks used in this study will also be outlined, as well as policies and legislation relevant to this study.

2.2 Review of literature

Artz et al. (2018) describe GBV to be discriminatory and gendered acts of violence towards a different gender from that of the perpetrator and includes sexual abuse, coerced pregnancy, intimate partner violence (IPV) targeted abuse towards females with disabilities, transgender people, and lesbians etc. GBV is a multi-causal phenomenon with many contributory factors (Montserrat et al., 2022). These abusive acts are physical, sexual, and emotional in nature (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998, 1998 [viewed online], Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022; Akamike et al., 2019). In addition, Enaifoghe et al. (2021) and WHO (2012) describe GBV as having negative consequences on the health of survivors including injury, mental health issues, and even death. Buiten and Salo (2011) submit that GBV is primarily driven by gender and power dynamics and the concept of misogyny, strong prejudicial views about females, are major contributors towards GBV perpetration as it is linked to masculinity and continuously enforced through socialisation (Buiten & Salo, 2011).

Peacock and Barker (2014) conducted a study that revealed about 46% of males had committed IPV, where women reported higher numbers for having experienced violence at the hands of an intimate partner. Evidence suggests that males who will commit sexual violence in their lifetime, will do so in their adolescence, and likely commit more offences as they grow older (Peacock & Barker, 2014). This is particularly interesting to the researcher as it suggests the crisis point is when males are adolescent. Alarming, South Africa is ranked in the fourth worst position, out of 183 countries (Enaifoghe et al., 2021), with over 40% of young females having experienced physical violence from an intimate partner (WHO, 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women). This draws a bleak picture of the worrying reality that women and children are in grave danger of being harmed physically, sexually, and psychologically through witnessing and/or experiencing GBV. As previously mentioned by Montserrat et al. (2022), a child-centred approach to GBV is neglected, and the researcher believes this will provide a new and informed direction for literature.

2.2.1 The impact and prevalence of Gender-based violence

GBV is detrimental to the whole family (Strebel, Crawford, Shefer, Henda, Kaufman, Simbayi, Magome, & Kalichman, 2006), and particularly children as they are at an increased risk of experiencing physical, sexual, and psychological abuse as well as being neglected (Montserrat et al., 2022). Artz et al. (2018) conducted a study that revealed that about 35% of young people had been exposed to sexual abuse in their childhood, with the average age for females being 4 years old and 6 years old for males. A study conducted in Zimbabwe in 2011 revealed similar findings with about 32% of girl children having been exposed to sexual violence in their childhood (Artz et al., 2018).

Inter partner violence [IPV] is the most common form of GBV perpetration globally (Enaifoghe et al., 2021; Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022; Akamike et al., 2019). WHO (2012) describes IPV as a form of violence that includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. The perpetrators of IPV are commonly males who are or were previously an intimate partner to the survivor (Buiten & Salo, 2011; WHO, 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women). Those who have endured GBV are at risk of injury, being physically and mentally impaired, and their sexual and reproductive health may be compromised (WHO, 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women; Sabbah, Chang, Campbell-Heider, 2017). The multi-country study conducted by WHO (2012) policy on understanding and addressing violence against women revealed that gendered violence, in this case IPV, often overlap from physical violence to sexual violence to emotional violence. This implies that these forms of abuse are not independent of each other, and this draws to the extent of trauma survivors are likely experiencing at any given time. Globally, 1 in 3 females have experienced some form of violence and 1 in 20 have be subjected to rape (Enaifoghe et al., 2021), reaffirming the implied overlap. Strebel et al. (2006) evinced high rates of gendered violence in the Western Cape, South Africa with approximately 53 000 rape cases having been reported to police in the year 2000. In 2019 in South Africa, 87 290 domestic violence cases were reported to the police, and during the national lockdown in 2020, GBV related complaints increased by 37% per week (Enaifoghe et al., 2021). This indicates the severity of the phenomenon and implies dysfunction within the home environment and communities.

2.2.2 Gender inequality

GBV infringes on the rights of women and children and premises itself on cultural and traditional ways of life (Enaifoghe et al., 2021). With masculinity central to heterosexual performance and physical strength, both of which are used to control females (Jewkes et al., 2011), gender inequality affords less females opportunities to exercise their will as they are seen as lesser than their male counterparts (Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). Because society often favours masculinity, this often results in feminist practices being less favoured (Graaff & Heinecken, 2017).

The researcher agrees that society often exerts pressure on males to be providers in their families (Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). Males are expected to demonstrate physical strength and are assumed to have an active sex drive (Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). By implication, these suggest that males are likely to use violence, fuelled by aggression, and exert power over their female counterparts (Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). This gives the researcher the impression that societal norms are an enabler of violence and the reason why GBV persists.

Graaff and Heinecken (2017) make mention of what they term 'hypermasculinity'. The concept is characterised by males believing that danger is exciting, the view that violence is a suitable means of demonstrating dominance, and insensitive sexual attitudes that have no regard for females' rights. These characteristics increase the likelihood of the perpetration of GBV as these are fuelled by gender inequality which has its roots in socialisation. A study conducted by Montserrat et al. (2022) evinced gender inequality as a contributing factor towards what is maintaining GBV perpetration, with one participant highlighting the power dynamics as a major contributing factor.

Traditionally, females bear the brunt of domestic chores in the home (Peacock & Barker, 2014) and Wilson (2012) goes on to state that that is the case even within the school environment. This suggests to the researcher that, because of the exposure young males have regarding GBV, this infringes on the rights of adolescent females because of the learnt societal gender norms, which maintain the continuous cycle of GBV.

The researcher agrees that contributors to the continued perpetration of GBV are mainly misconstrued gender roles and harmful masculinity identities and an internalization of these is what actively maintains the problem (Peacock & Barker, 2014). In South Africa, literature has revealed that sexual and physical violence are common in patriarchal societies where rigid traditional sex roles are displayed and are contributing factors to high incidences of IPV (Graaff

& Heinecken, 2017). Patriarchal gender roles are associated with GBV as power is often ascribed to males (Strebel et al., 2006), and this is what Schrock and Schwalbe (2009) suggest is maintaining gender inequality through always trying to acquire compliance from females.

Economically, females' lack of upliftment leads them to continue staying under those circumstances because they are dependent on the perpetrator (Enaifoghe et al., 2021). Where they are unable to leave a partner who is unemployed, she is at risk of IPV because her partner is likely to feel that his masculinity is being threatened and what better way to reassert it than using violence? (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation [CSVSR], 2016; Sabbah et al., 2017).

2.2.3 The impact of gender-based violence on young males

Literature has evinced that children who have witnessed their mothers being subjected to GBV is one of the primary factors linked to male perpetration of, and females experiencing IPV (WHO, 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women; Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). This is likely to lead to a normalisation of violence (WHO, 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women). The researcher believes that GBV puts young males at risk of being maltreated by their parent(s). Cicchetti (2016) describes maltreatment as all kinds of abuse, inclusive of negligence, and results to actual or potential harm to children's development as it relates to the concept of responsibility, trust, and power. The researcher wishes to remind the reader that GBV increases the risk of children experiencing physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, and neglect (Montserrat et al., 2022).

Montserrat et al. (2022) are of the view that the mother-child relationship is impacted and this is influenced by the perpetrator's engagements with the child, and the child's views about both parents. The implications of the impacted relationship, on the part of the parent, are negative emotions (Cicchetti, 2016; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022), harsh parenting practices, mental instability, frequent exposure to IPV and substance abuse (Artz et al. (2018). The researcher believes that this is profound as it suggests that young males may have emotionally unavailable mothers (Jewkes et al., 2011) because they themselves are grappling with the effects of being emotionally abused as WHO (2012) revealed that they are likely to experience anxiety and depression. The risk that maltreatment has on the development of the child is the alterations in the child's emotional and cognitive systems both of which are interlinked (Cicchetti, 2016). Emotion regulation is important in the initiating, encouraging, and classifying adaptive behaviours (Cicchetti, 2016). The researcher is of the view that if young males are exposed to

violence during their childhood, their emotion regulation may deviate from normal responses. This further reiterates the views by Buiten and Salo (2011) regarding persisting misogynistic views that linger in society, all of which are instilled through socialisation and maintained through patriarchy.

Gendered violence has an impact on the social development of children as they are likely to be anxious individuals with low self-esteems who perform poorly at school (WHO, 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women). Cicchetti (2016) highlights an interesting point stating that if children's emotion recognition is not accurate, this will likely mess up their identification of social cues that inform their behaviour. Again, highlighting the likelihood of altered and prejudicial thoughts about females.

Jewkes et al. (2011) argue that childhood trauma decreases males' ability to form close and nurturing relationships, as a result of this, males are likely to lack empathy. Jewkes et al. (2011) conducted a study that revealed that 45% of participants felt no guilt nor remorse for what they had done and displayed a sense of entitlement, reinforcing their cognitive legitimises. This reiterates Cicchetti's (2016) position, that the child's emotional regulation is likely to be inaccurate, which informs the child's cognitions. Basto-Pereira et al. (2022) opine that young people learn antisocial behaviours in childhood and this behaviour is often observed in the home.

Joseph and Linley (2006) are of the view that individuals can be resilient despite adverse circumstances and go as far as to say that traumatic incidents can induce positive change within an individual. This, they term adversarial growth (Joseph & Linley, 2006). Literature evinces low rates of this adversarial growth, and the researcher aims to explore the reasons for the continued cycle of GBV perpetration.

2.3 Theoretical framework

It is important that a theoretical framework be employed to understand the topic being investigated to provide the reader with a lens through which to view the problem under investigation, and the two that will be discussed in this section are social constructionist view of gender and the ecological systems theory.

2.3.1 Social Constructionist view of gender

From birth, children are born in societies which markedly differentiate between males and females and require children to understand this classification and where they fit in it (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). Schrock and Schwalbe (2009) state that socialisation teaches males to

identify themselves as boys or men, and females as girls or women. Parents, therefore, play a significant part through giving their children gendered names and toys (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). Research has revealed that the policing of male children who may want to wear dresses implies a devaluation and a rejection for the female identity (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). Young males are taught at a young age to suppress their emotions, engage in violent and aggressive sports, and have a sexual attraction toward girls as a means to indicate their masculinity (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). Males continuously have to signify and assert their manhood by being the dominant gender, subsequently devaluing females (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009).

Interestingly, Jewkes et al. (2011) assert that females' confidence is often interpreted as hostility. Considering the views of Schrock and Schwalbe (2009) and from sections above, the researcher is convinced that that is indeed the case.

The researcher derived questions that would assist in obtaining information that would lead to whether the social constructionist view to gender would help understand the perceptions and experiences of young males about GBV in the families and communities. The data collection tool asked participants *what are the roles you believe men and women should assume within the home and in society? What do you think the effects of gender-based violence are on victims/women? What are some common character traits that you believe a perpetrator(men) possesses?* These questions encouraged participants to talk about how GBV is possibly maintained in society, as suggested by earlier sections of this chapter. These questions assisted in addressing the first two research objectives.

2.3.2 Ecological systems theory

The ecological systems theory views violence as an occurrence on the micro, meso, exo, and macro level (WHO, 2012 policy on understanding and addressing violence against women; CSVN, 2016). The microsystem encompasses individual and biological factors that impact on behaviours, the mesosystem incorporates the individual's interaction with his family, school, and peers (CSVN, 2016; Sabbah et al., 2017). The exosystem includes external factors such as extended family, local services and the community that affect the individual's immediate surroundings, whilst the macrosystem takes into account social values, economics and politics that encourage the normalisation of violence (CSVN, 2016; Sabbah et al., 2017).

The ecological systems theory assumes that an individual's behaviour is as a result of the interaction between the individual and his social context, implying that change in one system

affects change in other systems (CSV, 2016). The theory posits that GBV is connected to biased gender norms, poverty, substance abuse (Lundgren & Amin, 2015), and community violence (CSV, 2016). This theory asserts that there are factors at every level, contributing towards GBV, from having witnessed or experienced violence in childhood, to a normalisation of violence, to high unemployment rates that threaten males' masculinity (CSV, 2016; Sabbah et al., 2017).

CSV (2016) submit that change in behaviour is possible, and Sabbah et al. (2017) state the ecological systems theory is useful as it guides interventions for change and the promotion of healthy behaviours.

Questions directed to understanding how GBV affects young males this theoretical framework guided to compilation of the following questions *Have you or any of your peers abused somebody else because of their gender? Tell me more. Tell me about a time you witnessed someone being abused based on his/her gender in your home. How often does it happen? How often do you hear about a girl have been abused or killed in your community?*

These questions allowed participants to address and dwell on contributing factors on the microsystem, mesosystem, and the exosystem. These questions directly relate to the first three objectives of the study.

2.4 Policy and Legislation

Whilst the preamble of the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998, 1998 [viewed online]) recognizes domestic violence as a social ill, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996, 1996: s12[viewed online]) affords all citizens the right to be free from all kinds of violent acts. As related to children, the Act makes provisions for children to be protected against all kinds of abuse, neglect, maltreatment (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 108 of 1996, s28). In its definition of abuse, the Children's Act 38 of 2005 incorporates children's exposure to emotional or psychological harm (Children's Act 38 of 2005). It has already been established that young males' exposure to GBV is a traumatic experience and has an impact of their social development. Article 16 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child [ACRWC] (1990) asserts the protection of children against abuse and torture. The researcher recognises that exposure to abuse is harmful to the wellbeing of the child, let alone experiencing it. The ACRWC's (1990) assertion prioritises children being safeguarded from harm that is likely to be detrimental to their wellbeing.

Goal 5 of Sustainable Development Goals emphasise the importance of gender equality (United Nations, 2015). The aim of the goal is to ensure the elimination of all kinds of discrimination and advocates for fairness. Worthy of note is its intention to eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls (United Nations, 2015). This is significant as it suggests that males are the most likely perpetrators of violence, globally.

The question posed to ascertain whether participants knew of any policies or legislation, the following question was asked *Do you know of any laws that can help those experiencing GBV?* This question allowed participants to engage on policies and legislation they believed likely to assist them having been exposed and experienced GBV.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed literature with regards to GBV, its impact and prevalence, how it can be linked to gender inequality, its impact on young males and the theoretical frameworks that can assist understanding of the phenomenon.

3 Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This section will describe the research design of choice and the desired population and sampling techniques. The data collection approach that was adopted, data collection instrument that was utilized, as well as the data recording. Additionally, the process of data analysis and verification will be outlined, together with reflexivity and the limitations of the study.

3.2 Research design

The research design that was utilised in this study is the qualitative research approach and exploratory, descriptive designs. This design enabled the researcher to gain a better understanding regarding the topic of choice and to learn more about the participants' lived experiences (Creswell, 2014; Fouché & Delpont, 2021). This research design aims to make sense of social problems from the perspective of participants (Creswell, 2014). The design is inductive in nature and relies on dense and detailed description of a phenomenon (Fouché & Delpont, 2021). The qualitative exploratory design samples a small number of participants with the purpose of collecting extensive and valuable data, meaningful to the phenomenon being explored (Fouché & Delpont, 2021).

It is suggested that the qualitative research design is more flexible (Fouché & Delpont, 2021), and this is due to the fact that this design is emergent in nature, suggesting that some stages of the research process might change once the data collection stage has commenced (Creswell, 2014, Fouché & Delpont, 2021).

3.3 Population and sampling

A population can be described as the total number of dynamic individuals who maintain relationships with one another and other populations who are under investigation for the study (Strydom & Delpont, 2021). A sample, on the other hand, can be understood to be a subsection of the total population of interest to be included in the study (Strydom & Delpont, 2021). More often than not, the sample size of a qualitative exploratory study is not statistically determined (Strydom & Delpont, 2021). The sample of the study was young males who were likely exposed to GBV.

3.3.1 Sampling procedure

This study utilized non-probability sampling. The researcher sought participants who had likely experienced the topic being explored, implying that participants do not have an equal chance of being part of the study (Strydom & Delpont, 2021).

Non-probability sampling allowed for the collection of rich and valuable data, a component that encouraged the researcher to seek participants that were situated in a place where the phenomenon being explored was likely to occur (Strydom & Delpont, 2021), in this case, the townships of Gqeberha.

3.3.2 Sampling techniques

Purposeful sampling refers to selecting a population based on specific characteristics related to answering the research questions (Strydom & Delpont, 2021). It enabled the researcher to assemble participants who were most likely to provide valuable and detailed information about the topic under study, exhibit typical traits and were representative of the population of interest (Strydom & Delpont, 2021). Thus, participants were selected based on the researcher's decision on who was likely to purposefully inform the aims of the study (Strydom & Delpont, 2021).

The researcher identified young males between the ages of 18 and 25 years in the Gqeberha area, Eastern Cape, as the population of interest. The sample included a total of 16 adolescent black/coloured males, living in marginalized communities who were either schooling or had dropped out of school. Considering the research design of choice, Strydom and Delpont (2021) suggest that this preselection process was crucial towards achieving the aims of the study.

The researcher identified young males between the age of 18 to 25 years in the townships of Gqeberha, Eastern Cape, as the desired population for the study. She would seek a maximum of 4 participants from 4 townships of Gqeberha, Because of the availability of participants, the researcher managed to get participants from KwaDwesi (1), KwaMagxaki (1), Motherwell (5), Gelvan (1), Joe Slovo (1), Veeplaas (1), Kwazakhele (1), Wells Estate (1), New Brighton (1) and Zwide (2).

3.3.3 Sampling characteristics

The researcher pursued participants from schools, non-governmental organisations, and skills development centres most likely working with the target population.

As previously mentioned, Gqeberha is a poverty stricken and crime infested area, risk factors for the perpetration of GBV. Upon approval by the ethics committee, the researcher approached these schools in different townships, local non-governmental organisations, and skills development centres.

A summary of the sampling characteristics is detailed below

Criteria for inclusion:

- Young males between the age 18 and 25 years from disadvantaged communities

Criteria for exclusion:

- Younger or older males outside of the age bracket not living in disadvantaged communities

3.4 Data collection approach

Considering the research approach utilized, interviewing was the most suitable data collection approach for the study. The researcher collected data by means of semi-structured one-on-one interviews. Greeff (2021) describes semi-structured interviews as a data collection approach that allows a researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' perceptions and experiences regarding a specific topic being explored. Creswell (2014) further adds that these interviews are designed in such a way that allows for open-ended questions to be asked, so that the views of participants can be evoked. Simply put, this data collection approach allows for what Greeff (2021) terms a 'meaning-making process.' Through the utilisation of this approach, participants were viewed as the experts of the topic and were provided the platform to communicate their experiences in abundance (Greeff, 2021).

By adopting this data collection approach, the researcher had to establish rapport with all interviewees and made use of interviewing skills such as probing, paraphrasing, reflective summary, and active listening to name a few, which allowed for the exploration of emergent subtopics (Greeff, 2021).

3.5 Data collection instrument

A semi-structured interview schedule was utilized as an instrument for data collection. The schedule had prearranged questions that served as a guide for the interviews that were to take place (Greeff, 2021). Considering the structure of the prearranged questions, the interview schedule allowed the researcher to engage fully and explore emergent subtopics (Greeff, 2021). Appendix 5 provided the structure that the interview would take before, during and after.

The first section of the interview schedule deals with demographical information that encouraged participants to provide information that would assist the researcher and the reader to understand the participants better. The information helped to describe the participants and the circumstances surrounding their situational context.

The second section was interested in finding out what participants know about GBV, and it involved soliciting the participants' knowledge and perceptions about GBV perpetration in their families and communities. An example of a question asked was '*What is your understanding about GBV?*' This would illustrate the knowledge and awareness that

participants had regarding the research topic. This section was also concerned with encouraging the participants to be aware of the cause-and-effect relationships that results from GBV, drawing back to the theoretical frameworks.

The third section was interested in soliciting information that allowed the participants to share their experiences in relation to GBV. An example of a question asked was *'Have you or any of your peers abused somebody else because of their gender? Tell me more.'* This allowed the researcher to draw back to the theoretical frameworks.

Section four was concerned about the factors that are seemingly maintaining GBV in South African communities. An example of a question asked was *'What are the roles you believe men and women should assume within the home and in communities?'* This would demonstrate the relevance current literature bears.

Section five sought to solicit recommendations participants had about the perpetration of GBV in their families and communities. An example of a question asked was *'As a young man, what do you think your contribution is in lowering the high incidents of GBV?'* The purpose of this line of questioning was to find solutions to the challenges experienced by survivors, perpetrators and witnesses of GBV in families and communities.

3.6 Data recording

The researcher utilized an interview protocol which allowed for the interviews to be audio-recorded (Creswell, 2014). By using this protocol, the researcher had the liberty to take notes during the interviews, noting any important contextual information and non-verbal cues displayed by participants (Creswell, 2014).

Appendix 4 served as permission that the participants provided for the interview to be audio-recorded.

3.7 Data analysis

Creswell (2014) describes data analysis as the process through which the researcher interprets the data collected in order to make sense of the information. Relatedly, De Vos (2021) defines this process as one that proceeds data collection and aims to translate the raw data into research findings. This process requires the examining the data collected, scrutinizing it, and reconstructing it in a way that is meaningful (Creswell, 2014). As a means to refine the rich data gathered, Creswell (2014) suggests the coding of the data into themes.

There are various steps that the researcher undertook to ensure that the data was analysed as required. Firstly, the researcher prearranged and prepared the data by manually transcribing the interviews verbatim on Microsoft Word (Creswell, 2014; Strydom & Delpert, 2021). The

researcher undertook to transcribe the one-on-one interviews soon after each interview. This was done on the researcher's personal computer. Secondly, the researcher began the process of familiarizing herself with the data as a means to interpret participants' general ideas (Creswell, 2014; Strydom & Delpont, 2021). The researcher accomplished the fulfilment of this step by transcribing then going through the data of each interview. This is how the themes, categories, and subcategories were derived. The third step includes coding the data from interviews. This required the categorization of the data by means of capturing emergent themes from the narratives of participants (Creswell, 2014; Strydom & Delpont, 2021). Similarly, the fourth step involves the use of codes in the creation of themes, categories, and sub-categories which constitute the main findings of the study (Creswell, 2014; Strydom & Delpont, 2021). The researcher did this by means of listening to the interviews and taking note of the codes. The fifth step concerns itself with organising the findings in a sensible way and this was done through the process of scrutinising all transcripts with the purpose of extracting those that are relevant to the derived sub-categories (Creswell, 2014; Strydom & Delpont, 2021). The sixth and final step aims to interpret the data gathered and this was done through thorough engagement with the data, literature, where similarities were mostly apparent (Creswell, 2014; Strydom & Delpont, 2021).

3.8 Data verification

Anney (2014) and Kalu and Bwalya (2017) suppose that, in the quest of a researcher trying to determine the trustworthiness of a study he/she ought to investigate the study's credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

3.8.1 Credibility

Credibility concerns itself with whether the findings of the study reflect the data shared by participants and is an accurate interpretation of the views of the participants (Anney, 2014; Schurink, Fouché, De Vos, 2021). The researcher, with the permission of participants, made audio-recordings of all interviews and transcribed all interviews as a means to capture an accurate representation of data collected (Anney, 2014; Kalu & Bwalya, 2017). The researcher made use of peer debriefing through ongoing supervision sessions (Anney, 2014). This was worthwhile because it allowed a fresh pair of eyes to analyse the data and provide thorough guidance where needed. The researcher was able to improve the quality of the study (Anney, 2014) through implementing the feedback received by the research supervisor. Triangulation is useful in reducing bias through utilising different researchers, theories and sources for validating evidence attained (Anney, 2014). In the researcher's quest to maintain the integrity

of the study, she made use of the transcripts, literature, and research supervisor to authenticate findings.

3.8.2 Transferability

Transferability describes the extent to which the findings of the study can be generalised in other contexts with similar populations (Anney, 2014; Kalu & Bwalya, 2017). The provision of thick and dense descriptions (Anney, 2014; Kalu & Bwalya, 2017) was achieved through thorough discussions about the problem statement and significance of the study in the first chapter as well as the methodology of the study in this chapter. Based on the literature of recent studies, and the data gathered in the current study, the researcher is of the view that the study can possibly be duplicated.

3.8.3 Dependability

Dependability is generally understood to be the stability of the research findings and the ability of the researcher to justify any changes that occurred during the research process (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017).

The researcher made use of the code-recode strategy to analyse the data collected over 4 weeks to ensure dependability of the findings (Anney, 2014). The current chapter provides an audit trail of how the research data was collected and analysed, thereby foundation of the confirmability of the study (Anney, 2014).

3.8.4 Confirmability

The last component of data verification is confirmability. This process is concerned with whether the findings of the data can be corroborated, and that the data is an accurate interpretation of the findings (Anney, 2014; Kalu & Bwalya, 2017). This is often achieved by keeping a reflexive journal, triangulating the data, and audit trails (Anney, 2014)

3.9 Limitations of the study

Limitations are generally understood to be constraints beyond the control of the researcher (Theofanidis & Fountouki, 2019). The study sampled 16 young males and it can be argued that is a small number to make generalisations about a topic. Secondly the exclusion of adolescent females may have limited the richness of the data gathered as they would possibly know the kind of support and services that she may likely need should she be subjected to GBV. Their being excluded though, was an effort to encourage young males to be aware of and take accountability of their role in the phenomenon.

3.10 Reflexivity

Reflexivity involves the researcher expressing and understanding one's own experiences as a researcher (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017). Anney (2014) supposes that this exercise requires the researcher to assess her own background and personal history about the research process. After interviewing several participants, the researcher was triggered by some of the participants' experiences. The researcher notified the research supervisor, and a decision was made that the researcher see professional help after the completion of the study.

Conclusion

This chapter detailed the methodology of the study, where the following was outlined; research design, population and sampling, data collection approach, data collection instrument, data recording, data analysis, data verification, limitations of the study as well as reflexivity.

4 Chapter Four: Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from in-depth interviews conducted with sixteen (16) young males on their perceptions and experiences about gender-based violence in their families and communities. This chapter will begin with a presentation of the organisational profile of participants, followed by a framework of discussion of findings as well as a discussion of finding.

4.2 Table 1: Demographic profile

Participant	Gender	Age	Race	Education
P 1	Male	18	Black	Matric
P 2	Male	21	Black	Tertiary, currently studying
P 3	Male	20	Black	Tertiary, currently studying
P 4	Male	23	Black	Matric
P 5	Male	25	Black	Tertiary, not complete
P 6	Male	24	Coloured	Diploma
P 7	Male	22	Black	Matric
P 8	Male	18	Black	Grade 11
P 9	Male	25	Black	Grade 11
P 10	Male	19	Black	Grade 9
P 11	Male	22	Black	Matric
P 12	Male	25	Black	Grade 11
P 13	Male	25	Black	Matric
P 14	Male	22	Black	Matric
P 15	Male	25	Black	Matric
P 16	Male	25	Black	Diploma

The table above represents the sample that was used for the study. The sample was made up of sixteen (16) young males between the ages of 18 and 25.

Initially, the aim was to seek participants from 4 townships in Gqeberha, and because the research site caters to all the townships of the city, the researcher managed to interview six (6) from Motherwell, two (2) from Zwide and one (1) from each of the following townships: KwaDwesi, KwaMagxaki, Gelvan, Joe Slovo, Veeplaas, Kwazakhele, Wells Estate, and New Brighton. Five (5) of the participants have received tertiary education, with two (2) having received their qualifications. Four (4) of the participants have not completed their high schooling with one (1) having his highest grade passed as grade 9.

4.3 Framework for discussion of findings

The raw data collected from the sixteen (16) interviews conducted with the young males from various townships in Gqeberha illustrated the below. Three (3) major themes, eleven (11) categories, and twenty-five (25) subcategories were derived from the data and are tabled below.

4.3.1 Table 2: Framework of analysis

Themes	Categories (sub-themes)	Sub-categories
Contributing factors of gender-based violence in the household	Cognitive distortions of self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distorted identity of self • Continuation of the cycle of abuse as a result of a history of violence in the home
	Harmful gender norms and stereotypes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violent socialisation • Perceived perpetrator character traits • Emotion regulation • Substance use and abuse as a catalyst of violence • Violent coaching
	Familial behavioural dysfunctionalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor parental capacity • Dysfunctional problem-solving strategies
The effects of gender-based violence on individuals, families, groups, and communities	Resultant behaviours of violence on the perpetrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character degeneration
	Manifestations of violence on survivors	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological effects of GBV on survivors • Continuation of the cycle as a result of experiencing GBV
	The impact of violence on the family unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effects of violence in the home on young males
	Gender-based violence effects at a community level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normalisation of violence leading to community despondence • Bystander safety concerns • South African Police Services inaction
Proposed intervention plans	Gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender roles • Improving problem-solving strategies
	Communication patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Man-to-man talk • Supportive social systems
	Information sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadcasting and social media platforms
	Community education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reporting of cases • Life skills workshops and support groups • Community keepers

Table 2 details the major findings collected in the form of three (3) major themes, twelve (12), and twenty-nine (25) sub-categories. The main themes that emerged were *contributing factors of gender-based violence in the household, The effects of gender-based violence on individuals, families, groups, and communities, and Proposed intervention plans.*

4.4 Discussion of findings

In this section, data collected from the sixteen (16) interviews of young males will be analysed.

Views of young males on GBV

There seemed to be consensus about the understanding about GBV amongst participants. Many participants highlighted the fact that it affects both males and females, although it is mostly males who perpetrate GBV. Although not tabled in the framework of analysis, the researcher is of the view that it is vital that the views of the young males be outlined.

Okay so for me, my perception about gender-based violence is any act of violation of a right towards a gender that, that results in that gender being terrorized by another gender (Participant 2, Male, 21)

.. Okay what I understand about gender-based violence when one gender abuses the other gender. Sometimes we think it focuses on one gender which is males eh abusing women but we do get women who also abuse males but males because of pride you see, they don't report uhm such cases and also for, and also because of how society puts it that males should react and how a male is supposed to feel uhm, that a woman can't treat a male this way so if we would report such cases you're considered weak, so my understanding is there, that uhm it's when one wants to be dominant than, than another gender in cases of okay, my sweetie uhm I think what's problematic, that causes this gender-based violence is that thing that we must, they say each gender must have its own role. Okay if you are a male suppose you're the head of the house, you supposed to take care of this, you supposed to do this, do this and do this and then when you see, when a male is unable to fulfil those roles uhm, and the female can, he feels weak as a person bestowed by society to have these certain roles, he's feel like, how can I put it? I don't know if he'll feel disrespected, but he'll feel weak but will want to remove the power from the one who can provide as a breadwinner, I'll put it like that, and then that when the fighting starts, abusing the other. The other wanting to, yes? (Participant 5, Male, 25).

Participant 5 went on to say that

But no one asks for it. No one asks for it no one asks that it happens to them, no one like like I, I, I don't want people to, to say, 'no I deserve it' you see? 'Cause some people have that all of which is happening in this moment you see, so no-one asks for something like that (Participant 5, Male, 25)

The views of the participants indicate that there seems to be knowledge about GBV amongst young males the city of Gqeberha. Participant 5 strongly summaries the thoughts of this paper

as he makes reference to the pressure males often feel due to the expectations placed on them by society. Males are expected to be physically and emotionally strong, be the head of the house, provide for the family's needs, and when he is unable to, society rejects them, making males feel weak because of the position they may find themselves in. Literature agrees with the statements made above with Montserrat et al. (2022) stating that GBV is multi-causal in nature.

GBV is generally described as gendered violence that is likely to cause physical, sexual or psychological harm towards females inclusive of threats of such acts. (Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022; Tlou, 2023; Akamike, Uneke, Uro-Chukwu, Okedo-Alex, & Chukwu, 2019; Artz et al., 2018). IPV and dating partner violence are the most common manifestations of GBV (Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022; Akamike et al., 2019) and will often be referred to throughout the paper. These can manifest in the form of physical or psychological aggression (Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022). Mngoma, Fergus, Jeeves, and Jolly (2016) concur with this supposition.

Simelane, Mofokeng, and Khosa (2023) conducted a study that revealed that close to 60% of community members were knowledgeable about GBV, similar to the findings of this study. A study conducted by Rasool (2017) indicated that three quarters of the total perpetrators of violence were males. This implies a congruency with the available literature on GBV and the data collected in this study.

4.4.1 Theme 1: Contributing factors of gender-based violence in the household

4.4.1.1 Cognitive distortions of self

4.4.1.1.1 Distorted identity of self

Some participants indicated that a low self-esteem, mistrust, and low confidence levels are likely contributing factors for the perpetration of GBV. These risk factors predispose and make potential survivors vulnerable to being abused. Participant 16 went on to say that the survivors may believe that they are deserving of abusive 'love', implying that the acceptance and normalisation of violence in their lives.

Personally, think it's that their self-esteem, because the person truly believes that there is no other person who can love them the way the abuser loves them. Their self-esteem is that low ... And they basically just accept the situation and start blaming themselves, believe it or not, like 'I was the cause of this, I caused him to hit me, I need to do better.' (Participant 16, Male, 25)

Okay so, if someone is a victim of gender-based violence, they will be, they will obviously be traumatized by the fact that they were, they were violated. They were violated to a point where they don't want to trust anyone with their, with their lives and they don't want to, they would not want to open up to being abused. And, also, they won't want to like give other people a chance prove themselves to them because they'll always assume that they will be abused by that certain person or they might end up being as violent as, As their uhm, their perpetrators (Participant 2, Male, 21)

Uhm, ah the main effects that it actually has on a woman is that uhm, ah women tend to lose self-confidence. So, you'll see that most women that have been abused by their, by a male are that they have low self-esteem and that, they are reluctant to actually speak out about their problems, and you'd actually see then, and you'd actually see then that there's something that's bothering them, but they are so reluctant to talk about, to talk about it because they're afraid of what the man can actually do if she were to raise out the issues that she has with him (Participant 3, Male, 20).

The statements above indicate that the survivor is likely to feel traumatized by the act of GBV, in the form of IPV or dating violence, and place the blame on themselves as opposed to the perpetrator. This is likely to create mistrust that ultimately limits the survivor's ability to form meaningful and healthy bonds. A study conducted by Forke, Myers, Fein, Catalozzi, Localioa, Wiebea, and Grissoh (2018) revealed that females with low self-esteem and who are mistrusting in nature are most likely to be subjected to GBV. It is likely that this cultivation of a negative sense of self is due to having had abusive and negative experiences during childhood (Cicchetti, 2016). It is this group of young people who will grow up to be youth who are at risk of GBV. Sutton and Simons (2021) and Debowska et al. (2021) posit that young females who have a history of violence places them at risks of future victimization in their own relationships. Participant 3 highlights the possibility that the survivor may be afraid of her partner. This implies that when survivors reach this point, the relationship is no longer mutual, but that of a dictator and a subordinate. The relationship is no longer a healthy one. This emphasises the need to implement screening assessment tool that will assist in identifying those who need psychosocial support.

4.4.1.1.2 Continuation of the cycle of abuse as a result of a history of violence within the home

Some participants agreed that there seems to be an expectation and an acceptance of the possibility of violence occurring in dating relationships. The exposure of both males and females to violence in relationships influences their behaviour patterns as one gender is expected to be violent and the other is expected to take and accept the abuse as a normal part of their dating relationships. Two participants reached the conclusion that this act of violence may be perceived as creating a stronger bond between the couple, which ultimately maintains the high rate of perpetration.

Yah, maybe they grew up in that kind of environment, so they think like that's [GBV] the right thing ... because their mothers didn't stand against it [GBV], they think it is the right thing (Participant 7, Male, 22)

Participant 7 went on to say;

They want like that, that emotion in the relationship, there be that emotion between them. Maybe, I don't know, maybe they believe that it makes them to be together (Participant 7, Male, 22)

... Then the second one is upbringing of people sometimes uhm there are, because of a person grew up under those circumstances so, the person couldn't [inaudible] but on both uhm genders they bottled everything inside and then it is too late and when they find a partner, they expect the same to happen. What was done to, what was done to me, to their parent is the right thing to do, he must do it to his partner because he grew up under those circumstances and now it gets to a point where he accepts that it is the right thing to do, it is supposed that we do it and uhm maybe I as a male or uhm as a female you see? So, the person realizes that, 'okay, in order for this relationship to be good, I need to be beaten' you see? Another will say 'I don't like a reserved person, I want someone who will beat me because that's how I understand relationships to be, that's where this gender-based violence starts (Participant 5, Male, 25)

Research has evinced that youth who have a history of violence within the home, are at risk of experiencing GBV, although not all youth who have been exposed to GBV will experience it later in life (Barnes, Szilassy, Herbert, Heron, Feder, Fraser, Howe, & Barter, 2022; Lundgren & Amin, 2015; Browne et al., 2021). The former researchers sampled young females aged between 18 and 25, and over half stated that they had been exposed to both domestic violence in their homes as well as GBV in their romantic relationships (Barnes et. Al., 2022; Mahlangu, Gevers & De Lannoy, 2014). Research has shown that GBV is a growing phenomenon amongst

youth and perpetration is evinced to be high (Lundgren & Amin, 2015). This suggests that many females experience violence from a very young age, necessitating interventions at the earliest stage possible. Risk factors to exposure to GBV include having a history of abuse, having experienced GBV before, poor parental bonds, exposure to substance use, patriarchal socialisation that treat females as second class (Lundgren & Amin, 2015), most of which will be discussed in this study. A study conducted by Forke et al. (2018) revealed that a quarter of the participants had reported witnessing violence in the home during their childhood, with almost half of the participants reporting that they had experienced dating violence as a survivor, perpetrator or bidirectional violence. Chikwira (2019) sampled females who stated that they had witnessed their mothers being abused by their father whilst growing up, and they themselves were survivors of GBV.

4.4.1.2 Harmful gender norms and stereotypes

4.4.1.2.1 Violent socialisation

The researcher is of the view that GBV is as a result of violent socialisation. Society cultivates young males to continuously display masculinity and later forbids this masculinity when it is asserted on vulnerable populations, particularly females. Many of the participants agreed that the circumstances under which the perpetrator, and even the survivor, greatly impact on them being a perpetrator because this would have been encouraged through socialisation or modelled through abusive and dysfunctional behaviour patterns.

I would say, the man is a person who, who like loves having the final say who loves, who loves being dominant, who loves doing everything, who loves umh, who doesn't like being, who doesn't like competition with regards to a woman being independent, that a man doesn't like. Uhm and uhm, a man doesn't like it when a woman, when a woman doesn't take orders from that man. And, a man also, also wants to be, no no no, sorry. A woman has to be dependent on that man, like it, it's not a choice (Participant 2, Male, 21).

And some are really, well maybe it comes from a place of control, maybe you want someone to be submissive to you, maybe you don't just want someone to have an opinion or something like that, you just want to control them. Whatever you say goes. Many people are like that, many people are possessive, many people, so I think all of those kind of things would be things that motive people to do those kind of stuff to their perpetrators, to their victims I mean (Participant 4, Male, 23)

Graaf and Heinecken (2017) suggest that gender is a social construct that is modelled and learned through socialisation. Many communities favour the male identity (Graaf & Heinecken, 2017; Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009) and that is how the challenge of inequality in social settings is birthed. Schrock and Schwalbe (2009) believe that young children are taught and steered towards identifying themselves and as the gender that aligns with their sex. Parents play a major role in these teachings, and they can play a significant role in instilling gender equitable practices too. What Schrock and Schwalbe (2009) are basically implying is that all interventions to curb or rather eliminate GBV should start at home.

In communities where males are expected to be tough and to constantly display strength, they often have dysfunctional coping mechanisms because they are likely to display aggression and want to control others (Graaf & Heinecken, 2017). These elements combined, promote a sense of violence in social settings (Graaf & Heinecken, 2017).

Ah, dominance, like he, they become dominant in that sense because males are more, are predominantly stronger than women so, things are like, I can't, I can't explain but like uhm, yah men are more violent in a way (Participant 6, Male, 24)

Graaf and Heinecken (2017) profoundly stated that males are not violent because they want to, it is the expectation laid on them by society, all in the name of maintaining dominance. This is reiterated by Participant 6 as he implies that it is second nature to be strong and maintain dominance. Buiten and Salo (2011) emphasise this as they are of the view that GBV is predominantly driven by misogyny and enforced by socialisation. This necessitates that need for attitudinal and behavioural programmes so that these cognitive distortions are eliminated,

4.4.1.2.2 Perceived perpetrator character traits

In describing what kind of person the perpetrator is and the kind of experiences that he may have had in his life, many participants attributed anger, having a sense of control over the female partner, insecurities as well as a non-nurturing upbringing as perpetration risk factors. One participant stated that the perpetrator will humiliate the survivor by assaulting her as a means to retain and maintain control in the relationship.

.. I would say that mostly insecure, uhm possessive as well. So, they're always expecting, they're always expecting for things to go their way, without actually looking to the other person's opinion about something and they always have to, they always believe that they're always right in every kind of scenario (Participant 3, Male, 20)

Uhm, I would say not that much to people that I am close too, but like I've seen scenarios whereby, let's say a person like as I've stated before, a male being controlling over another female maybe even if they're out socially, in a place whereby they're going to drink or having something. The other female can't talk to other people or just because they're going with the other male you know. So, sort of abusive things like that end up hitting them, assaulting them in front of people you know, embarrassing them and all of that you know. And it also takes a place in their self-esteem also as, as, as a female you know. So, what happens is basically, I, some, some women are scared to actually step up and actually leave, but I've seen women actually take the initiative and then no, I deserve better, I should actually go, I shouldn't actually you know (Participant 4, Male, 24)

Firstly, he is someone who, who in his childhood did not get attention or had anger, or lacked love, he did not receive love from his parents, all of that. Or maybe he grew up being abused. It goes like that (Participant 1, Male, 18)

As the child who has been subjected to non-favourable conditions grows older, he may have negative expectations about relationships, thus, resulting in withdrawal from or increased aggression towards others (Cicchetti, 2016). This child will display a compromised ability to read and recognize the emotions of others, resulting in errors in encoding social cues (Cicchetti, 2016). This is difficult because the young person will not be able to identify his abusive behaviours as problematic. These young people may grow up to be youths who have victim and victimizer tendencies (Cicchetti, 2016). This implies that the young person is likely to become physically and verbally assaultive towards others as a result of having been exposed to negative childhood experiences, that have ultimately altered his neurological connections (Cicchetti, 2016; Holzhausen & Campbell, 2023). Research evinced that young males that have been exposed to GBV related violence are likely to display externalising behaviours characterised by aggressiveness, a disregard for social order, and emotional dysregulation (Ronzon-Tirado, Redondo, & Munoz-Rivas, 2023). These behaviours will have a negative impact on the young males' dating life as they are likely to make use of violence as a way of solving problems, thereby replicating the behaviours observed in their social settings (Ronzon-Tirado et al., 2023). In the next section, a further elaboration will be discussed about the impact of dysregulation of anger and related characteristics. Rivas-Rivero and Bonilla-Algovia (2022) suggest that perpetrators who display aggression to have some level of psychopathology and having low levels of empathy, implying callousness (Holzhausen & Campbell, 2023). The researcher agrees to a certain extent as there is consensus amongst participants that one cannot

abuse another person knowingly that they cannot defend themselves. This puts the perpetrator's levels of empathy into question. Basto-Pereira et al. (2022) posit that children who are exposed to chronic childhood adverse experiences are likely to develop hyper-responsivity which is characterised by an inability to understand and respond to social cues in an appropriate manner.

Young males are most likely to display violence as a result of a history of violence, socio-economic circumstances, rigid views of the role of males and females, and social isolation (Rivas-Rivero & Bonilla-Algovia, 2022). As a result, they are generally unable to tolerate frustration and often do not take accountability for their actions, are not able to reason emotionally as they are often emotionally dependent, and they often consume alcohol as a way (Rivas-Rivero & Bonilla-Algovia, 2022; Browne et al., 2021; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022) to deal with the pain or as a means to bring about this behaviour, because that is what they have grown up to know.

Reed et al. (2010) are of the view that males' need and desire to be in control and powerful is a contributing factor to violence in dating relationships and in social settings in general. This often sees these young males displaying hostile attitudes, making use of expressive and instrumental violence tactics, have unstable emotions, and exercise intimidation to assert their dominance (Rivas-Rivero & Bonilla-Algovia, 2022).

4.4.1.2.3 Emotion regulation

Male children are taught at a young age to suppress their emotions. Naturally, this is likely to result in a build-up of anger because everyone experiences negative emotions from time to time. Many of the participants agreed that perpetrators are usually people who possess a lot of anger, are manipulative, short tempered and are self-centred and these contribute greatly to the perpetration of GBV in homes and communities.

Well, I would say first of all aggression, maybe it could be due to their own uhm stress or their own problems in life. How can I, how can I put it? I could say aggression, anger, it's just a sense of violence I'd say rage to something like that because you'd find often most times it's not even something that is that big uhm triggers the person to actually do what they do to actually do the offence to the other person. So, I'd say maybe, I, I wouldn't say it's their own demons, but it's their own kind of things that they're facing but, you know, they have this lackish way of actually emphasizing their problems you know, instead of going to seek help, but they resort to actually taking it out on uhm their victims and all of that you know (Participant 4, Male, 23)

I think he also, short tempered people, yah because people who like to abuse have short tempers and they like to be in control of things, yah (Participant 7, Male, 22)

I'm going to put it like this, as I see it, I'm not going to say I know because I have never been in that situation. A perpetrator is always angry, always he doesn't want someone who is smiling, like he doesn't want smiling, like all the time, for him to be happy not him or his partner, he wants it only for himself, like everything has to be about him, if there is a conversation about something, it must be about him so (Participant 11, Male, 22).

When considering risk factors, on an individual level, it is important that the effects of abuse are explored (Cicchetti, 2016). If we continue with the trail of thought that posits the influence of the young males' upbringing has an impact on how he responds to the expectation that violence is the solution to all problems, these severe disturbances in the social environment occur and increase the risk of the biological make-up of the young male being modified (Cicchetti, 2016). Cicchetti (2016) speaks of the emotions system. The main function of the emotions system is to influence and organize behaviour, and this system has an impact on cognitive processes, vice versa, although they function independently (Cicchetti, 2016). These systems are both pertinent to the development to the child's ability to regulate negative emotions in an adaptive way (Cicchetti, 2016). For instance, emotional regulation emerges as a result of early parent-child engagements, and if the young male child has had negative experiences, he is at risk of neurological pathway damage due to these adverse experiences and subsequently have an impact on emotional development (Cicchetti, 2016; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022). Some of that participants indicated that they have witnessed their mothers being abused in the home. This would ordinarily place them at risks of emotion dysregulation, but it seems that they realise GBV is intolerable and have not taken on these dysfunctional behaviours. Research suggests that witnessing or experiencing GBV impacts one's development of emotions and manifests as behavioural problems (Ronzon-Tirado et al., 2023). Forke et al. (2018) suggests that young males that lack the ability to regulate their emotions and display aggressive behaviour are less likely to form healthy relationships because of under-developed neurological pathways. Studies have shown that children who have been exposed to violence display early onset of fear and anger and have low accuracy in identifying and recognizing emotions, implying socially related deficits (Cicchetti, 2016). As one may have noticed, all these deficiencies in the child's development stem from the interaction between the child and his/her parent(s), which give rise to a host of interconnected manifestations. This child will grow up to be a young person that displays dysfunction in his dating relationship. Young people

who have been exposed to violence are more likely to be isolated from potential support structures by their parenting system (Cicchetti, 2016), impeding on their emotional development. Essentially, the young person's ability to function adaptively is undermined, later having an impact on his ability to maintain social and interpersonal relationships.

A study conducted by Graaf and Heineken (2017) revealed that males are expected to be strong and that often affects the way in which they deal with pain or express their emotions. The same was concluded in a study conducted by Schrock & Schwalbe, (2009). Literature evinces that males are at higher risk of experiencing emotional distress as a result of having a history of violence and this will have an impact on his emotion regulation (Mngoma et al., 2016; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022.). The perpetration of GBV could be as a result dysfunctional coping mechanisms (Mngoma et al., 2016).

4.4.1.2.4 Substance use and abuse as a catalyse of violence

Many of the participants were of the view that alcohol is a major contributing factor instigating abusive acts with some stating that this occurrence commonly happens on weekends. This is very interesting because it infers a high frequency of GBV related incidences. There is an implied sense of impulsivity, that seems to be often excused, that sees bystanders trying to break such fights.

Alcohol has a big role in gender-based violence because when you're intoxicated you can't really think what's going on so, you just do (Participant 6, Male, 24).

Yes, I've heard that stuff I see some maybe during the weekends, maybe they're drunk, some they're under influence, couples are fighting, whilst walking I'll see that sometimes. I can go and break that fight, something like that but I do see often here things like that sometimes you see... (Participant 12, Male, 25).

Well, people generally being unemployed, especially males. Uhm, drinking themselves to oblivion, uhm some would take out their frustrations on their partners by hitting them, that type of situation (Participant 16, Male, 25)

Shiva, Shukla and Chandra, (2021) acknowledge that not all males who use and abuse alcohol perpetrate GBV, and males who do not consume alcohol are possible perpetrators of GBV as well. Nonetheless, excessive alcohol use is believed to be a contributing factor to GBV (Shiva et al., 2021; Lundgren & Amin 2015; Carlson, Namy, Norcini Pala, Wainberg, Michau, Nakuti, Knight, Allen, Ikenberg, Naker, & Devries 2020; Lipsky, Caetano, Field, & Larkin, 2005). Cafferky, Mendez, Anderson, & Stith (2018) opine that substance use and abuse co-occur with

GBV in all cultures and regions globally and this association has a detrimental impact at an individual, family, and community level. Township communities are said to be more likely to report a higher frequency of alcohol abuse (Lipsky et al., 2005), which makes sense that all participants in this study live in townships and many witnessed abuse mostly from persons who had been drinking alcohol. Participant 16 highlighted an important factor, that males often drink heavily when they are unemployed, suggesting more strain on his emotional wellbeing and family life.

Research conducted by Akamike et al. (2019) revealed that females whose partners who use and abuse alcohol are more likely to be subjected to GBV. It is said that perpetrator alcohol use may be as a result of excusing or responding to aggression (Cafferky et al., 2018). The researcher believes that it is most likely the latter. Participant 6's view suggests that when people are intoxicated, they are more likely to be impulsive in their behaviours and actions. Whilst alcohol is believed to have a stress reducing proneness, it generally impairs an individual's decision making, impulse control, as well as their judgement (Shiva et al., 2021).

Literature alludes that exposure to community violence also increases the individual's likelihood of abusing substances and illegal substances as a coping mechanism (Nabi, 2021). This implies that violence exposure often encourages the use of alcohol, which later has a detrimental effect coping skills and the likely prevalence of GBV related violence.

4.4.1.2.5 Violent coaching

A few participants shared the view that GBV perpetration is as a result of possible perpetrators taking on the behaviours of their peers, as seen or discussed in their social circles. These immoral and ill-thought-out problem-solving skills often impact the dating relationship and the family as a whole.

Or it can start with him, let's say eh, young males have their own conversations right, older males have their own conversations that "no man, in order to set your wife straight, you must slap her" things like that. They converse over dumb things. He then does the same thinking it's right (Participant 1, Male, 18)

[Coughs] Sometimes males I would say, I would say, I would say sister sometimes males will hear the point of view his friend outside so he then takes that and takes it out on the family, he'll want to, to see if in, what his friend told that "Ey let me try it man with my wife" but it doesn't work out the way his friend has said it would so (Participant 11, Male, 22).

Dishion and Tipsord (2011:190) define peer contagion as “a mutual influence process that occurs between an individual and a peer and includes behaviours and emotions that potentially undermine one’s own development or cause harm to others”. This process occurs in natural settings where peers can engage freely from an early age (Dishion & Tipsord, 2011). Contributing factors to this process include deviancy training which describes the rewarding of mutual influence amongst peers, which in turn has the potential to increase problem behaviour because of the appraisal of stories of deviant actions (Dishion & Tipsord, 2011). This phenomenon could potentially see peers being increasingly aggressive (Dishion & Tipsord, 2011) as stated by participants. Studies show that the socialising environments are where individuals are exposed to, learn, and amplify their aggression (Dishion & Tipsord, 2011). The same is suggested by this study, the possibility that peers influence the way in which perpetrators deal with conflict in their own lives without reasoning how this behaviour will impact family life. The young person will likely exhibit playful retaliation-like forms of problem behaviours substitute reactive aggression (Dishion & Tipsord, 2011). Research has shown that youth who have aggressive friends are likely to become aggressive over time as well, (Dishion & Tipsord, 2011) the same sentiment was found to be true for youth learning the behaviours in the home and displaying them in their social settings (Forke et al, 2018). The researcher believes that targeting interventions at young males will have impactful results because it is at this stage of development that many vulnerabilities are delayed, or the young person has a deviant trajectory. Programme developers must not overlook the potential that their interventions have for increasing rather than decreasing the targeted problem behaviour.

4.4.1.3 Familial behavioural dysfunctionalities

4.4.1.3.1 Poor parental capacity

A few participants highlighted the impact that GBV has on survivors’ parental capacity, and so the cycle of abuse continues. Because the female is subjected to this abuse, this negatively impacts her ability to parent in a warm and nurturing way. As a manifestation of abuse, she is likely to become verbally and physically aggressive towards her children. Participant 13 highlights how the parent’s state can indirectly affect the child.

Yah, [the survivor] will have anger, so like [the survivor] will have anger issues a lot so, sometime [she] will lash out like towards her children (Participant 7, Male, 22)

Yah, say she, like as she, as she is beaten like her mother you see, she does the same thing on her own child or to other children outside (Participant 10, Male, 19)

Children will be mostly affected because they'll absorb all of what is happening and think what is happening in the home is the right thing because they grew up in that kind of environment. So, I think it affects them a lot, it will disturb them at school for that matter, and even drop out and decide to be violent, rob and burgle and no-one will understand, all to find out that it all started at home (Participant 13, Male, 25).

Children generally learn and model behaviour as displayed in their families (Forke et al., 2018). This suggests that the young person will learn dysfunctional ways of socialising if he is exposed to GBV within the home. And as related to violence in the home, this implies that a female who may have witnessed her mother being beaten by her father is likely to experience future victimization and the assumption is that the male is likely to continue with this behaviour in future dating relationships (Forke et al., 2018). This infers that male and female children are affected differently by violence. Ronzon-Tirado et al. (2023) suggest that youth who have been exposed to inter-parental violence are likely to display chronic of internalizing and externalising behaviours in adolescence.

Literature suggests that young people identify with and view the same sex parent as more of a role model than the opposite sex parent (Forke et al., 2018; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022). This strengthens the view that young male who witnessed their fathers being violent within the home are likely to be perpetrators in their own dating relationships (Forke et al., 2018). The young person models how his father is able to gain power and maintain control of the relationship (Forke et al., 2018). Browne et al. (2021) opine that hegemonic norms of masculinity informs personality development as well as how young people express themselves. When males experience frustration, they often use aggression (Browne et al., 2021; Rivas-Rivero & Bonilla-Algovia, 2022; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022). A study conducted by Chikwira (2019) revealed that the females who had experienced or witnessed violence in their homes were of the view that this violence disrupted their family dynamics and that this led to their parents neglecting their parental responsibilities. Chikwira (2019) goes on to talk about what she terms children being parentified, where the parent-child roles and responsibilities are reversed.

The young person who has been subjected to non-favourable rearing conditions evaluates his/her acceptability or non-acceptability through the eyes of their attachment figures based on earlier experiences which is often characterized by insensitive and abusive care (Cicchetti, 2016). The child-parent relationships will be impacted because of the hostility created by the dysfunctional ways of resolving conflict in the home are less likely to engage in nurturing parenting (Sutton & Simons, 2021). Basto-Pereira et al.'s (2022) study revealed that a child's

emotion regulation is impacted by the level of parental supervision. This implies that parents need to be present in their children's lives so that the children can reach full development in all aspects of their lives. In a study conducted by Carlson et al. (2020) females who had been exposed to IPV, almost 40% stated that they had been violent towards their children, and this was because of redirecting their frustrations regarding the matter as well as their sense of powerlessness. Research suggests that young people who experienced abusive parenting are likely to rely on aggression in their relationships (Sutton & Simons, 2021). So, this young person will develop negative emotional coping mechanisms and this will affect how he/she is able to maintain these relationships. The lack of warm and nurturing involvement of parents in their children's lives does put a strain on the parent-child relationship (Elsaesser, Gorman-Smith, Henry, & Schoeny, 2020). High parental involvement is a protective factor that can potentially eliminate GBV at an individual level for both genders as there is the assumed good communication and parental supervision (Elsaesser et al., 2020). The family system is considered the hub of the young person's source of stability, this is where they learn their values as displayed by those in their social systems (Elsaesser et al., 2020). Parents need to be equipped with parenting skills so that the young persons' protective factors increase. It is important that a culture of nonviolent problem-solving is fostered in all homes, implying a decrease in both the exposure and witnessing abuse (Lundgren & Amin, 2015). The utilisation of counselling, educational support groups, and home visits would go a long way in correcting dysfunctional and violent parenting as well as improving communication with parents and their children (Lundgren & Amin, 2015). Parenting programmes have evinced a significant reduction in child maltreatment and abuse over the life course of the child (Lundgren & Amin, 2015).

4.4.1.3.2 Dysfunctional problem-solving strategies

Many of the participants agreed that poor problem-solving strategies are causal to GBV and suggested healthier ways to resolve conflicts within the home and in communities. The dating partners may be in conflict over something minor, but because of aggression and the normalisation of violence, the conflict quickly escalates to violence. There seems to be this notion that one cannot come in between a couple that is fighting because they are likely to see past each other's differences and leave the other person in a negative light. This is enabling and contributes to the maintenance of the dysfunctional problem-solving strategies.

And, I don't know but, as of late she has started this thing of jokingly slapping me, and I told her that 'hey, this is not okay' because society believes that it is not okay for a man to hit a woman. That has been preached to men since the beginning of time. But, no one has told women

it's not okay to hit men. And so, generally women think it's okay to hit men. They think, no matter what, no matter what I do, he's not going to respond back (Participant 16, Male, 25)

Okay. It's my bigger brother he's dating someone right and, when most of times he had money, he used to drink. When he's drunk, he used to be emotional abuse ah, towards the lady ah. So, the other day, he's next door to me, I knock there, and the lady was crying, and I open up the door and they were busy fighting, scrapping each other so I try to stop him I, he pushed me away, and he told me that I must mind my own business. Eh okay so, I remain silent for a moment, so I told mom inside the house that big brother here is fighting eh so, something we must do or try to call the cops ah. So, the mother came in, he tried to stop him ah, he stopped him by herself ah, at that moment he remained calm uhm, only the lil' things that they are fighting about eh, maybe my brother didn't give back the lady's card ah of payment ah, so they're arguing about something that is small ah. So, it was that small argument uhm, but the lady was crying that moment like she wants to leave and go home at mid after night and so I spoke to her that "no you mustn't go because it's too dark outside, eh it's not safe" ah, so she remained calm at that moment. The next day she left (Participant 9, Male, 25)

When I was living in the location, yes, I used to hear things like that a lot, a lot and I sometimes witnessed them or I, I, I would be sleeping and be woken up by a fight, when I peek through the window, these people who are fighting are a couple. I sometimes cannot get involved in that, sometimes it is people I know, and they are maybe it is a man beating his partner, I realise that I cannot get involved because of that, although I don't like it (Participant 13, Male, 25)

Graaf and Heineken (2017) agree that violence has become a common problem-solving tool for many in dealing with their feelings and managing their relationships. This suggests that the inability to effectively deal with conflict will have a negative impact on the way in which the individual interacts with his social setting. As was suggested in the sections above, it is important that one understands that the individual's surroundings will impact on his behaviours and what seems to be logical to him. This further emphasises the need to for interventions as early as possible focusing on the young people's social setting. The young person's history of negative experiences and expectations about social relations, determines their probability of using aggression towards others (Cicchetti, 2016) and developing psychopathic traits (Basto-Pereira et al., 2022). The aggression is often accompanied by the need and desire to be in control and powerful, (Reed et al., 2010) the display of antisocial behaviours, unbalanced

emotions (Rivas-Rivero & Bonilla-Algovia, 2022; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022) which are all hinderances in the young males' ability to deal with conflict in an amicable manner.

4.4.2 Theme 2: The effects of gender-based violence on individuals, families, groups, and communities

4.4.2.1 Resultant behaviours of violence on the perpetrator

4.4.2.1.1 Character degeneration

It is morally wrong for a person to abuse another but, society does not realise that young people are the product of their surroundings; what they experience and what they witness. How young males are socialised to always demonstrate masculinity and hegemony and the result of that is the perpetration of GBV. Previous sections highlighted the perceived characteristics and emotion dysregulation of the perpetrator that undermine young males' ability to form healthy relationships.

... I don't, I don't, I don't regard another person who can hit another person knowingly that they can't fight back, and that they are less powerful than them, I don't regard that person as a person who's mentally healthy if I should say, you know. So, maybe in the, in the short run maybe you'd, right now when they've just did it they might feel good about themselves, which is not good, I'm not saying it's a good thing, but like in the long run they can also see that the damage that it's actually causing because the person might be even distant, might even like, even if they loved you, they might not even like you anymore because of what you do you know. So, it's, it's a lot. It's a lot (Participant 4, Male, 23).

Otherwise, there are some fathers in the home who make themselves like, they are, they are, how can I say? Be a monster in the home but the minute he steps outside, he is someone else like soft side, he is smiling, smiling with everyone, everything is alright but the minute he steps into the home he is a monster. You ever hear that saying "we don't want dad, we prefer mom because mom like will have a soft heart for me and her." Mom will always have a nurturing sense for us [children] (Participant 11, Male, 22).

Yah, it happens most of the time with youth because most of the time parents don't do it [abuse] a lot, but yah. Violence is amongst teenagers you see, with older people it no longer occurs because like older people (Participant 11, Male, 22).

The statement made by the Participant 11 below signifies the basis with which the research is positioned, and particularly why the young males were the target population of choice.

Research has shown that males who hold patriarchal views and have witnessed violence in the home, are likely to engage in dating violence (Debowska et al., 2021; Forke et al., 2018), as has been reiterated throughout this paper. Nabi (2021) and Ronzon-Tirado et al. (2023) are of the view that those who have been exposed to violence often manifest externalising behaviours which are behaviours directed to others. This can be in the form of increased reactive aggression which is when an individual acts in an aggressive manner because of a perceived incitement (Nabi, 2021). This kind of aggression is linked with the inability to control impulses, poor response to regulation of annoyances, and limited frustration tolerance (Nabi, 2021; Shiva et al., 2021; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022). The perpetrator is likely to develop a low responsivity to stressful situations and an inability to respond appropriately to social cues (Basto-Pereira et al., 2022).

It is high time that these hegemonic masculinity norms and standards be reconsidered because the idea that males ought to be in control, strong, successful, respected and be the providers for their families (Mahlangu et al., 2014), adds unnecessary burden on males when they are not able to be all these things because of the dysfunction in their family and because of the economic climate. To assert themselves and compensate, males often make use of violence to restore order and control (Mahlangu et al., 2014) limiting females' right to live freely and enjoy the pleasures of life.

4.4.2.2 The socialisation and normalisation of submissive behaviour

4.4.2.2.1 Psychological effects of GBV on survivors

Many participants were of the view that GBV affects the survivor psychologically as it creates survivors with low self-esteem who eventually feel that they are to blame or deserving of the abuse. This can induce depression and a sense of mistrust in men in general and create an expectation that relationships are generally abusive. Because of these effects, the survivor's social functioning in the home and in the community is impacted. One participant shared that the violence that was so rife in his community ignited a sense of survival mode in his female family members.

I think, I think when you, I just think when, when a person gets beat down so bad in something, they just, they just loose the power and courage to you know, even if it's not about maybe based on violence or something like that. When you're constantly trying to prove something or achieve something and it's not happening, sometimes you lose the motivation and power you know. So, sometimes some women just have phrases like 'why bother?' because as, based on what I've said before, maybe their, their own psych, psychic traumas you know. They're controlling what

they're actually uhm creating scenarios in their head like, maybe they won't find a perfect guy anymore, maybe you know every guy is the same, they'll end up doing it you know. Those kinds of things (Participant 4, Male, 23).

Oh okay, uhm firstly they lose trust on everyone right? Uhm, 'cause they think, what happened to them, it's gonna be a continuous cycle each and every relationship they get into they will get the same treatment so trust, like is removed from them so they, they block they, they, close off to being able to love other people again. If it does happen, it takes time and it doesn't also, it doesn't only affect bona it also affects their family you see? It has many effects when it comes to their family uhm, 'cause, when, when you are a victim, every, every bruise and every uhm injury you have on you, your family does see it. Your family [inaudible] stresses it's, they will worry because you part of their family ... And then the other one uhm, they'll always have that mentality that they deserve what's happening to them Victims like to stay in situations and leave after a while, it takes a while for them to leave until their hearts, until the heart says so, that 'no I have had enough now,' whilst we as their families say so, they will not leave, they like to stay in situations. And sometimes they stay not because they enjoy what's happening to them but they, they, when you love someone you give your all to them it's hard for them to leave even though he [the perpetrator] does hurtful thing until your heart aches. So, it affects them as victims and their families (Participant 5, Male, 25)

Okay, uhm well, different people react differently to gender-based violence uhm, I'm going to mention the ones I think are common to most people. Uhm, usually victims of gender-based violence are going to be sort of reserved, reserved than most people, uhm low self-esteem, uhm things of that nature. But a person can be really go the opposite way. They might be so used to the gender-based violence that it's nothing for them. I could sit here and say that person is going to be uhm dependent on the person that abuses them be it financially or emotionally, but really it depends on the type of person (Participant 16, Male, 25).

Mahlangu et al. (2014) opine that females often display internalizing behaviour, whilst males engage in risky behaviours which indicate an externalisation of the exposure to violence, as would Nabi (2021) and Ronzon-Tirado et al. (2023) agree. Ronzon-Tirado et al. (2023) posit that females are vulnerable to internalising behaviour such as developing a low self-esteem, anxiety, and other psychological tensions. Bhattacharjee, Ma, Musyoki, Cheuk, Isac, Njiraini, Gichangi, Mishra, Becker, and Pickles (2020) add that the survivor is likely to experience a sense of hopelessness and possibly suicidal thoughts. In a study conducted by Bryngeirsdottir and Halldorsdottir (2022) revealed that females who experienced IPV developed anger

towards themselves after the fact, and exercised belittling of themselves in very destructive ways. Interestingly, these females often feel aimless after these abusive relationships end because they had been isolated from their social supportive systems and are probably felt financially destitute (Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022). This line of thinking is that which the participants are premised. The females will often have trouble trusting and connecting at an emotional level with others because of the abuse they were subjected to (Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022).

Rasool (2017) conducted a study with high school going youth that revealed that 20% of females are likely to experience sexual violence by the time they complete their schooling. This number is too high considering that these females are yet to explore and discover the world and doing so with so much fear of violence will limit their ability to live and enjoy the fruits of life as would Bryngeirsdottir and Halldorsdottir (2022) and Tlou (2023) agree that experiencing gendered violence has detrimental effects on the life of the survivor and them being able to live freely in their communities.

The abuse that females are often subjected to make it difficult for them to confront and process their negative feelings and often develop a negative attitude towards things ever getting better as they often experience so much distress impacting on their physical and psychological health (Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022). The difficulty in confronting and processing feelings is often masked with feelings of shame for having been subjected to the abuse, they often put blame on themselves and develop the view that they should know better (Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022). Basto-Pereira et al., (2022) go on to state that female youth that have been exposed to prolonged abuse are likely to develop self-blame. This reduces the likelihood of a survivor to reach out for support because the survivors also fear being judged and blamed for the abuse by other people (Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022). These females will continue in or start new relationships with low self-esteems (Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022).

...So, I grew up, I personally grew up in Gelvandale. I grew up with the crime, I grew up with the, where there was street violence. So yes uhm, in my street? Ah, no, not that I know of. Uhm, what I can add to this is the women that grew up in Gelvan like my mom and stuff, and also my auntie, uhm they[re] not easy to, how can I say, push over, they're not easy to abuse because they retaliate by hitting because I think it's, it's the area that you grew up in, things make you tough, yah (Participant 6, Male, 24).

The feelings of distress often make survivors live on survival mode (Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir, 2022) that which is reiterated by Participant 6 who made an interesting comment that implies that some females harden because of the abuse that they have been subjected to or witnessed and this has seen them become defensive at a point of retaliation.

4.4.2.2.2 Continuation of the cycle as a result of experiencing GBV

The participants were of the view that once the survivor has been exposed to and experiences abuse, she is likely to experience it throughout her life because she might have an expectation that the abuse will happen, and it is part of how relationships are. The survivor is likely to begin to accept that abuse is normal in dating relationships.

Okay so, when, when a woman is being abused rather physically of course, not only will they be like be physically scared, but they will be also, they will .. they will be scared emotionally and mentally, and by that, that will result in woman getting used to being abused by the man. And also, she will end up getting used to the patterns that the man like uses to abuse the woman, and because of that, that will uhm, that will create some sort of tension mentally and emotionally which will result in her getting used to the abuse and will also inflict abuse as well (Participant 2, Male, 21).

..The second one is people's upbringing, sometimes uhm these exist because of a person grew up under those circumstances so all of that he did not [inaudible] but on both uhm genders, they bottle all of that inside and then it becomes too late when they expect another person to think the same way. The thing he did, was done to me, to his parent, it's the right thing to do to his partner because he grew up under those circumstances and he came to the realisation that okay this is the right things to do, that I am supposed to do and umh maybe as a male or uhm as a female you see? So, a victim thinks okay, in order for this relationship to be great I need to be beaten you see? Another will say "I don't like a quiet partner, I'd rather be with someone who will beat me because that's how I understand that a relationship goes like that" that's where gender-based violence starts surfacing (Participant 5, Male, 25)

Research suggests that dating violence as a form of IPV becomes prominent in youth with the frequency increasing in instances where the couple lives together (Lundgren & Amin, 2015). A study conducted by Graaf and Heinecken (2017) revealed that there was a perception that males needed to be violent with their partners as a means of asserting themselves. Dating relationships are extremely gendered as males often take on more of the decision-making power (Mahlangu et al., 2014). A survey conducted about violence in dating relationships among high school going youth revealed that violence had been accepted as part of romantic relationships

and as a way of expressing love (Mahlangu et al., 2014). Debowska et al. (2021) conducted a study that revealed that females who had witnessed violence in their childhood, were likely to be accepting of and experience that violence later in life. Literature posits that females who currently experience violence in their dating relationships or marriages have a history of violence through their childhood (Chikwira, 2019). And that is what the researcher believes to be the root of the problem. This then begs a different way of parenting in nurturing ways that delay the likelihood of exposure and increase protective factors because everyone is a product of their experiences.

Chikwira (2019) posits that females who have experienced violence in their own dating relationships have a likelihood of staying in these dysfunctional relationships because they have been cut off from family and friends and would not have a place where they could find refuge. Similarly to the thoughts of Bryngeirsdottir & Halldorsdottir (2022).

An outlier made an interesting comment that implies that survivors will stay in abusive relationships because they are trying to preserve the family, and this is accompanied by the survivors's emotional attachment to the abuser.

It is possible that she's scared, but it is also possible that she doesn't want to be reached out to because she is so in love with the person or either she is trying to protect the, what's it called, the integrity of the family and she knows, if she voices out, someone might take this information to the police, the husband is gone, there's no more protection (Participant 16, Male, 25).

This is when Chikwira (2019) and Akamike et al. (2019) believe females start minimizing their misfortunes and accept this as part of their lives. This is when the female's survival mode kicks in as she realizes that she is stuck in this situation and that she needs to remain resilient (Chikwira, 2019).

4.4.2.3 The impact of violence on the family unit

4.4.2.3.1 The effects of violence in the home on young males

The home no longer becomes a safe space for all family members because the implication of violence in the home is a negative and hostile atmosphere. The home breeds trauma and many other negative emotions. Violence in the home implies dysfunctional communication patterns and the need for young people to want to defend their parents. This is likely to lead young males to develop anger towards the perpetrator and towards the home environment.

[Deep sigh] No I have witnessed this happen in front of me when I used to stay in Slovo. My mother was, I had a stepfather like, he used to do this to my mother like, at first, he did not do it in front of my sister and I but, there was this day, I don't know what they were fighting about, and he became angry there was a day, like that guy ended up saying ugly things like, my mother, my mother is a quiet person. And during this time, I was in the kitchen washing dishes, I could hear they were talking, I'm wearing earphones. I heard a noise like, I don't know what I did like, my mother took us, she moved us behind her right, then she moved us behind her like, you could see like this guy is standing there angry like he wants to beat up a female. It's like I said, he wants to beat up a female like feels that he has that power. He wants to beat up a female, like that kind of stuff. I witnessed it that way (Participant 1, Male, 18)

My mother. Yah, when we were staying ah, in New Bright, where we used to stay with our father yah. It used to happen like, like a lot then it would stop, then happen again we end, my brother and I end up being involved. But my brother he would leave it, but because I am an emotional person, I used to be really involved in that thing between them (Participant 7, Male, 22)

Well, in my home, many a times it would happen when my father maybe came home drunk you know. Uhm, you'd find that maybe, that's why I say these things are based on their own aggressions and their own things and their own agendas, they come back from wherever they come from you know, and they come back they actually express it, and you know, take it out on other people. Because you'd find that it starts as a little problem, and it turns out to be a huge problem you know. Maybe, let's say a person doesn't want this kind of meal and wanted the other kind of meal, you know, now it's going to be a problem, it's going to be a huge one. And, that's why I'm saying it's, it's all about uhm, sometimes it's all about control and that aggression that you don't want a person to actually say 'no you have to eat this, there's no other that' you know, you want to, it's either your way or the highway you know, and that's how it all starts and all of, you know, it gets to. So, sometimes I've actually seen that happen you know, where uhm with, my parents got into a[n] altercation emo like emotionally, physically you know. So, it's really something not nice to actually experience as a child growing up with those kind of things you know. So, yah I could say (Participant 4, Male, 23)

Ronzon-Tirado et al. (2023) and Basto-Pereira et al (2022) opine that millions of young people worldwide are exposed to violence each year. As echoed throughout this paper, exposure to violence has detrimental effects, particularly if the young people had chronic exposure to abuse (Ronzon-Tirado et al., 2023; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022). Behaviours displayed in the family

system are observed and implemented in other social systems, whether good or bad, the young male will have known this behaviour as correct as it was normalised in his family system (Ronzon-Tirado et al., 2023; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022). Basto-Pereira et al. (2022) are of the view that a child who is exposed to or experiences any form of abuse, neglect or dysfunctionality in the home, is at risk of experiencing more severe forms of adversity by the time he/she turns 18-years-old, and this is said to be a predictor of delinquency. This further increases the young person's likelihood of engaging in crimes (Basto-Pereira et al., 2022).

Young males who have been exposed to violence in the home are likely to have an increased appetite for aggression, which escalates likely perpetration (Browne et al., 2021). This reiterates the statement made by Participant 4, that in his home, his father would create conflict, while intoxicated, escalate the matter with aggression whilst the matter did not necessitate conflict.

As implied by the ecological systems theory, young people are affected by acts of violence in the home, and this violence is likely to see more aggressive young people who make use of, and tolerate violence (Debowska et al., 2021; Rivas-Rivero & Bonilla-Algovia, 2022). This leads to the maintenance of the problem. This will impede on the ability to form healthy relationships (Mahlangu et al., 2014; Forke et al., 2018).

Rivas-Rivero and Bonilla-Algovia (2022) opine that experiencing or being exposed to violence in the home is a major contributing factor as this is a major stressful life event and may determine young people's trajectory. Basto-Pereira et al. (2022) revealed that childhood adversity experiences are extremely predominant worldwide and have the potential to accelerate a young persons' likelihood of engaging in delinquency. This translates to intergenerational transmission of violence, and this is where the normalisation and tolerance of both aggression and violence begins and the inception of increased levels of the use of aggression (Rivas-Rivero & Bonilla-Algovia, 2022). Mngoma et al. (2016) revealed that 60% of males had abused a female psychologically in their lifetime.

Violence in the home may infer that those affected lack social support (Rivas-Rivero & Bonilla-Algovia, 2022; Basto-Pereira et al., 2022) an important component in ensuring that they get the help that they need.

4.4.2.4 Gender-based violence effects at a community level

4.4.2.4.1 Normalisation of violence leading to community despondence

Many of the participants realise and accept that violence has become a part of many people's lives as the violence, at the hands of a man, occurs as often as every weekend in some instances. Every other weekend in some communities, instances of sexual abuse and even murders of females are perpetrated. One of the participants stated that violence infringes on the female's safety although it is something that is a normal part of their lives. A few of the participants indicated that there is a level of no longer caring about the occurrence of GBV because of its frequency, the less likelihood of decrease even after intervening, and the survivor's perceived inaction regarding the abuse that they are subjected to. Possible reasons for inactivity were detailed in previous sections.

I remember going to break a fight this other day, I called out [to the community] & they [the community members] said "argh leave them, it's their thing they'll" and they say not to interfere with a couple fighting [inaudible] ... Okay, they abuse, no, it's an everyday, not an everyday, its every weekend thing. You see, that, that, the, this girl I'm talking about the one I was telling you about? You see that man, that one, each and every weekend it's the same case. It's the same case, if they're abusive, they'll drink and fight and he beats her in front of the young children (Participant 5, Male, 25)

... They see that there is no patrol. A matter gains noise just for a moment, and then it is no longer an issue. Community members don't follow up on the matter. It gains now for that day, okay this and that happened to so-and-so, they stand up for the person and soon lose momentum (Participant 1, Male, 18)

Mhm, no, I will talk about those from Slovo, you see in Slovo, there were many in Slovo like, when I was living there. You'd hear in the morning that there is a child who was rape who was dumped there at the bottom. There are bushes there in Slovo, I used to live in the streets that were down there by the bushes, it's houses here, then bushes. So, those kinds of things used to happen. Girls not safe, especially those who are in the streets at night. All of that, you hear a lot, that one has been killed, another was raped, all of that (Participant 1, Male, 18).

Communities have a high tolerance for violence against females, and that is part of what maintains this high prevalence of violence (Bhattacharjee et al., 2020). Carlson, et al. (2020) are of the view that GBV is common, with an increased usage of violence as a solution to conflict resolution in homes and communities. This is a very passive way of dealing with the challenge. Violence has come to be an accepted way of dealing with conflict, with males

displaying violence to assert their masculinity, and this stems from the apartheid era (Graaf & Heinecken, 2017; Frescura, 2023). Hoosen et al. (2022) are of the view that the South African history has seen young people being increasingly exposed to violence and impeding on their quality of life. Communities that accept violence in dating relationships maintain patriarchy (Debowska et al., 2021), which further maintains the externalisation of attitudes and behaviours of these young males, and they will likely adopt in dealing with conflict in their social settings (Debowska et al., 2021).

Interestingly, Participant 10 made a profound statement, suggesting that once the perpetration of GBV starts, it is hard for the perpetrator to stop and implies a level of stubbornness on the perpetrator's part. The researcher believes that this is mostly because of socialisation and having done things a certain way and having observed certain behaviours in social settings.

Yours is to advise him that "Ha man, please stop this thing of abusing" actually, he is not going to stop, "please stop what you are doing, abusing" you see? ... Because he has been doing it for a long time, he is used to it, he is not going to listen to your words when he is like that (Participant 10, Male, 19).

This suggests an acceptance of violence. In a programme analysed by Graaff and Heinecken (2017), one of the participants made a comment that implied that the perpetration of GBV is so far gone that it is not worth addressing. This assumption implies that survivors are to be the lifetime survivors of GBV. Debowska et al. (2021) posit that the lack of resources put a halt on male hegemony in society is a hinderance to survivor empowerment. It also implies that there are high levels of violence because nothing is done about it, and help is likely not to be accepted by those subjected to the abuse (Debowska et al. (2021).

4.4.2.4.2 Bystander safety concerns

A few of the participants stated that they are often ready and willing to intervene in violent and hostile situations but have to often ponder the likelihood of them being injury in the process. Many of these participants made mention of the possibility of being injured as a result of a gun or a knife.

Yah, I would. I would. But like, consciously though, like you have to actually think about it because if you are in a space whereby you see, we often see scenarios whereby, maybe this guy is a person who, who's armed you know. So, you guys maybe as, as people who are trying to solve it and, and actually get this thing to stop, you might have a hard time because the guy is armed, and then the guy will tell you that 'hey, you need to back away' because you know 'I

will shoot you, I'm busy here and I'm doing this, and that, and that, and that' you see? And it's the same kind of uhm cockiness that I'm talking about, that are big headedness that I was telling you about you see, that kind of attitude, that 'there's nothing that you're actually gonna do' you know. So, it's really, it's really difficult sometimes even though we, we try by all means to actually you know, stop and erase gender-based violence (Participant 4, Male, 23) ... I, yoh lately, too much. Too much. Lately, it's even gotten to the point whereby even little boys, as young as 14 right now can come carrying a gun. And, even if maybe you're a 26-year-old, if you think you're going to talk to that boy in a way where you upset him or something, he will shoot you, because these boys can shoot now you know. And, getting a gun is easy these days I don't know whether it's ah corruption where they get the guns from, but I know is, you don't need to own a gun these days, even if you can just take someone's gun an bring it back later on you know. it's those kinds of ah things that we're living with right now in so, we're living with these days, gun violence is just too much (Participant 4, Male, 23)

I don't talk to anyone you see? With someone I can see is violent towards someone else, I don't go there and try to, to, to solve their situation you see because I, I, I don't know what tomorrow brings. Even with me, maybe the person, he's carrying a gun now I get shot and killed you see? So, I would advise the person that, the one I was friends with uhm, it's, it's not right, yes, but I would say he must take me as an example, that is what I would say because he was someone, actually, he knew me as I don't think of that hence he took advantage, to be violent with me because he knows very well that I am not that kind of person (Participant 13, Male, 25)

Not comfortable because I doubt sometimes whether this guy maybe, maybe he, he have a weapon, he will stab me while trying to break that situation. Sometimes it depends, you see (Participant 12, Male, 25)

Research indicates that there sometimes is a safety risk due to intervening in violent situations and this could be in the form of physical harm which is likely to have a diminishing impact on future bystander intervention (Park et al., 2023). This is exactly what is mentioned by Participant 13. He stated that he will not intervene because of the fear of possibly being killed. This reduces the help that is much needed by those subjected to GBV. Browne et al. (2021) is of the view that youth who have been exposed to violence in their childhood, are likely to engage in armed crimes. This statement corroborates the line of thinking of participants. The young male who has been exposed to violence in his social setting, observes and learns this behavior. He displays problematic and delinquent behaviors which provide a gateway to other crimes like using illicit drugs and making use of armed weapons.

4.4.2.4.3 South African Police Service inaction

Many of the participants expressed their distrust of the South African Polices Service (SAPS) in their ability to effectively respond to and handle GBV related cases. Participants acknowledge that the laws exist to protect survivors against GBV but not enough is being done in ensuring that these laws are implemented in a sufficient manner. There appears to be attitudinal challenges on the part of police officers, which impedes on their ability to adequately serve community members. One participant interestingly implied that male police officers may need training to deal and handle GBV related cases in an empathetic manner.

So, ah, this is where the law must come in because I feel like law is like not doing enough to protect the victims from gender-based violence. So, hence I'm saying the law must intervene in this. Law has to make sure that the perpetrators are puni, are served with their punishments towards their actions so that they can learn from, from what they have done and, yes (Participant 2, Male, 21)

[Sigh] Ah laws, laws, ah that's actually, that's actually a very interesting question because uhm, honestly when I look at our justice system, I kinder feel like the justice system is failing us in all aspects in terms of, especially women being abused because what you hear is that women, if a woman reports a case like a rape case of a, a, an abuse case, uhm you hear that police, you hear that police officers are actually taking it lightly, taking it lightly than they actually should. So, I feel like, I personally feel like stronger measures can be put in place like, we should have more uhm, how can I put this? I can't say like more officers that are aware, but I can say like, have more, have, have the station managers be more self-aware, have more awareness about the situation because it's a situation that's constantly happening, on a daily basis (Participant 3, Male, 20)

Is it possible that the SAPS does not know how to handle the matter of GBV?

But the police can get, you mustn't go to those, if you're a female don't go to, to a male, as a female. This one will understand you better, your situation (Participant 14, Male, 22)

The South Africa government has been recognized to have made great strides in ensuring that vulnerable communities have access to the justice system, social and health services and providing educational aids to ensure that those identified as at risk are equipped (Mmamabolo et al., 2020). Despite this, the implementation by the necessary departments has been impaired (Mmamabolo et al., 2020). The SAPS is mandated through the constitution of the Republic of South Africa to ensure that all members of society are safe and ensure that they proceed with

care when dealing with survivors of crime as police officers are the survivors' first point of entry to the justice system (Tlou, 2023; Mmamabolo et al., 2020). SAPS's aims are to prevent and investigate crimes, create a safe and secure communities for all members of society, follow-up on any crimes that are likely to threaten the security of communities, as well as ensuring that justice is served to criminals (Tlou, 2023). Participants seem to not believe that the SAPS's mandate is being implemented as intended and this translates to mistrust on the part of community members.

A study conducted by Howes, Watson, and Newett (2021) revealed 25% of the sample stated that some police officers display a level of unprofessionalism which manifests as bias towards other members of the community. This suggests that GBV related cases rather be reported to female officers with the assumption that she will be able to empathize and deal with that matter in a caring and sensitive manner (Howes et al., 2021), as was suggested by Participant 14. This implores the need for police officers to be trained as these different cases will come in at an influx, considering the high rate of prevalence, requiring the skills and knowledge of all to ensure that community members are safe. It is important that police officers are aware of their purpose, respond to cases timeously, display the necessary skills in managing GBV related case, and understand the context of the community which they serve (Howes et al., 2021)

It has become apparent that the attitude that police officers have is not accommodative towards survivors of crime, they are reportedly insensitive, lack empathy and are not able to exercise their discretion when attending to GBV related case and post incident care (Mmamabolo et al., 2020; Simelane et al., 2023). It seems that training is focused on the theoretical component and neglects the practical component (Mmamabolo et al., 2020). That which is implied by Participant 14's statement. The lack of effective and supportive services contributes to the maintenance of the cycle of violence, which in turn, violates human rights (Tlou, 2023).

4.4.3 Theme 3: Proposed intervention plans

4.4.3.1 Gender equality

4.4.3.1.1 Gender roles

Although the participants expressed that gender roles should be neutral, traces of socialisation were detected through the responses of some as they shared that the father figure is expected to be the head and protector of the home whilst the female figure is to be the carer and nurturer of both children and the home. Many of the participants stated that both genders should see each other as equal parties in the relationships. A combination of both how the participants

were raised and how they wish things would be, was prominent. This implies that gender roles are a major contributing factor towards the phenomenon under study. The role of a mother was perceived as more nurturing and that of a father as distant.

Ah, okay. Okay I was, I was okay, I'm just gonna explain something firstly. I was raised ne biblically so, when you say role neh, I, I will maybe I will be more specific you see in a way, how does a bible eh, eh identify a man and a woman yah. So, a man is a head of a house. When you say role you, you, you, you are trying to say role ... Okay. So, a man is a head of house, so he's there to protect family. And the mom has to make sure you see, everything is eh, what can I say, everything is in order yah. Those are the two roles which I think count ... I believe so it has to be the same, yah. That's why we, we get to see these uhm, these activities, eh the, the gender-based violence because, at some point now we as youth don't respect now the, the others you see? If you, if, if you in a bible you, you, you, you, you, you are a youth, you were, you were, you were gonna respect your father more than anything. So now, nowadays it's no longer happening that way (Participant 15, Male, 25)

Okay, uhm I grew up in a household where my father was the breadwinner, and my mum was a stay-at-home mum. Now, do I encourage that? No, I do not. Uhm, there needs to be at least 2 income streams to su, to basically to be ah support the family, you see? Uhm, and so for me, what I believe that a man has to do in society, it basically to be the head of the house, the protector of the house right? And the female, she can, she can work. She can do most of the things that the man does but, but, there are roles in the household that I feel that are specific to the woman which is laundry. I don't think any man can go to his friends and say 'hey, I'm the one who does laundry at my house, and I feel happy about it.' If he does, then chances are, he won't have any more friends. The amount of ridicule he is going to face and yeah, it's basically such duties. As for cooking, I cook all the time, I cook, and unfortunately my girlfriend doesn't want to cook. Her excuse is 'I'm not married to you' I'm like 'hey, hey this is 2023, don't come her with that type of stuff.' So, in other words I'm trying to tame the, the way that I grew up but yet trying to modernise it you see? I'm aiming for equality, if I'm the who cooks, you're the one that does that, yeah ... Yeah, it's just basically society. The man has the ability to do anything uhm, it's just basically society like, if, if you do certain things for instance, if you wash your wife's underwear, I'm sorry to say but that makes you less manly according to society. Hell, if I saw my dad washing my mom's underwear, I'm sure my [giggles] respect level for him would have just diminished a little bit (Participant 16, Male, 25)

Uhm, uhm, well you know, well this is my, this is my opinion anyway. You see, when it comes to the different things that the mother and father do, I personally, when I look at it, I feel like the mother and father are basically doing the same job. They're supposed to do the same thing in terms of, so if utata is a role, looks, has to be the role model, why can't umama be a role model as well? Like it should be something that's equally distributes to, to both, to both genders because, because we're both human after all so, we can't, because at the end of the day uhm, I believe that women should also be given bigger responsibilities than just only taking care of the home. Like it should be widened and a broader spectrum because uhm, we're living in a changing world, a changing world, and an advancing world as well, so like we expect like everyone to be catching up. So, you can't, you can't say that as, women should be, to be housewives, to be cooking and cleaning. I feel like the man should do that themselves as well. It should be a 50/50 thing. So, if the man and woman are both working, so, what's, if the man arrives earlier, what's stopping him from being the one who's cooking dinner tonight? Even, even the washing, like we can do it together. Why, why should I expect my wife or a woman to do it themselves because of their gender? It does, it still, it doesn't make sense because I feel like we should be walking as a team instead of, instead of someone doing things alone (Participant 3, Male, 20)

Lundgren and Amin (2015) are of the view that gender inequality is core of any gender related violence. Mahlangu et al. (2014) agreed that dating relationships are greatly gendered, and this has seen females continue to be bear the brunt of this kind of violence. McGhee, Shrestha, Ferguson, Shrestha, Bergenfeld, and Clark (2021) conducted a study that revealed that imbalanced decision-making, communication in a relationship, and the division of labour as reinforcers of hegemony as subsequent GBV accelerators. Many of the participants made mention of this. Graaf and Heinecken (2017) assert that unequal gender norms are a high risk for the likelihood of GBV perpetration. The high levels of inequality and male dominance contributes to the high levels of violence (Graaf & Heinecken, 2017) as gender roles implies gender power imbalances which later disempowers survivors (Mngoma et al., 2016). Bhattacharjee et al. (2020) are of the view that all acts of violence have a negative impact on survivors' social entitlements and impede on their equal participation.

4.4.3.1.2 Improved problem-solving strategies

Many of the participants agreed that it is important that those who are in dating relationships exercise communicating in an effective manner as a means of positive problem-solving. By way of communicating, one party identifies the problem, informs the other party, and provides

workable solutions to the avoidance of the problem. One participant made mention of creating relationships that are a safe space for one to openly share how they are feeling.

Ah for me basically, I would say it's for my, at my house it's actually the way you treat the people in your house you know, with love and care you know, letting the people know should they have a problem, any kind of problem you know, they should come to you and actually talk about it you know, whether it's from, from like the other gender you know. You know, and actually trying to actually solve something with it you know, and like how like letting them know that you're there for the comfort also you know, so, also abroad, not only in my house but like the people, the girls that I know that are my friends, I always tell them like 'guys, if you know chasing somethings, come for advice, don't bottle your emotions up you know 'cause you can you know, do a lot of damage to you. So, it's yah, it's along those lines ... Well, in my house what we actually do, we give each other like, maybe let's say in a month we'd have like a sit down, maybe 2 sit downs a month where a person can say what they wanna say you know, it's a chance and time whereby a person can actually speak out and voice their own opinion you know, as a person who's actually you know, actually a resident of the house. So, it's, it's, it's kind of, it's kind of nice cause in the same way people can get to vent you know, and some issues, most of the issues get resolved even though some issues might need more time and more sit downs. But like it, I can see the actual improvement because we, we didn't do it a long time ago, it's something that we just started you know. So, it's very nice, it's a very nice thing to do actually 'cause you'll find that it's much more better to actually live with each other when you actually do that you know, and you know and you address your problems head on you know, talk it out. So, it's really something that I would actually encourage other people to, to try you know. And, socially, socially we need to, we need to actually have uhm things set in place like that because I don't think we actually do have those kinds of things set in place where we know maybe a certain person has wronged and then we can like bring them forward, like some kind of commission, community commission you know and then speak how the reparations will be done. Maybe, what kind of punishment are they going to get? Ah you know, certain things, those sorts of things you know. So, uhm yah (Participant 4, Male, 23)

The statement above describes the kind of character traits that one should possess in order to encourage positive conflict resolution, how his family managed to implement positive conflict resolution in his home, and its importance in other social settings.

So, we can solve conflict by first having to like defuse the situation and then find out what the problem is, what caused it, and how it unfolded. And then from there, we work around the

problem, we find solutions as to how to solve the problem, how to prevent it from happening again so that conflict does not arise again (Participant 2, Male, 21)

I will say, I will talk about myself, I will talk about myself. If there's like conflict between mom and dad, they always, mom and dad because we're children you see? As the eldest son, I am the son then my younger sister. So, I take my mom and take her out of the situation, I take dad and talk to him as a man that "why are you doing this?" If he answers me, so long as, sister other things like I can solve, I take mom and put her aside, I take dad and put him aside and reunite them and ask them what do they want? What is going on? ...Dad is not going to listen to me because I am his son but, with mom, she will hear me. But dad will hear me out a little, but my words may sound harsh because the words are coming out of my mouth in rage. So, these words are coming out of my mouth, and he hears them and he will filter them. That's what I believe (Participant 11, Male, 22)

Participant 11 states that he has had to get involved in the conflict between his parents because of their lack of ability to communicate and problem-solve in non-violent ways. He goes on to say that his father is likely not to respond to his intervention, but his mother likely will. This further emphasises the perceived character traits of the perpetrator displaying externalising behaviours and wanting to control all situations in a non-empathetic way.

The prevention strategy discussed by McGhee et al. (2021) revealed the importance of engaging both partners in the dating relationship results in a reduction in IPV. The youth relationship programme is a programme that aims to eliminate any forms of violence in dating relationships by means of strengthening their communication skill (Crooks, Jaffe, Dunlop, Kerry, & Exner-Cortens, 2019). It is an 18-session programme that targets adolescents that have a history of violence (Crooks et al., 2019). Results indicated that this programme was effective in reducing physical and emotional abuse over time (Crooks et al., 2019). This is interesting because it suggests that there are interventions that have yielded promising results that can be implemented as a means of an early and at risk intervention strategy.

Tlou (2023) supposes that restorative justice (RJ) as a way of handling matters of a violent nature. RJ provides a platform for a dialogue between the perpetrator and survivor and for them to restore the harm that has been caused (Tlou, 2023). It is important that the practitioner does the necessary groundwork to ensure that the chances of re-victimization are eliminated (Tlou, 2023). Where possible, the researcher believes that this is a great platform for both the survivor and the perpetrator to have an impactful conversation about what transpired and the impact that

the violence had on the survivor. This way the perpetrator can be sensitized to what effect their actions have had on the survivor.

4.4.3.2 Communication patterns

4.4.3.2.1 Man-to-man talk

When asked what their contribution towards curbing the high incidences of GBV, many were of the view that they do in some way or another by means of breaking fights, being a perceived support system for the likely victim, expressing their disagreement with those kinds of actions and behaviors, and generally engaging peers about GBV.

I think it would be great if, if males would go public to show like, to show like, to show men that things need to change, we need to change because you can't beat someone up and wake up the next day and she is bruised like, how do you look, how do you look at her and your child, how do you look at her? "Mom, what happened yesterday?" something like that (Participant 7, Male, 22)

Okay. We can call him and we, try to sit down with him and have a word with him, try to convince him not to do such things in the community you see, and try to make it a point that he gets it ... It not easy up until we, it happens to his family. But I'm not wishing for that you see, that it must happen to his family, obviously there is a way to help him also not to do such things yah. So, he also needs a, a, a, a counsellor, yah he also needs counselling (Participant, Male, 25)

Uhm, I think there should be meetings for men specifically, not men who abuse or anything of that nature, just men in general. They go to the meetings, they speak about their issues and how to handle them, how to be the man of the house properly, uhm things of that nature yeah ... For me, I would say lose some of the formality. Generally, men don't go to these meetings because you're probably sitting in a circle and then, any and everything that you say has to make sense. There's that amount of pressure on you. If you could just lose that formality, maybe set up a braai for a Saturday. Men only. Do not come here with your wife or anything, just men only. And, braai's basically they just spark up conversations. Something sort of like informal you see? Because men really don't, we don't do formal things. Yeah ... It would not be. It would not be. I mean, generally men are, men don't like telling other men what to do and how to behave. And, men in general don't like to be told what to do and how to behave. So, it really needs to be some casual conversation kind of really structured to helping people. Yeah (Participant 16, Male, 25)

McGhee et al. (2021) are of the view that the reduction of GBV is largely dependent of engaging men through reflection and an open mind set to exploring new practices. Musungu, Alves, Volks, and Vallie (2018) emphasise the importance of those who are affected directly or indirectly by the abuse start having what seems to be an uncomfortable conversation against these patriarchal societal norms, to start being part of the solution, particularly, being of aid to survivors. Casey, Leek, Tolman, Allen, and Carlson (2017) opine that engaging males is a growing effort to globally combat GBV perpetration. The aim is to bring males together so that they can have conversations about gender equality and feminism, and for them to realise that they are part of the solution (Casey et al., 2017). This requires mobilization at a community level so that a wider reach can be made through media, social networks, and policies (Casey et al., 2017). It can be expected that this engagement will be met with resistance from males because it will be a disruption of their norms and, ultimately undermine how they were brought up. The content of these conversations should be centred around building healthy relationships, positive masculinity, and experiences of fatherhood (Casey et al., 2017; Pérez-Martínez, Marcos-Marcos, Cerdán-Torregrosa, Briones-Vozmediano, Sanz-Barbero, Davó-Blanes, Daoud, Edwards, Salazar, La Parra-Casado, & Vives-Cases, 2023).

Research shows that recreational activities, like sports, are a good way to initiate these conversations (Casey et al., 2017). The premise is that males need to realise that the problem starts with them, so they need to talk through their experiences first, in order to identify and provide solutions to the problem (Casey et al., 2017).

4.4.3.2.2 Supportive social systems

It seems that the question is, to be of support in abusive situations or not to be. Many of the participants indicated that it is important family members and loved ones offer their support to those subjected to GBV. One of the participants stated that, in his family, the intervention of family members only intensified the violence and made the home environment more volatile.

Ah, here at home, we talk. Here at home, we talk like maybe someone didn't like the something that you may have said whilst angry, he/she tells you, and corrects you. If you, well here at home, a person humbles him/herself, if they realise that they are wrong he/she apologises, and all of that, I don't know about the community (Participant 1, Male, 18)

Uhm, usually my home, conflict is resolved through uhm family conversations if it's that big a situation or we can resolve it as an internal family thing, within the home, we solve it within the home. Even the community at home, in my community you don't really hear a lot of violence

occurring, like the community members gather and a community meeting is held then they look for solutions, then every has their own, then everyone voices out their opinions, and then they, and they all, they all make, come to a conclusion (Participant 3, Male, 20)

It is interesting how Participant 7 stated that in his own experience, involving other perceived supportive social system rather escalated the abuse in his home rather than delay it.

In my home, they call like family, a family meeting but because my family I, my family side, my family's side from my father doesn't like my mother, they were, so they always took my dad's side. So, it didn't help. The only, the only thing that helped like was that she [mom] left ... I think when you bring society to the abuse of two people, I think it adds more fire .. To everything because the, the abuser is gonna get more ang, angry so like, I don't think it would help because even myself, coming from that experience when, when we involve like family, then family leaves, maybe like one day he will be back at it again (Participant 7, Male, 22)

Ragavan et al. (2020) and Mngoma et al. (2016) emphasise the importance of support structures for young people who have a history of violence as it serves as a protective factor for them. Research conducted by Ragavan et al. (2020) and Rivas-Rivero & Bonilla-Algovia (2022) revealed that young who had been exposure to IPV felt that they did not have much social support. This implies an increased risk of likely future perpetration by young males and victimisation by survivors (Ragavan et al., 2020).

Chikwira (2019) opines that the normalisation of violence is a contributing factor for those experiencing violence in their home to not disclose what they were or are currently going through. This undermines the psychosocial services these survivors have at their disposal. It is important that survivors have people who are helpful, which they can rely on when they are faced with violence related challenges (Chikwira, 2019). This is what would be considered a protective factor in reducing the high incident rates (Chikwira, 2019). Those sampled in Chikwira's (2019) study confirmed the assertion that survivors generally had little or no form of social support. This emphasises that need to have educate communities about

4.4.3.3 Information sharing

4.4.3.3.1 Broadcasting and social media platforms

Broadcasting and social media were cited as platforms through which the conversation can continue to be driven in the efforts of reducing the perpetration of GBV. Media was identified as a tool though which information about GBV can be accessible to a wider range of people.

There were mixed views of whether or not it has a likely impact on the reduction of GBV perpetration.

Uhm, not really because even though like we've seen media speak about gender-based violence but I feel like actions have not been like totally made to prevent gender-based violence from happening. So, so, and there are not enough ways to prevent gender-based violence. So, hence I'm saying that it's not a topic that is well spoke of, but it should be something that, it should be the main point in the conversation (Participant 2, Male, 21)

I don't think it's talked about enough personally, because if, if, it's happening every day, every second of the day around the world. They should like, if I can say, like the covid thing, it was a major thing, it was a global impact so, if this gender-based violence is happening globally, why is it not talked about enough around the world? Why is it not on the news every single day? Posters around street corners, I don't think it's talked about enough (Participant 6, Male, 24)

Ah, well we can, we can make it ah, through the society like, you can put it out, we can put it out in a broader scale like, we can make, we can make more group chats, like we can post more content leaning towards gender-based violence so that you're making other people aware, so that other people can also voice out their own issues, because if once you start a movement, the movement starts to pick up momentum, then we can see that the support will start growing and then we will see that everyone, we'll see like people, people that are actually being abused will start actually voicing out their own problems because they see that everyone is starting to talk about their own issues and they're actually getting advise on what to do. So, that, that's one of the main suggestions that can be done (Participant 3, Male, 20)

Howes, Watson, and Newett (2021) agree that making use of national broadcasting platforms like the radio and national television to spread awareness about the GBV and related issues have had an impact. Posters have been evinced to encourage a willingness to intervene (Villalonga-Aragón et al., 2023).

Social media can be understood to be a set of internet-based communication platforms which allow and encourage personal and public communication as well as community formation (Phiri, 2019). D'Ambrosi, Papakristo, and Polci, (2018) state that social media has the power to join people separated by distance to converse on current affairs as it has an informative and awareness raising function that has the ability to affect change across communities. This change may come with resistance particularly because these will be new values and behaviours that will be encouraged (D'Ambrosi et al., 2018). Social media offers society new ways for communities at large to actively participate in GBV related case (D'Ambrosi et al., 2018). It is basically spreadable media (Phiri, 2019). The researcher believes that media platforms would be an effective tool for ensure that the topic of GBV is talked about.

4.4.3.4 Community education

4.4.3.4.1 Reporting of cases

Participants agreed that survivors of GBV should be encouraged to report cases of abuse against them. They need to recognise SAPS as a resource for them to getting help. One of the participants stated that GBV and many other cases are known to the police when the matter has resulted in a fatality.

It's something that happens here in South Africa every day and it's something we're trying to stop but it doesn't stop. It makes, it continues, sometimes it's unstoppable because other cases happen behind closed doors, we don't see them. People are not reporting, but those that are reported are reported too late to a point where the cases of those people end up being killed (Participant 5, Male, 25)

Police station. Yah, they must go there and report the, the, the, the situation (Participant 15, Male, 25)

Mmamabolo et al. (2020) and Tlou (2023) opine that SAPS is the survivor's initial point of contact with the justice system and is likely to shape the survivors' experience of the justice processes. Police officers should be unbiased and be respectful towards survivors of GBV related crimes (Mmamabolo et al., 2020).

Debowska et al. (2021) conducted a study that revealed that survivors who have adopted traditional gender beliefs were less likely to report dating violence. This implies that they accept that it is part of their lives or blame themselves for the violence (Debowska et al., 2021). This appears to be because of gendered socialisation and the normalisation of violence in homes and communities. Akamike et al. (2019) are of the view that the root of the problem is because the African culture expects that females be submissive to their male counterparts and failure to do so is frowned upon. This is a major contributing factor towards reluctance to report GBV related cases (Akamike et al., 2019).

Simelane et al. (2023) agrees with Participant 5, that a large number of cases go unreported because of various reasons. Rasool (2017) opines that although evidence exists that indicate that youth experience GBV, the results yielded may not be an accurate reflection of the actual cases due to a noted reluctance because of fear, feeling embarrassed about what they experienced, lack of trust and attachment from educators, or because they may not think that the violence was not important enough to report. Rasool (2017) suggests that young people often experience GBV unbeknown to their families, and because of ignorance and age, they often are not aware of resources in place to assist them. That is why it is important that these young people be shielded with nurturing parenting and support systems. Literature states that young people are often isolated from their support systems and often believe that they will not be viewed as survivors because of the perceived notion that their relationships may not be considered legitimate (Rasool, 2017). This emphasises the reality that, the cases known may not be a true reflection of the actual cases because of inconsistent and lack of reporting (Rasool, 2017; Simelane et al., 2023). Females are said to generally have a reluctance of reporting cases, and this may be because of an acceptance of and a normalisation of violence (Rasool, 2017). Survivors of violence need to realize the importance of reporting of GBV related cases so that they can get the help that they need from mandated stakeholders (Tlou, 2023). The aim of the SAPS is to ensure thorough investigations are conducted, the survivor is kept safe and out of danger (Tlou, 2023).

4.4.3.4.2 Life skills workshops and support groups

Many participants alluded to the importance of survivors utilising support structures like counselling groups where they can work through the traumatic experiences and rebuild their self-esteem. One participant emphasised the importance community education, identifying GBV and working towards solutions as a collective in communities and amongst youth. Although it suggests that the perpetration of GBV is likely not going to stop soon, he indicated

the necessity of equipping survivors with skills to defend themselves in the likely event of being subjected to abuse.

Uhm, I don't know if there may be a way, like maybe do therapy sessions as a collective you know. Not maybe in the, maybe some women would be I don't know, skeptical of going if we actually put it in that way, that it's actually therapy you know. May you could say a women empowerment something you know. Something that will make them feel like, maybe I don't know, much better about themselves you know, like something that will boost their self-esteem you know, 'cause, 'cause I can imagine maybe lots of women have low self-esteem due to gender-based violence. So, I think that's the main thing we would do, is actually taking initiative as guys you know, actually having those empowerment sessions with women you know, encouraging them to actually go. And we actually taking upon what we say, keeping our promises that we're not going to do what we usually do you know, 'cause it's time for change, we need to change. It's been a while now you know. Yah (Participant 4, Male, 23)

... Okay first of all I think, as a society we do need education when it comes to gender-based violence ... that membrane needs to be removed, that membrane, this is something common to us black people and as we have gotten used to it [GBV] it's not gonna stop it'll continue from generation to generation to generation. If we can firstly remove that membrane that okay this, this is a norm, this is normal and must happen ... Then we can be able to come up with different solutions 'cause there are places that are trying to come with their own organisations shame, that would fight based, gender-based ve, violence, but there are, especially in our townships, we don't care about that. We do, if you're been beaten there, your partner is beating you. If we can remove that mentality that no, this is not your partner anymore, he is an abuser [inaudible]. I think we need education first of all, and then we will be able to come up with ways to stop gender vi, gender-based violence. We can't stop it now because of we're, a, many people don't know about it like okay this is, you see, the acts of ben, gender uhm, gender-based violence [laughter] (Participant 5, Male, 25)

Okay uhm, I think, I think women should, if they are a victim of gender-based violence, I think they should like go for self-defence classes in my opinion, because generally women are not, are not strong, I don't want to like downgrade them or something, they're not strong. So, if they have certain knowledge of self-defence; be it knife, gun, or actual physical self-defence, then they can better themselves and ah maybe like paint a picture for the man to not push me over again (Participant 6, Male, 24)

Programmes focusing on attitudinal and behavioural changes are likely to be impactful amongst youth because this is the time where most gender role disparities intensify and most act in accordance with what they have experienced or have been exposed to in their homes as related to dating relationships (Lundgren & Amin, 2015; Villalonga-Aragón, Martí-Vilar, Merino-Soto, & Tantalean-Terrones, 2023). Programmes should target young males with a history of violence (Debowska et al., 2021) and should address the risk and protective factors of GBV perpetration in adolescence through the discussion of the normalisation and tolerance of violence, working on healthy problem solving and communication skills, and resources where one can go to should they find themselves in an abusive situation (Lundgren & Amin, 2015; Crooks et al., 2019; Mahlangu et al., 2014). These kinds of programmes have been found to be effective in developing gender-equitable attitudes and behaviours amongst youth (Lundgren & Amin, 2015). Programmes aimed at survivors should provide them with necessary skills to be able to confidently deal with violent treatment (Debowska et al., 2021; Crooks et al., 2019). Debowska et al. (2021) emphasise collaborating with the target population so that meaningful and impactful change can be made. Schools would be a great place to initiate partnerships and collaborations as masses of people are gathered almost daily (Debowska et al., 2021; Mahlangu et al., 2014). Coaching boys into men is an example of a school-based programme that equips coaches in addressing their teams about the GBV pandemic (Crooks et al., 2019).

The Change Starts at Home 9 months programme that aims to improve behavioral and social change communication intervention incorporates radio listening, radio drama, group discussions, and community engagements aimed at improving interpersonal skills, thereby reducing the perpetration of violence in relationships (McGhee et al., 2021). The three pillars of the programme are reflecting on norms that maintain violence in the home, the development of essential skills and community action (McGhee et al., 2021). The study yielded individual and relationship level differences, with the former including a decrease in alcohol use which implied more quality time spent at home and improved communication, and the latter indicating that there was more consideration to shared decision making and having a willingness to assist with homely chores (McGhee et al., 2021). Participants ascribed the changes mostly to increased wealth of knowledge about the impact of these negative behaviours had on their relationships with their spouses (McGhee et al., 2021). This emphasises the need to educate and equip communities with the skills and knowledge for them to identify when they have a problem and solve the matter. The main aim for prevention would be

eliminate violence in homes and communities, increase survivors' protective factors, and teaching healthy ways of dealing with conflict in dating relationships (Crooks et al., 2019).

4.4.3.4.3 Community keepers

Many of the participants were of the view that it is important that communities unite and stand firm against GBV to ensure that the prevalence decreases. It was emphasised that males need to take the lead as this would indicate that they too are invested in eliminating this massive social ill that is crippling many homes and communities. A few participants highlighted the need for the youth to unite and be part of the drive to reducing the risk of occurrence. This is profound because the basis of this study is that if the risk factors can be identified and eliminated in adolescence.

A person must talk when he/she is experiencing abuse, and not sit at home. Everyone in the community must get along with their neighbours so that they talk to them should anything of that sort happen, so that they can be of help 'cause reason why people don't get help, there are people in society that lock themselves in the house. The community doesn't know what is going on in the home. You find that the mother of the house or the father of the house "no, he was killed by his wife" or "she was killed by her husband." Why is she not say anything? So, everyone must get along with their neighbours and share "no, my neighbour, I have this kind of a problem" and the neighbour will share with other community members (Participant, Male, 18)

So basically, I'd say it's about the laws you know, stating the laws of gender-based violence and actually uhm telling people that they have to take accountability you know. People have to know that it's a serious offence you know, whether like, if you, if you get caught doing it there must be something you must you know, pay for something, you must pay for it you know, whether I don't know how at the moment, but there must be something that we're going to uhm account for when you're doing gender-based violence. So, I'd say, for us here in the community, even though, maybe violence wouldn't be the answer for us, because I wouldn't say I, I, I would say let's, let's delegate a team of people whereby we go around hitting people 'cause that wouldn't be you know [giggles] that wouldn't be the right thing to do either. So, [giggles] uhm yah. I don't know but yah, we need to have like those constructive things to do against gender-based violence 'cause it's kind of a plague it's a, it's a, it's something that is spreading you know and it's not only, well in South Africa it's one of the, it's the highest, one of the countries

with the highest rate of gender-based violence South Africa and I feel like it's something that we need to put more initiative into (Participant 4, Male, 23)

Sure, I think every community should form something of a community watch or something. Uhm, I don't know if they should go door to door asking if everything is okay, but they definitely should make it public to everyone in that community that 'hey, if you are a victim of abuse, you can call this number, you can go to this location, we speak about such things, and we basically advise you on what to do.' but personally, me, I believe that the community should just tell the person 'hey, leave the relationship, if you don't, we're calling the cops on your behalf.' (Participant 16, Male, 25)

It is important that communities are engaged and made aware of their ability identify possibly hazardous situations and be equipped on how to intervene at any stage of the perpetration of violence (Crooks et al., 2019). If communities are made aware of their importance is standing against violence in simple and manageable ways, this would potentially see a reduction in the perpetration of violence (Crooks et al., 2019).

le Roux, Kramm, Scott, Sandilands, Loots, Olivier, Arango, and O'Sullivan (2016) opine that that faith leaders have significant influence on communities' beliefs and behaviours, and they are usually well respected and trusted in the community and often have good understanding about the local dynamics and context of the community. Faith leaders have the opportunity to address the personal, conditional, and sociocultural aspects contributing to the maintenance of GBV (le Roux et al., 2016). The study revealed that faith groups should play an active part in endorsing gender equality, are considered a safe space for survivors of GBV and have the platform to counsel males on ways to affect attitudinal and behavioural change (le Roux et al., 2016). Of course, there are views that faith groups can be condone patriarchal practices that often treat females as second grade, but faith groups have been mostly viewed as an effective way in dealing and responding to GBV (le Roux et al., 2016).

In the bystander's quest to being proactive in defusing conflict, he should identify the problem, assess the risk that the potential survivor(s) are likely in, make the decision to, and break the fight (Villalonga-Aragón et al., 2023; Park, Woo, & Kim, 2023; Sánchez-Prada et al., 2022). Sánchez-Prada, Delgado-Alvarez, Bosch-Fiol, Ferreiro-Basurto, and Ferrer-Perez (2022) encourage that community members and those witnessing the abuse take action and be prosocial bystanders who are able to respond to the crime. Park et al. (2023) agree that those who are aware of the violence are in a position to choose to be prosocial in their response to the incident and assure survivors that they have resources at their disposal to ensure that the

return to safety. This requires that community members be engaged towards cohesive and inclusive community interventions that can affect socio-normative changes (Villalonga-Aragón et al., 2023). It is encouraged that community member develop an altruism intense enough to see the need to care for others in need, ultimately, developing a sense of community which seeks to promote community safety and the disruption of aggressive situations (Villalonga-Aragón et al., 2023). Communities should move away from the viewing GBV related cases as private matters and recognize that they are public health matters, which necessitates the need to providing knowledge and upskilling communities (Villalonga-Aragón et al., 2023), as social participation contributes immensely to the prevention of GBV related crime (Sánchez-Prada et al., 2022).

The researcher believes that empathy is a critical skill to have in the effort to create a sense of community. Sánchez-Prada et al. (2022) describes empathy as the ability to put oneself in the shoes of another person. Having a similarity to the person subjected to abuse is suggested to have an impact on prosocial behaviour e.g., gender, and it is suggested that females are more empathetic than males and this is likely due to socialisation and are said to have a greater inclination towards affiliation (Sánchez-Prada et al., 2022). How do we then increase the empathy levels of males so that they can actively play a role in reducing GBV?

Howes et al. (2021) are of the view that community engagement is critical in identifying community impediments and fostering partnerships to workable solutions. Achieving a sense of community will require that community members receive empathy building workshops, increasing their sense of ownership in making these changes and collectively finding solutions (Levine, Philpot, and Kovalenko, 2020). Research suggests that some males are confident enough to intervene and express their discomfort about a potentially abusive situation with about 35% stating that they would offer to walk a survivor home after a night out to ensure their safety, the participants were mostly prepared to offer assistance (Musungu et al., 2018) similar to the findings of this study.

In a study conducted by Simelane et al. (2023) participants stated that GBV related cases are not private matters to be dealt with by the families, implying that they have the perception that GBV is a major phenomenon that requires outside intervention because of the potential further harm of those affected.

5 Chapter 5: Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will detail the main conclusions and recommendations discovered based on the findings presented in the previous chapter.

5.2 Main conclusions

This study was able to explore the perceptions and experiences of young males about gender-based violence in their families and communities. It sought to explore how young males are socialized, whether exposure or experience about GBV has any bearing on future perpetration, typical characteristics of a likely perpetrator and how rehabilitation and restoration can be achieved.

Mahlangu et al. (2014) believe that any intervention tool that is likely to make impactful change is that which focuses on addressing risk factors and enhancing protective factors by improving the health and safety of everyone. With GBV being identified as a health issue amongst youth (Barnes et al., 2022; Reed et al., 2010), it warrants urgent interventions so that a steady decline in prevalence can be appreciated. This study, similarly, to that of Bhattacharjee et al. (2020), emphasises the need for quality interventions and policies to identify and address violence early in life. The researcher strongly believes that interventions should be targeted at school going children as early as possible. The sooner the conversation and interventions are initiated, the less likely for GBV to escalate. Failure to do so will amplify the intensity and frequency of violence, and this could have fatal consequences (Rivas-Rivero & Bonilla-Algovia, 2022).

From the data collected and analysed, Theme 1: Contributing factors of gender-based violence in the household, emerged. Many factors contribute towards exposure to GBV in the household. At an individual level, contributing factors include low self-esteem and confidence levels, which is likely to leave the survivor traumatized and unable to build health relationships. Repeated exposure to GBV was seen to be a contributing factor towards the maintenance of violence in dating relationships as males are expected to be violent and females are expected to be accept the about as a normal part of dating relationships. This implies dysfunction in the socialization and abusive behaviour patterns are accepted and expected by society, which implies this violent coaching, because the perpetrator learns these behaviours from peers, family members, and communities. This directly links to the social constructionist view of gender, that markedly exerts different expectations of males and females (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). Negative character traits and a non-nurturing environment were viewed to be

contributing towards how perpetrators. This highlights the premise of the ecological systems theory, that which happens in one system, has a direct impact on other systems (CSVR, 2016; Sabbah et al., 2017). Society further teaches young males not to express their emotions, but rather to suppress them. Alcohol use was also cited to be a major contributing factor towards high levels of GBV, particularly in township communities (Lipsky et al., 2005). Females living with partners who use alcohol, are more likely to experience GBV (Akamike et al., 2019). This abuse is likely to impede on both the survivor and the perpetrator's parental capacity and hinder on their problem-solving skills.

Theme 2: The effects of GBV on individuals, families, groups, and communities, is tremendous. Perpetrators are socialized to hold patriarchal views and that has a detrimental effect on vulnerable communities. It goes without saying that the survivors are likely to be impacted psychologically as they are likely to internalize the behaviour (Mahlangu & Gevers, 2014) and grow an expectation of violence in dating relationships, and so the cycle continues. As this abuse happens, the family no longer becomes a safe space as the abuse breeds trauma. This leads to a maintenance, a tolerance, and a normalization of violence within homes and communities. Community members often contemplate whether to intervene because of a safety concern, leading to a continuation of this violence.

Theme 3: Proposed intervention plans. Participants proposed some intervention plans to help remedy the problem at hand included efforts to promote gender equality through promoting neutral gender roles and improving problem-solving skills. This would positively impact dating relationships and make them a safe space for both partners. It was highlighted that males should speak to other males about GBV and discourage acts of violence towards other, and rather be of support to suffering from violence. Participants suggested that social media platforms be used to start conversations about GBV so that people normalize talking about the problem. Community education and life skills were suggested as a means of empowering and supporting communities, much like the Change Starts at Home 9 months programme that aims to educate and engage communities about healthy communication patterns, thereby reducing potential violence incidences within the home (McGhee et al., 2021). Males were also seen to be the main role players in decreasing the prevalence of GBV as well as communities having to unite against the prevalence.

5.3 Recommendations

It is vital that all stakeholders are engaged in significantly reducing the high levels of gendered violence that survivors are exposed to including the young people, their parents, schools, teachers, and the community at large (Lundgren & Amin, 2015). Forke et al. (2018) are of the view that it is important that intervention efforts target gender and the risks of being exposed to or witnessing violence within the home in the efforts of reducing GBV related crimes. Programmes should be directed towards addressing violence within the home, building positive self-esteems, improved problem-solving strategies, and anger management (Forke et al., 2018). Sutton and Simons (2021) emphasise the importance of relationship-focused programmes that are gender transformative (Pérez-Martínez, et al., 2023) that educate participants about healthy relationships addressing topics like; the importance of self-awareness, positive interpersonal skills where conflict resolution and communication skills are to be unpacked, as well as positive parenting skills. Programmes should have an intention to change attitudes and behaviours to reject GBV related crimes (Akamike et al., 2019; Carlson et al., 2020; Pérez-Martínez et al., 2023).

Programmes should be directed toward helping perpetrators and survivors of GBV with macro level services like medical, psychosocial, and legal services (Graaf & Heineken, 2017) but this is rather a reactive approach as it implies that services are only available after the commission of the crime. Policy makers and scholars recognise young people as key role players in eliminating violence and working towards healthier homes and communities (Browne et al., 2021). Akamike et al. (2019) agree that effective and appropriate policy strategies are required to mitigate the effects of GBV on communities. This requires an in-depth understanding about the how big the problem is and factors contributing and maintaining the problem (Akamike et al., 2019). It is crucial that government and the private sector rally resources that are family-centred so that those families can become exemplary community members who are able to deal with conflict in non-violent ways. Policies like the Service Charter for Victims of Crime developed in 2004 stipulates the survivors' rights and the minimum standards for the services that survivors ought to be provided (Mmamabolo et al., 2020). Communities should be educated about such supportive structures. It is suggested that stakeholders, particularly the SAPS, get the necessary training required to ensure that they are fully equipped and knowledgeable on how to respond to GBV related cases and the resources available to survivors (Tlou, 2023). It is apparent that members of the SAPS required more intense training to capacitate them on the skills and knowledge related to handling GBV related

cases with care (Mmamabolo et al., 2020). It is crucial that officers understand their role, related guiding frameworks and related programmes that will be a resource for survivors so that they can provide a gender sensitive service to survivors (Mmamabolo et al., 2020).

Many of the participants of this study made suggestions that they believed that would also make impactful change. They suggested peaceful marches accompanied by posters encouraging GBV to be eliminated, awareness campaigns via media and social media platforms. This would require the collaboration of local government and actions groups to sanction marches. Community education through engagement and linking both survivors and perpetrators to psychosocial services for rehabilitation purposes were also suggested although Barnes et al. (2022) are of the view that some survivors do not seek counselling services because of the possibility of being negatively labelled and due to poor and misaligned services. This suggests that government institutions need to work together and not insolation when dealing with GBV related cases so that the survivor receives all services that will encourage healing. Participants also suggested consistently talking about GBV with peers and on media platforms and its effects until society makes attitudinal and behavioural change so that females can live their lives freely.

Opportunities for future research could focus on sampling school going children and how they are directly and indirectly affected by GBV, with the aim of increasing their awareness about how heinous GBV is and increasing self-reporting among those affected. This will see adolescent survivors more willing to report cases and likely deter likely perpetrators because literature supposes that an adult perpetrator's first GBV related crime likely happened in his adolescence. It would be worthwhile to sample both genders in one study so that each gender is informed about the views about GBV of the other gender. This could be the inception of awareness strategies.

5.4 Conclusion

In conclusion, a lot still needs to be done to ensure that females enjoy the same rights as do males, in a society that embraces them rather than treating them as second class. It is important that males are engaged about the dysfunctional ways in which they had been socialised so that they can make the conscious decision to be informed about GBV and how it affects those directly and indirectly affected by the commission of the act. Stakeholders need to work in synergy to combat GBV as a collective.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Permission to enter research site



University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, 7701

Date: _____

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a Masters in Criminal Justice Social Work student currently enrolled at the University of Cape Town. As a prerequisite of the course, I am required to conduct a research project, and the title of the research project is; *An exploratory study on the perceptions and experiences the of young boy children in relation to gender-based violence perpetration in their homes and communities in the townships of Gqeberha.*

My request is to identify potential research participants who meet the following criteria:

- Black pupils
- Pupils who have observably displayed problem and anti-social behaviour
- Pupils who have seemingly become disengaged with school
- Pupils who are reportedly experiencing family problems
- Pupils between the age 12 and 17 years


The research study involves conducting semi-structured interviews as well as a focus group session aimed at exploring the perceptions and experiences the of young boy children in relation to gender-based violence perpetration in their homes and communities in the townships of Gqeberha. The research commits to upholding the ethical guidelines and requirements of the university and confidentiality agreements will be communicated to gate-keepers and participants.

I would appreciate it if you could identify potential participants for our first official meeting on a date, time and a venue convenient for the both of us. This will provide you with the opportunity to ask any questions you need clarity on.

My research supervisor is Associate Professor Leon Holtzhausen from the Department of Social Development, at the University of Cape Town. Any questions regarding the study can be directed to the student or research supervisor.

The student can be contacted on 062 524 3174 or bnzmih001@myuct.ac.za. The research supervisor can be contacted at 021 650 3483 or leon.holtzhausen@uct.ac.za.

Yours sincerely



Ms. M. Banzana

(Social Work Students)

A/Prof L. Holtzhausen

(Research Supervisor)

Appendix 2: Letter to participants



University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, 7701

Dear Participant

I am a Masters in Criminal Justice Social Work student currently enrolled at the University of Cape Town. As part of the requirements of the course I have to complete a research project, and the title of the research project is; *An exploratory study on the perceptions and experiences the of young boy children in relation to gender-based violence perpetration in their homes and communities in the townships of Gqeberha.*

The research project is aimed at exploring the perceptions and experiences the of young boy children in relation to gender-based violence perpetration in their homes and communities in the townships of Gqeberha.

I would need to conduct one interview of approximately one hour with you at a time and location that is safe, secure, and convenient for us both. Therefore, confidentiality and privacy will be ensured.

The research project will conform to the ethical guidelines and requirements of the university, and we will enter into individual confidentiality agreements with all participants interviewed.

My research supervisor is Associate Professor Leon Holtzhausen from the Department of Social Development, at the University of Cape Town. Any questions regarding the study can be directed to the student or research supervisor.

The students can be contacted on 081 276 7673 or bnzmih001@myuct.ac.za. The research supervisor can be contacted at 021 650 3483 or leon.holtzhausen@uct.ac.za.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Barman'.

Ms. M. Banzana

(Social Work Students)

A/Prof L. Holtzhausen

(Research Supervisor)

Appendix 3: Consent form



University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, 7701

I, _____(parent/legal guardian), agree that
_____ can participate in this research study.

The following points have been explained to me;

1. Participation is entirely voluntary, and I can withdraw my consent at any time, before or during the interview.
2. The focus of this research is aimed at exploring the perceptions and experiences the of young boy children in relation to gender-based violence perpetration in their homes and communities in the townships of Gqeberha.
3. Participation is limited to one semi-structured interview and one focus group.
4. Should I experience any discomfort or distress, I have the right not to answer any question at any time during the interview.
5. Should I experience discomfort or distress, Ms. M. Banzana will provide details of public counselling service facilities (FAMSA).
6. Participation in this research is entirely confidential and personal information will not be released.
7. Ms. M. Banzana will answer any questions I wish to ask about this research project now or during the research process.
8. The results of the research will be made available to me if I so wish. Should I require a copy of the research, I will communicate this to Ms. M. Banzana.

Signature of parent/legal guardian

Date

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of researcher

Date

Signature of Research Supervisor

Date

Appendix 4: Permission and release form (use of audio recordings and written material for research purposes)



University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, 7701

Participant's Name: _____

Contact details:

Address: _____

Telephone No: _____

Names of student:

Level of research: Minor dissertation

Brief title of research project: An exploratory study on perceptions and experiences the of young boy children in relation to gender-based violence perpetration in their homes and communities in the townships of Gqeberha.

Supervisor: A/Prof L. Holtzhausen

Declaration

(Please sign in the blocks next to the statements. If you are unable to sign a symbol of "X" can be provided)

1. The nature of the research and the nature of my participation have been explained to me verbally and in writing.	Signature:
2. I agree to participate in an interview and to allow audio-recordings of these to be made.	Signature:
3. The audio-recordings will be transcribed only by the researcher.	Signature:
4. Once the data have been transcribed the recordings will be destroyed.	Signature:

Date:	
Witnessed by researcher:	

Appendix 5: Interview schedule



University of Cape Town, Rondebosch, 7701

Participant's number: _____

Date of interview: _____

Name of interviewer: Ms. M. Banzana

(Please mark 'X' where applicable)

Consent form explained and signed	YES	NO
Permission and release form (recordings and transcriptions) explained and signed.	YES	NO

- The interviewer will introduce herself and clarify her role as a student researcher.
- The interviewer will explain the goal of the research and the purpose of the interview.
- The interviewer will explain and clarify the “Consent form” and the “Permission & release form”. After the participant has signed the form, the researcher will proceed to switch on the audio recorder.
- During the interview the interviewer will use the following interviewing skills to explore and clarify the participant's responses: minimal verbal responses, paraphrasing, clarification, reflection, reflective summary, listening and probing.
- The interviewer will inform the participant that she will take notes during the interview, where necessary, to ensure accuracy of the information gathered and assure the participant of the confidentiality of the notes.
- The interviewer will show gratitude towards the participant's presence and ask if she may proceed to ask the questions as provided in the interview schedule.
- Once the participant is ready and indicates that the interviewer may proceed, the following questions will be asked:

1. Demographic questions

- 1.1. How would you describe yourself in terms of gender?
- 1.2. How old are you?
- 1.3. What grade are you in?
- 1.4. Who do you currently live with?
- 1.5. Where do you live?

2. Knowledge and perceptions of young boy children regarding gender-based violence perpetration in their homes and communities

- 2.1. What is your understanding about gender-based violence?
- 2.2. What do you think the effects of gender-based violence are on victims/women?
- 2.3. What are some common character traits that you believe a perpetrator(men) possesses?
- 2.4. What are your feelings towards the perpetration of gender-based violence?
- 2.5. How often do you hear about a girl have been abused or killed in your community?
- 2.6. Do you know of any laws that can help those experiencing GBV?

3. Experiences of young boy children regarding gender-based violence perpetration in their homes and communities

- 3.1. Have you or any of your peers abused somebody else because of their gender? Tell me more.
- 3.2. Tell me about a time you witnessed someone being abused based on his/her gender in your home. How often does it happen?
- 3.3. Tell me about a time you witnessed someone being abused based on his/her gender in your community. How often does it happen?

4. Contributing factors towards a normalization of gender-based violence in homes and communities

- 4.1. What are the roles you believe men and women should assume within the home and in society?
- 4.2. Do you think gender-based violence is a topic talked about enough?
- 4.3. How is conflict often solved in your home and community?

5. Recommendations

5.1. How can society best support victims of gender-based violence?

5.2. How do you think society can assist perpetrators in reducing the high incidents or gender-based violence?

5.3. How can conflicts within our homes and communities be better solved?

5.4. As a young man, what do you think your contribution is in lowering the high incidents of gender-based violence?

5.5. How can our society increase the awareness of gender-based violence?

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