Faith-based interventions in addressing violence against women in Cape Town

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ABSTRACT

Violence against women is a social reality in South Africa. In 2014, the country was named the world rape capital by media and humanitarian organizations because of the intensity of violence. Several legal reforms have been put in place to address such violence, which include the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998 and the establishment of Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences investigations units across all South African Police Services stations. However, because of the persistence of violence against women, it appears these laws and policies have not been successful in addressing the problem. As representatives of religion in the public sphere, Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) have also responded to the problem of violence against women. In this thesis, I study the interventions of Ihata Shelter, a Muslim organisation, St Anne's Homes, a Christian organisation, and South African Faith & Family Institute (SAFFI), a multi-faith-based organisation, in responding to violence against women in Cape Town, South Africa. Ihata Shelter and St Anne's Homes have established shelters to offer support to victims of abuse, and SAFFI provides education and training on violence against women to religious leaders and religious communities. Guided by Van Gennep's rite of passage theory, I argue that these organisations follow the model of a rite of passage in their interventions. I explain how the three stages of a rite of passage (separation, transition and incorporation) are embodied in these three organisations' interventions. My findings reflect that some of the women who had undergone the shelter programmes transformed from a state of trauma caused by abuse to a state of healing and empowerment, while some religious leaders transformed from a state of non-involvement to a state of positive engagement and action in addressing violence against women after undergoing SAFFI's teachings and trainings. Overall, I conclude that the work of these FBOs in addressing violence against women reflects the continued presence of religion in the public sphere and its role in addressing social problems.

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Plagiarism Declaration

I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and pretend that it is one's own. Each contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation, from the work(s) of other people has been attributed and has been cited and referenced.

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ABBREVIATIONS

FBOs:	Faith-Based Organisations
NGOs:	Non-Governmental Organisations
VAW:	Violence Against Women
GBV:	Gender-Based Violence
SAFFI:	South African Faith & Family Institute
DVA:	Domestic Violence Act
IRFSA:	Islamic Resource Foundation of South Africa
DSD:	Department of Social Development
SAPS:	South African Police Services
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
CSVR:	The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation
POWA:	People Opposing Women Abuse
SBCWC:	Saartjie Bartman Centre for Women and Children
UN:	United Nations
NSM:	National Shelter Movement of South Africa
WCWSM:	Western Cape Women's Shelter Movement
GNWS:	Global Network of Women's Shelters

ANWS:	Africa Network of Women Shelters
NPA:	National Prosecuting Authority
NICRO:	National Institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders

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1. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study: Violence against women in South Africa.

> The crisis of violence against women and children is a great shame on our nation. It goes against our African values and everything we stand for as a people. We grew up being taught that as men and boys we must respect women and protect children. We were taught to never raise a hand against a woman. But we have lost our way. Our communities are in the grip of violence against those we are supposed to protect. President Cyril Ramaphosa, State President of South Africa.

On the 25th of November 2019, the President of the Republic of South Africa addressed the people of Limpopo province as part of the launch of 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women. In the speech, President Ramaphosa raised a concern about the intensity of violence against women in South Africa. In an earlier speech, Ramaphosa indicated that the case figures of violence against women in South Africa resemble those of a country at war: 'The women and children of this country are under siege. There is a very violent and brutal war underway against the women of South Africa.' He further added that the South African Police Services (SAPS) receives over one hundred cases of rape cases daily. (Cyril Ramaphosa Speech, 06 September 2019). This reflects the continued intensity of violence against women in South Africa.

One of the factors that prompted President Ramaphosa's speech was that in August 2019, a month celebrated as Women's Month in South Africa, there were a series of rape and murder cases of women that gained nationwide attention. South African Minister of Women, Youth and people with Disabilities, Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, reported that over 30 women were killed during Women's Month 2019. This included the death of Leighandre Jegels, a boxer and karate champion who was shot by her boyfriend; Jess Hesse, a University of Western Cape student who was murdered in a flat in Parow; and a 19-year-old University of Cape Town

student, Uyinene Mrwetyana, who was raped and murdered by a Post Office worker in Cape Town, after which her body was set alight.[1] Uyinene's case sparked a nationwide outcry against violence against women. Her death resulted in several protests by university students and the community at large. It also sparked the #AmInext campaign and #EnoughIsEnough campaign on social media. In these campaigns and protests, women expressed their anger and fear of becoming the next victims of violence against women.

The above incidences show how violence against women is a social reality in South Africa. In a 2018 study, Naidoo also confirms that cases of gender-based violence within South African families, communities and societies are increasing at an alarming rate (Naidoo 2018, p. 40). The intensity and extent of the violence against women resulted in the country being dubbed the 'world's rape capital' by international media and humanitarian organisations (Le Roux 2012, p. 51). In elucidating the levels of violence against women, the president of South Africa reiterated that 'South Africa is one of the most unsafe places in the world to be a woman...' (Ramaphosa, C., Parliamentary Address, 18 September 2019).

Wael (2019) indicates that although gender issues have received much attention in contemporary South Africa, cases of violence continue to prevail. Women's organisations in South Africa estimate that one in every three women is a victim of rape (Buiten and Naidoo 2016, p. 536), while one in every six women is in an abusive domestic relationship. Other statistics report that two in five women are beaten by their partners and one in fifteen women is murdered by her partner. Naidoo also highlights that some statistics say that one in every two women reported to have experiences some form of violence in their lifetime (Naidoo 2018, p.40). Despite the differences and inconsistences in the statistics, these figures still reflect the

[1] Nkoana-Mashabane, M., Minister of Women, Youth and People with Disabilities, speech, https://ewn.co.za/2019/09/03/over-30-women-were-killed-by-their-partners-in-august-maite-nkoane-mashabane Date accessed: 02 October 2019.

intensity of violence against women in South Africa. The number of cases of violence against women are actually suspected of exceeding what is presented in the statistics due to under-reporting.

The term 'violence against women' is loosely used to refer to physical and sexual abuse against women. Although these are the most common forms of abuse, as indicated by the incidents mentioned above, violence against women goes beyond sexual and physical violence. According to the United Nations (UN),

> Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life[2].

The above definition of violence against women shows that violence against women takes many forms including physical, sexual and emotional violence. Most of the literature uses the term violence against women interchangeably with gender-based violence, based on how the women are mostly affected. However, it is imperative to note that gender-based violence affects both men and women (Chitando and Chirongoma 2013). In this study my focus is only on violence that is perpetrated against women.

1.2 Responses to Violence Against Women in South Africa

According to Nowrojee and Manby, the South African government had already made several interventions to address violence against women (VAW) by 1993. Prior to 1993, a peace order or a restraining order issued by the court to protect a person in a situation involving domestic violence was the principal mechanism used to warn an abusive partner to stop abuse. In 1993, a new law, The Prevention of Violence Act, was promulgated. However, Nowrojee and Manby

[2] United Nations Definition of Violence Against Women Defining Violence against Women and Girls (endvawnow.org) Date Accessed: 18 October 2019.

(1995) criticized both the act and the peace order as ineffective strategies for protecting women from violence. In their view, a peace order was a mere warning that had no provision for arrest if the order were breached (Nowrojee and Manby, 1995).

In 1995, likewise responding to the scourge of violence, the South African Police Services (SAPS) established Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences units. These units were established to prevent and investigate violence against women related crimes and to offer services to victims of violence against women (Manby 2001, p. 198; Bryen and Bornman 2015, p. 59). By 2003/2004, South Africa had 13 Family Violence, Child Protection and Sexual Offences units in its major cities, and by 2006, the number had risen to 49 (Manby 2001, p. 198). Despite these efforts, cases of violence against women continued to prevail in South Africa.

Responding to the problem of violence against women, the government also passed the Domestic Violence Act no 116 of 1998. The Act was promulgated after it was realised that the existing interventions for victims of domestic violence had proved to be ineffective (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998,1). The act clearly states that its purpose is to offer victims of domestic violence protection from domestic abuse (Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998, 1). Later, another law, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007 was published which criminalised any attempt, conspiracy and incitement to commit a sexual offence. In a 1999 study, Rasool believed ‘the act will be of great benefit to women confronting abuse but still more needs to be done (Rasool 1991, p.29).

While Wael considers the law ‘a powerful tool that can be used to put society on the right track for the implementation of human rights values’ (Wael 2019, p55), it appears that both of these laws have not been effective strategies given the continued increase of violence against women in South Africa. Mogale and others highlight that despite the government's efforts to implement

these laws, cases of violence are still rampant (Mogale, Burns and Ritcher 2012, p. 589). These scholars criticize both the Domestic Violence Act and Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act for not providing strategies that take into consideration cultural, social and economic factors within which violence against women is embedded (Mogale, Burns and Ritcher 2012, p. 582).

In 2012, the South African government also established a national council against gender-based violence. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) advises, monitors, reports and coordinates national and international partnerships and it is responsible for implementing 'a 365 Day National Action plan against Gender Based Violence' (OECD 2014, p. 166). South Africa implemented the 365 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children campaign, which is influenced by an international campaign of Sixteen Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children which runs from 25 November to 10 December annually (https://www.sanews.gov.za/south-africa/365-days-activism-campaign-moves-mshadza; Date accessed: 02 October 2019). This government initiative has likewise not yielded many positive results in curbing violence against women. Although the government has made it a priority to take part in these campaigns, the situation of VAW in South Africa remains alarming.

Moyo, Khonje and Brobbey highlight the role played by NGOs in responding to violence against women in South Africa (Moyo, Khonje and Brobbey, 2017). According to these authors, the work of these non-state service providers centres on advocacy, training, awareness creation and research (Moyo, Khonje and Brobbey, 2017). Examples of such NGOs include Rape Crisis Cape Town Trust, which operates in the Cape Town suburbs of Observatory, Athlone and Khayelitsha. Established in 1976, this organisation provides counselling and

support for survivors of rape.[3] Another organisation, People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA), is based in Gauteng Province Johannesburg. The organisation was established in 1979 and offers counselling, shelter, and legal advice to abused women.[4] The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR), which was established in 1989, is another example of an NGO that has responded to violence against women in South Africa. CSVR has branches in Johannesburg and Cape Town. This organisation seeks to understand and prevent violence through research and advocacy.[5]

Women's Legal Centre is another NGO that addresses violence against women. Founded in 1999, it focuses exclusively on women rights, and has a department that deals with violence against women. This department ensures that there are legislative frameworks[6] to protect women in general and ensures that the state has implementation plans in place to action these legal frameworks and policies. Another NGO that addresses violence against women is the Saartjie Baartman Centre for Women and Children (SBCWC) in Athlone, Cape Town. This organisation was likewise established in 1999 and provides shelter and counselling [7] for abused women. Sonke Gender Justice[8] was established in 2006. It seeks to promote gender equality, prevent violence against women, and reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS (Peacock 2013, and Moyo, Khonje and Brobbey, 2017). Sonke Gender Justice is involved in advocacy campaigns, community education and policy development. Moyo, Khonje and Brobbey appraise some of

[3] https://rapecrisis.org.za/about-us/ History of Rape Crisis Trust an organization that offer support to survivors of sexual violence, Date accessed: 14 March 2020.
[4] https://www.powa.co.za/POWA/about-us/mission-vision-and-history/ This is a link to the background and history of People Opposing Women Abuse, an NGO that addresses violence against women in Johannesburg, Date accessed: 14 March 2020.
[5] https://www.csvr.org.za/about-us/our-history Link to Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation website, Date accessed: 14 March 2020.
[6] https://wlce.co.za/violence-against-women-vaw/ Link to Women's Legal Centre website, Date accessed: 14 March 2020.
[7] http://www.saartjiebaartmancentre.org.za/ Saartjie Bartman Centre for Women and Children is a shelter for abused women named in honor of Saartijie Sarah Bartman a Khoi Khoi woman who was taken to England and exhibited for her body structure. Date accessed: 14 March 2020.
[8] https://genderjustice.org.za/our-work/ Link to Sonke Gender Justice website Date accessed: 14 March 2020.

these non-governmental organisations for complementing state interventions on violence against women (Moyo, Khonje and Brobbey, 2017).

1.3 FBOs and Violence Against Women

Faith-based organisations are among the many non-governmental organisations that have responded to violence against women in South Africa. Despite their efforts to respond to and address the problem of violence against women, these organisations have not received much attention in scholarship. Although I do not suggest that faith-based interventions are the panacea to the problem of violence against women, I propose that faith-based interventions have the potential for positive change given that the majority of South Africans are affiliated to religion. According to Schoeman (Schoeman 2017, p. 3), the results of the General Household Survey conducted in 2013 showed that over 90% of the South African population is affiliated to some kind of religion. Schoeman noted that those who said to be religious were from diverse strands of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Bahai Faith, Buddhism, African Traditional Religion and Judaism. It is therefore vitally important to assess the impact of faith-based interventions in a society where the majority has a positive attitude towards one or more types of religion. This justifies my focus on faith-based interventions that were implemented in a context where laws and policies in South Africa appear to be ineffective in curbing violence against women (Mogale, Burns and Ritcher, 2012). FBOs have been involved in advocacy and providing education on violence against women. They also provide shelter and counselling to victims of violence against women.

The aim of this study was to identify the interventions of faith-based organisations in addressing violence against women in Cape Town. This study also assessed the ways in which the interventions by these organisations are implemented. This was achieved through the following research questions.

1. What are the interventions of faith-based organisations in addressing violence against women in Cape Town?
2. How are these interventions carried out?
3. How successful were they for the participants?

1.4 Significance of the Study

This thesis contributes to the study of FBO and violence against women studies in four ways. Firstly, it is one of the few studies that assesses the interventions of FBOs in addressing violence against women. While FBOs have responded to the problem of violence against women through advocacy, campaigns, counselling and shelters for abused women (McCleary-Sills *et al*. 2013, Rasool and Suleman 2016, Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Lewis and Cole 2017, Njagi 2017, Magezi and Manzanga 2019), they remain largely under-researched (Le Roux 2015, p. 42). My research fills this gap in FBO studies by assessing the interventions and potential of these organisations in addressing violence against women.

Secondly, this thesis also contributes to FBO studies by assessing how the interventions of FBOs are carried out. Very few studies have explored how faith-based organisations carry out their practices. Most of the literature on FBOs has focused on the definitions and typologies of FBOs, and FBO's role and contribution in social service provision (Sider and Unruh 2004, Jeavons 2004, Hefferan, Adkins and Occhipinti 2009, Bornstein 2005, Clarke 2006, Clarke and Jennings 2008, Bompani 2011, Nishimuko 2008), but the framework and processes that govern their interventions remain largely under-researched. Thus, my study contributes to the body of knowledge by assessing how selected faith-based organisations carry out their interventions in addressing violence against women. Guided by the framework of a rite of passage developed by Arnold van Gennep (1909) and later popularised by Victor Turner (1967), I focus on the transformative nature of rites of passage. I argue that the three stages of a rite of passage, that

is, separation, transition and incorporation, manifest in FBOs' interventions in responding to violence against women.

Thirdly, my study addresses the secularisation thesis that diminished the role of religion in the public sphere (Deneulin and Rakodi, 2012). As the representatives of religion in the public sphere, FBOs have been involved in addressing problems that affect public life (Weiss 2020, p. 2, Chowdhury, Wahab and Islam 2019, 1056, Lunn 2009). My study explores the role that these religious organisations play in responding to social problems such as violence against women. The interventions of FBOs in providing counselling and shelter to abused women, as well as education on violence against women and advocacy around the issue, highlight the involvement of religion and its continued presence in the public sphere.

Lastly, my thesis suggests alternative interventions in addressing violence against women in South Africa. I argue that in a society where laws and policies appear to be ineffective, there is a need to look for different types of interventions in addressing violence against women. The impact of faith-based interventions in responding to violence against women should not be overlooked in a society where the majority ascribes to religion. Hence, the study offers new perspectives of exploring ways in which the problem of violence against women in South Africa can be addressed that go beyond the Domestic Violence Act and other laws and policies, or the responses of secular NGOs.

1.5 Chapter Summary

In the next chapter, I provide a detailed background of the nature of faith-based organisations in general. Chapter Two situates FBOs within a larger context of religion in the public sphere. I argue against the secularisation thesis that undervalues the role of religion in the public sphere, by turning a spotlight on faith-based organisations in social service provision. I highlight how, particularly in Africa, faith-based organisations are instrumental in social service provision

such as healthcare, education and humanitarian aid. The literature reviewed for the purpose of this study suggest that FBOs fill the gap left by the incapacities of governments to provide social services to its citizens. I conclude this chapter by highlighting the role of FBOs, particularly in addressing violence against women. While extensive FBO studies have been carried out in the areas of healthcare, education and humanitarian aid, there remains a dearth in studies that assess the place contributions of FBOs in responding to violence against of women.

Chapter Three, 'Theoretical Framework and Methodology', discusses the theoretical framework that guides this study. I present a detailed understanding of the rite of passage theory developed by Arnold van Gennep (1909) and later popularised by Victor Turner (1967). In the same chapter I present the methodology used in this study. I present the sampling technique I adopted in selecting study sites, the various methods of data collection, and the ethical considerations that were associated with this research.

In Chapter Four, 'Faith Based Organizations Responding to Violence Against Women in Cape Town', I go on to provide a context for the FBOs that address violence against women in Cape Town. I introduce my study sites and outline their backgrounds. I go on to identify these FBOs' specific interventions in responding to violence against women. Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children, which is a Muslim organisation, and St Anne's Homes, a Christian organisation, both provide shelters as well as healing and recovery programmes for women who have experienced abuse. I also document the background of South African Faith & Family Institute (SAFFI), a multifaith organisation that provides education on violence against women for religious leaders and religious communities.

In Chapters Five, Six and Seven, which represent the core of this research, I present my findings and analyse how each of these organisations intervene in addressing violence against women.

Guided by the rite of passage in Chapters Five and Six, I argue that Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children and St Anne's Homes follow the model of the rite of passage in providing shelter and therapy to abused women. I further argue that, as with any rite of passage, women are separated from their familiar environments and brought into seclusion at these shelters. I interpret the period that women stayed at the shelters and were exposed to the teachings and therapy sessions as the transition stage of the rite of passage. I then interpret how women reintegrate back into their communities as the incorporation stage of the rite of passage. I conclude that these FBOs use rite of passage in providing therapy to abused women with the goal of providing transformation from a state of being victims of violence, to a state of healing and emancipation.

In Chapter Seven, I argue that SAFFI also follows the model of a rite of passage in providing education on violence against women to religious leaders and religious communities. I explain why I consider the experiences of religious leaders and religious communities before receiving education on violence against women, as well as how they were selected to be part of SAFFI's programmes, as the separation phase of the rite of passage. I then argue that the training period was the transition stage of the rite of passage. Then, I share the experiences of participants after undergoing SAFFI's programmes as the incorporation phase of a rite of passage. As is the case with rites of passage, I conclude that the SAFFI programmes transformed some of the religious leaders and religious communities from a state of non-involvement in addressing violence against women, to a state of positive engagement.

In Chapter Eight, the last chapter, I provide a synthesis of the whole thesis. I conclude that FBOs that provide shelter to abused women and offer training and education on violence against women to religious leaders and faith communities follow the model of a rite of passage in carrying out their interventions. I conclude that the processes that the FBOs in my study employ in carrying out their interventions transformed the women in the shelters from a state

of abuse to a state of healing and emancipation, while the teaching and trainings provided by the other organisation transformed religious leaders and religious communities from non-involvement to positive engagement in addressing violence against women. I end the thesis by recommending further studies to assess the interventions of FBOs addressing violence against women in other geographical locations, given that this area of study has not been well researched to date.

2 CHAPTER TWO: FAITH-BASED ORGANISATIONS IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I develop a detailed understanding of the nature and role of faith-based organisations (FBOs) in the public sphere. I will begin by locating FBOs within the larger framework of religion in the public sphere. Despite the arguments of secularisation theories that dismiss the role of religion in the public sphere, there is ample evidence that religion continues to be present in public life. The plethora of faith-based organisations globally are one example of the continued presence and the interventions of religion in public life. These organisations have become popular for their provision of social services particularly in Africa, where the capacities of governments do not seem to meet the demands of all citizens. According to Bompani (2011, p.1), FBOs are regarded as the most significant non-state providers of social services and provide more than 50% of education and healthcare services in Sub-Saharan Africa. FBOs have also been instrumental in responding to social problems such as violence against women, but very few studies have focused on this topic.

2.2 Religion in the Public Sphere

'The meaning and place of religion in personal and public life differ from one region to another in the world' (Tayob and Weisse 1988, p. 6). There are three dominant positions on the place and meaning of religion in the public sphere that will be shown. The first position of secularisation which was developed in Europe and later applied to other parts of the world posits that religions will eventually disappear in the public sphere as societies modernise. The second position, which is also popular in Europe, suggests that secularisation has privatised religion but that there has been a resurgence or return of religion in the public sphere. The third

position, which is very popular in Africa, holds that religion has always been part of the public sphere.

The first position is the theory of secularisation that can be traced back to early theorists such as Saint-Simon (1760-1825), Auguste Comte (1798-1857), JG Frazer (1854-1941), Max Weber (1864-1920), Durkheim (1858-1917), Karl Marx (1818-1883) and Sigmund Freud (1856-1939). Comte claimed that religion would disappear with the progression of science (Stark 1999, p. 250). The Frazerian thesis posited that human belief has gone through three stages: magic, religion and science. Frazer assumed that humans would develop from the world of magic to the world of religion, and that religion would be replaced by the world of science (Harrison 2017, p. 51). These positions by early theorists suggested the replacement of religion with modernity, particularly through science. The secularisation thesis assumed that with the coming of modernity, religion would lose its power in society and its influence over individuals (Casanova, 2004; Deneulin and Rakodi, 2011; Aden, 2013). It held that modern societies were based on rationality and these forces of rationality would remove religion from public life (Aden 2013, p.296). Furthermore, it posited that, as a private matter, religion should not affect the public spheres of civil society, political society, or the state (Deneulin and Rakodi, 2012).

In the 20th century, the secularisation thesis was adopted by scholars such as Jürgen Habermas, a German sociologist and philosopher with an interest in the public sphere (Dreyer and Pieterse 2010, p. 1). Habermas later shifted his position on the role of religion in the public sphere. In his most recent view on religion, Habermas dismisses the secularisation thesis as invalid (Habermas, 2003). He proposes a new concept, 'post secularism', to explain the place of religion in contemporary secular societies. Habermas now understands Western societies as post secular societies, where religion continues to exist side by side with secularisation (Habermas 2003, p. 104).

In his 2005 work, Habermas expresses how religious traditions and communities were gaining political importance (Habermas 2005, p. 1). He provides examples of how religious family law has become an alternative or substitute for secular civil law in many Muslim countries. To further validate his argument, Habermas goes on to explain how the liberal constitution of Afghanistan is shaped by the sharia law (religious law) (Habermas 2005, p. 1). In a later publication (Habermas, 2011), Habermas asserts the power of religion in the public sphere and concludes that religious practices and perspectives are key sources of the values that uphold or facilitate multicultural citizenship based on respect and solidarity. Habermas's revised perspective clearly exposes the shortcomings of the secularisation thesis and makes room for the recognition of religion in the public sphere in modern states.

Against some of the core assumptions of the secularisation thesis, the second position holds that religions have not disappeared from the public space (Casanova, 1994). Casanova argues that religions have refused to accept a marginal and privatised role in the public sphere. He calls this phenomenon 'deprivatization', the return of religions to the public sphere (Casanova 1994, p. 5). Agreeing with Casanova, Berger (Berger 1999, p. 2) admits that his early assumption that the world would be secularised is false and mistaken, as the world is as religious as it ever was. Berger speaks of 'desecularisation' to explain the proliferation of religion in the public sphere (Berger 1991, p. 2). Stark (1991, p. 249) likewise noted that the secularisation theory has not been consistent with empirical reality, given the presence and role of religion in secularised states.

Scholars have criticised the secularisation thesis based on empirical evidence of the continued presence of religion in the public sphere. Berger cites examples of the presence of religion in international politics, war, peace, economic development and human rights (Berger, 1999). Aden similarly notes the presence of religion in national and global affairs (Aden, 2013). For Hennessy, 'religion and faith have become key public issues in this century nationally and

globally. As our societies grow more religiously diverse, we grapple with religion as a significant force in public life' (Hennessy 2017,2).

The third position is from post-colonial theorist Talal Asad. Asad has refuted the secularisation thesis from a different perspective. For Asad, religions have always been part and parcel of the public sphere. He provides examples of how religion has been instrumental in the formation of many European national identities, such as that of England, Poland, Ireland and Greece (Asad 1999, p. 178). Asad also speaks of how Zionism and Arab nationalism in the Middle East were influenced by religious histories (Asad 1999, p. 178). Tayob, moreover, highlights Asad's argument that religion was an essential part of the secular culture, a binary opposite without which the latter could not be imagined or defined (Tayob 2018, p. 5). Analysing this Asadian perspective of religion as a necessary part of the secular culture, Tayob concludes that Asad's thesis points to the continued presence of religion in the public sphere (Tayob 2018, p. 5).

In the South African context, there is ample evidence that religion has never disappeared from the public sphere. This is particularly clear from the role religion played and the place it held in both apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa. According to Leatte, 'religion has been so saturated by politics in South Africa's past, and politics so saturated by religion' (Leatte 2017, p. 1). She explains that apartheid South Africa was not secular as it was governed by Christian values (Leatte 2017, p. 27). South Africa provides an example to illustrate how there was little separation between the state and the Dutch Reformed Church. Leatte points to the South African Constitution of 1961, which made explicit reference to how the country was guided by God and governed by 'Christian' values (Leatte 2017, p. 36).

While religion was used to legitimise white rule and segregate black people, religion was also used by the liberation movements in the country to mobilise the public in the Anti-apartheid struggle. Liberation theologians like former Archbishop Desmond Tutu promoted a political

theology of equality. According to this theology, all humans are created equal in the image of God (Leatte, 2017). As summarized by Leatte, 'religion and tradition became grounds on which politics was contested' (Leatte 2017, p. 49). This involvement of religion in the apartheid struggle is a clear example of the persistent presence and role of religion in the South African public sphere.

In 1994, South Africa moved from a Christian political theology of the apartheid and became a secular democracy (Leatte 2007, p. 30). According Leatte, South Africa experienced what she calls 'political secularism.' This meant the separation of religion from the state, but this did not mean the total exclusion or distancing of religion from public life. According to Leatte, in post-apartheid South Africa it is only the institutional power of religion that had changed: '… religion was institutionally excluded from the state but was rhetorically, performatively, included in the project of nation-building...' (Leatte 2017, p. 166). Thus, political secularism is not the absence of religion in public sphere. For Leatte, 'religion, and things that look a lot like religion, continue to be important and visible in South African politics and public life'. Leatte provides examples of the how *sangomas* (diviners) and praise singers are found at inaugurations and public rallies (Leatte 2017, p. 1).

The state in post-apartheid South Africa supports good relations with formal religious groups. The African National Congress and the Constitutional Assembly (the highest court in the country) working with religious groups in drafting a new constitution for post-apartheid South Africa (Tayob 2019, p. 28). Albie Sachs, a member of the African National Congress party who later became a Constitutional Court judge, proposed that there should be cooperation between religion and state (Tayob 2015, p. 122). Leatte points to the presence of religion in politics, highlighting Nelson Mandela's convening of an interfaith National Religious Leaders Forum in 1997 to bring churches closer to the African National Congress party. While the National Religious Leaders Forum acknowledged the separation between religion and the state,

they believed that political and spiritual integrity are closely connected (Leatte 2017, p.160). Another forum, the National Interfaith Leadership Council, was established in 2009. Quite similar to the National Religious Leaders Forum, this organisation regarded itself as a driver of moral upliftment in the public sphere. In a statement issued by the African National Congress party, this council was 'well placed to be the key driver for social education and moral regeneration for sustainable development' (Leatte, Jeannerat and Erlank 2010, p. 9).

Religious leaders were found at inaugurations and public rallies, while political leaders turned to religion. Tayob also showed how Muslims were represented at different levels of the South African government: as ministers, deputy ministers, members of parliament, and councillors (Tayob 2011, p. 21). In his 2018 study, Tayob also highlights the key role that religion plays in state and independent radio stations and television channels (Tayob, 2018). He refers to the presence of religion in the speeches and displays of the South African state. According to Tayob, South African state presidents and various government officials alike invoke religion in state performance (Tayob 2018, p. 6). Jacob Zuma, the former President of South Africa, likened himself to Jesus (Leatte 2017, p. 2). Zuma turned to churches for legitimacy and moral standing in his political battles. He attended the Rhema Church, where he was given an opportunity to campaign for the 2009 elections. Zuma was also declared an 'honorary pastor' at Ntuzuma Full Gospel Community Church. In a speech delivered at his ordination as 'honorary pastor', Zuma urged churches to work closely with the government to transform society (Leatte 2017, p. 164).

Apart from the role of religion in politics, Religious Education in South Africa is another avenue which clearly shows how religions occupy the public sphere (Tayob, 2018). Analyzing the South African Religious Education policy of 2003, Tayob argues that it promotes the representation of religions in the public sphere (Tayob 2018, p. 7). Tayob furthermore notes that it projects a positive disposition towards religions: 'religions are expected to add value to

the social and individual life of learners' and 'are expected to contribute to the moral regeneration of the country' (Tayob 2018, p. 7). An assessment of the place given to religion in the South African Religious Education policy shows not only the presence of religion in the public sphere, but also how religion is perceived and appreciated as contributing to the social and individual moral regeneration.

The examples given above demonstrate that the post-apartheid South African state acknowledges and integrates religion as constitutive of public life, civil society and constitutional policies. While scholars debate 'deprivatisation', 'resurgence' or 'return' of religion in the public sphere, or the 'desecularisation' of religion, religion has always been an important feature of the public sphere in South Africa. The literature shows that the relationship between religion and state in the postcolonial Global South is different from what it is presumably in the West. It is against this background that Tayob proposes the need for more studies and new concepts for studying the state, given that the place of religion in post-colonial societies cannot be easily understood from the experiences of Europe or North America (Tayob 2019, p. 28).

2.3 Faith-Based Organisations

One way of appreciating the role and impact of religion in the Public sphere is the phenomenon of religious organisations or groups called 'faith-based organisations' (FBOs). These organisations have become the most popular representatives of religions in the public sphere, particularly for social welfare provision. Weiss indicated that multilateral and biliteral government agencies recognize that FBOs are key partners to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Weiss 2020, p. 2). In the same vein, Chowdhury and others highlight how FBOs have also been instrumental in providing community welfare in most countries particularly when state interventions seem inadequate or are delayed (Chowdhury,

Wahab and Islam 2019, 1056). FBOs in general have become popular particularly in Africa through providing social welfare services which were previously considered the responsibility of the state. People believe that FBOs work with honesty. Lunn adds that based on this belief, these organisations are trusted over state bodies or other NGOs and religious leaders from these organisations are trusted over government ministers (Lunn 2009, p. 944).

2.3.1 Defining FBOs

Although there is no consensus on the definition of a faith-based organization, the given definitions offer a starting point which helps to clarify what is meant and what is excluded by the term FBO (Ochippinti 2015,334). Bompani understands FBOs as formal organizations engaged in development work, inspired by faith and familiar with the language of secular development (Bompani 2015). Clarke and Ware (2015) agree that FBOs are religiously motivated, non-profit organizations that provide social services. Clarke and Jennings define an FBO as 'any organization that derives inspiration and guidance for its activities from the teachings and principles of a faith or from a particular interpretation or school of thought within a faith' (Clarke and Jennings 2008, p. 6).

Clarke and Jennings produced a much broader definition which includes congregations as FBOs. However, this is problematic for Jeavons (2004) and Bielefeld and Cleveland (2013). Jeavons contends that congregations should never be described as FBOs (Jeavons 2004). Jeavons and Bielefeld and Cleveland argued that congregations are pervasively sectarian in their programs. In this study, I limit the scope of FBOs to religious organizations that resembles a structure a formally registered non-governmental organization with a clear focus and goal of providing social services.

The emergence of the term Faith-Based Organisations in the West can be traced to the time of George W Bush's presidency (2001–2009), during which religious organisations proliferated

in the public sphere with an agenda of promoting social cohesion and the provision of social services (Tomalin 2012, p. 692). Dilger, Burchardt and Van Dijk cite how the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) to respond to the global pandemic of HIV and AIDS generated new opportunities for religious actors in the public sphere (Dilger, Burchardt and Van Dijk 2010, p. 378). The term later became a global phenomenon.

In Arab countries, FBOs proliferated earlier in the 1990s. On the one hand, FBOs emerged in response to political reform and economic liberalisation (Clarke, 2006). On the other hand, FBOs were a response to state fragility or collapsed states in countries such as Somalia and Palestine (Clarke, 2006). Clarke also highlights the growth of political Islam as another factor that influenced the proliferation of FBOs in Arab countries. Clarke concluded that in developing countries, FBOs came to prominence as a result of economic neoliberalism as faith groups responded to growing poverty, inequality and social exclusion (Clarke, 2006). Whilst Hefferan, Adkins and Occhipinti and others agree with Clarke that FBOs increased prominence in an era of global poverty (Hefferan, Adkins and Occhipinti, 2009), they add that these organisations filled the gap caused by state neglect (Hefferan, Adkins and Occhipinti, 2009). Bompani and Frahm-Arp as well as Lunn agree that FBOs pick up the slack on the failure or incapacity of governments to provide adequate social services (Bompani and Frahm-Arp, 2010, p.5, Lunn 2009, p. 944). FBOs are popular providers of social services where states often fail to meet the demands of their citizens; a dynamic that has been driven, among others, by the introduction of neoliberal reforms from the mid-1980s to early 1990s onwards.

2.3.2 Faith Based Organisations in Africa

FBOs have gained prominence in Africa by filling the gap caused by the incapacities of some governments to deliver social services. Tomalin notes how the term FBO is considered by some to be problematic for being Western in origin and having Christian connotations (Tomalin, 2012). She indicates how some organisations avoid the term based on the complexities

associated with the issue of faith. According to her, some prefer not to use the label FBOs as they feel that this label prevents them from obtaining international donor funding (Tomalin2012, p. 694). Nevertheless, many organisations in Africa with a religious ethos and an agenda in social service delivery continue to be reputed and self-identify as FBOs.

FBOs are instrumental in the provision of social services in Africa (Bompani and Frahm Arp, 2010; Bompani, 2011; Olarinmoye, 2012). Bompani stresses that FBOs remain a critical source of welfare in Africa and are regarded as the most significant non-governmental providers of basic social services to disadvantaged groups (Bompani, 2011). About half of the health care services and education in Africa are provided by faith-based organisations (Bompani 2011, p. 1). Bompani adds that around early 2000, the Catholic Church provided more antiretroviral drugs than the South African government (Bompani, 2011). In the same vein, Patterson also notes that the churches' response to HIV and AIDS involved a collective action among church leaders, congregants, and/or community members to develop programmes such as home-based care, HIV awareness campaigns, congregation-based support groups for people living with HIV, and the distribution of anti-retroviral treatment (ART) at mission hospitals. In all these regards, the Catholic Church acquired a dominant position towards the Zambian state (Patterson 2010). Weiss shows that Muslim FBOs are a growing feature in the public sphere in Sub Saharan Africa (Weiss 2020, p. 1). Such work of FBOs reflect how these organizations are an important part of public life.

2.3.3 FBO-State Relations in Africa

Although FBOs are registered as non-governmental organisations, they collaborate and partner with governments to provide social services. However, it is crucial to know that the form of relationship between FBOs and the state is context specific and influenced by the level of involvement of the organisation in social welfare (Crisp, 2014). In some instances, the relationship between FBOs and the government is complementary and characterised by

cooperation, while in others there is hostility and a degree of mistrust between these parties (Owouche 2015, p. 1).

Most FBOs in South Africa are formally recognised and registered with the South African government under the Non-profit Organisations Act 71 of 1997. According to the Act, the state has a responsibility to promote and support non-profit organisations (including FBOs): '…within the limits prescribed by the law, every organ of state must determine and co-ordinate the implementation of its policies and measures in a manner designed to promote, support and enhance the capacity of non-profit organisations to perform their functions' (Non-Profit Organisations Act 1997, p. 5). This policy shows some form of collaboration between the state and FBOs. Bratton interprets organisations' registration and policies as a strategy of the government to control and monitor the number and activities of these organisations in the country (Bratton 1989, p.577). In contrast, Rabe interprets FBOs' registration with the government as a strategy some FBOs use to benefit from state funding and gain legitimacy in order to attract donors (Rabe, 2018).

Van der Merwe, Swart and Hendricks indicate how the government expects FBOs to contribute to social welfare in fighting poverty as well as HIV and AIDS in countries such as South Africa (Van der Merwe, Swart and Hendricks 2009, p. 129). Dixon (2016) likewise notes that the South African state shares the responsibility of welfare service provision with private organisations such as FBOs (Dixon 2016). Such expectations suggest a partnership between the state and FBOs. The South African Government White Paper or Social Welfare policy recognises FBOs as partners (Van der Merwe, Swart and Hendriks 2009, p. 133). Van der Merwe and others also note how the purpose of such a policy is to promote and strengthen the partnership between the state and non-state organisations (including FBOs). In bringing out the interaction between the state and Islamic FBOs, Sadouni showed how they cooperated with

each other in poverty alleviation, awareness of HIV/AIDS in schools and in communities and distribution of aid (Sadouni 2012, p. 46).

The state's provision of funds to FBOs is another factor that indicates a cordial relationship between governments and FBOs. Whyle and Olivier have highlighted how several faith-based healthcare providers in sub-Saharan Africa receive funds from their respective governments and ministries of health (Whyle and Olivier 2017, p. 685). This dependence sometimes has a huge impact on how the programmes of the FBOs are structured. Van der Merwe, Swart and Hendricks have shown how some FBOs are sometimes forced to structure their programmes in line with the religious-neutral social welfare agendas of the state rather than their own religious values (Van der Merwe, Swart and Hendricks 2009,136). In the same vein, Sadouni adds that such close relationship with the state as well the financial dependence of some non-governmental organisations with the state led political scientists to describe dependent NGOs as Governmental Non-Governmental Organizations (Sadouni 2012, p. 47). These dynamics reflect unequal power relations between the state and the NGOs that receive government subsidies.

Relations between the state and FBOs are not always cordial. They are sometimes characterised with hostility and mistrust. There is often a lack of trust between governments and entire non-profit sectors. Sometimes these organisations are suspected of having other agendas beyond social service provision. Thus, they are often closely monitored. Olarinmoye highlights how many FBOs in Africa are treated with caution because of fear of the 'immense capacity of religion to mobilise and constitute by and in itself an independent and legitimate arena of political action possibly in opposition to the state' (Olarinmoye 2012, p. 2). Thus, despite many states' incapacity to provide social services, they regard themselves as the legitimate controllers of the public sphere and prefer that FBOs and other non-governmental organisations play an auxiliary role.

In a study on FBOs in Tanzania, Mallya refers to the relationship between the government and FBOs as ambivalent. According to Mallya, the government uses FBOs when they can fill the political gap of service delivery and resources. But, when FBOs are unable to deliver these services, the government immediately limits their sphere of influence (Mallya 2010). In a similar vein, Skinner notes that sometimes there is no basis for cooperation between Muslim FBOs and the governments in Ghana, The Gambia and Sierre Leone. Skinner argues that 'Muslim NGOs are interested in expanding their own development agendas which are not always related to that of the government, nor do they always work in consultation with government bodies' (Skinner 2010).

Owuoche (2015) discusses the relationship between the Kenyan government and FBOs from the colonial to post-colonial era. Relations between the government and FBOs were characterised by hostility sometimes and cooperation at other times. This was largely influenced by the political eras and the governments in power. During the colonial era, from 1884 to 1968, and during the reign of President Jomo Kenyatta, relations between the state and FBOs were cordial. From 1978 to 2002, when President Daniel Arap Moi came into power, the relations between the state and FBOs became hostile. This was largely influenced by the FBOs' open criticism of the state's governance. From 2002 to 2013, in the era of President Mwai Kibaki, the relations between FBOs and the state shifted again, this time from hostility to cooperative participation. One of the reasons was that the new government realized that FBOs played an important part in the country's transition to a more democratic political era. The state had also realized how interwoven FBOs are with the fabric of the country's national life (Owuoche 2015, p. 7). Owuoche therefore concludes that FBO-state relations fluctuate between cooperation and conflict depending on the political situation at hand (Owuoche 2015, p.10).

Focusing on Muslim FBOs, Weiss highlighted how some are accused of supporting militant movements. He adds that Muslim FBOs are confronted with increasing lack of trust after 9/11. Weiss adds that some Muslim FBOs are identified as potential supporters of Al-Qaeda and ISIS (Weiss 2020, p. 9). Chowdhury and others also indicated how Muslim FBOs are sometimes accused of being agents of spreading political Islam by helping with material aid (Chowdhury, Wahab and Islam 2019, p. 1064). Chowdhury and others also give an example of how some Christian FBOs were suspected of having a hidden agenda of Christian evangelism in the name of humanitarian aid and welfare services (Chowdhury, Wahab and Islam 2019, p. 1064).

On the basis of existing studies, then, state-FBO relations are complex. On one end there is cooperation and partnership in social service provision, while on the other end there is some degree of mistrust. The presence of FBOs is sometimes politicized, by governments, international organizations, and FBOs themselves. Governments look out for any hidden agenda other than the provision of social services that FBOs might have. Thus, the activities of FBOs are sometimes closely monitored and controlled by the governments. But FBOs continue to be respected by communities and often also by governments and other development organizations as one of the major non-state providers of social welfare services in Africa. These organizations are believed to work of the public good and they are believed to be more sensitive to people in times of chaos or conflicts (Lunn 2009, p. 944).

2.3.4 African FBOs and Social Service Provision

As mentioned earlier, FBOs in Africa are popular for delivering humanitarian aid, healthcare and education services (Bompani, 2011; Kagawa, Anglemyer and Montagu, 2012; Saynaam, 1991; Bornstein, 2002; Nishimuko 2008, 2009; Shizha and Kariwo, 2012). Dilger and Schulz highlighted the central role faith-based schools have always played in the provision of education both in colonial and post-colonial times. These scholars also indicated how FBOs in

the education sector are gaining new social and political significance in most African countries (Dilger and Schulz 2013, p. 365). In countries such as Sierre Leone, 90% of primary education is provided by FBOs. According to Nishimuko, FBOs' provision of primary education in Sierre Leone supplements government's efforts. Nishimuko adds that the collaboration among FBOs, NGOs and the government has made progress towards achieving education for all in Sierre Leone (Nishimuko, 2009, p. 281).

Missionary FBOs have a long history in the provision of education in Africa (Saayman 1991, Bornstein 2002). Fourie and Swanepoel highlight the significance of the establishment of mission stations in the development of education in South Africa (Fourie and Swanepoel 2015). According to Shizha and Kariwo, first formal education in Zimbabwe was provided by missionaries (Shizha and Kariwo 2012). Shizha and Kariwo add that mission schools provided education to black Africans while the government provided education for white children (Shizha and Kariwo 2012). To date, the majority of the secondary schools in Zimbabwe are school established by missionaries. In Nigeria, formal education was also introduced by missionaries. Metz indicates that the first schools in Nigeria were established by the Methodist missionaries, Anglican and Catholic missionaries (Metz 2002). Although the missionaries are criticized that they established schools to spread Christianity in Africa (Lewis and Steyn 2003, 103), their contribution to education should not be overlooked. Missionary established schools remain the major non-state providers of education in most African countries to date. Though Islamic organizations have also been providing education in Africa (Shah 2012, Davids 2019). Dilger and Schulz note how Muslim schools are among the faith-based schools that have played a central in education in both colonial and post-colonial settings in Africa (Dilger and Schulz 2013). Apart from primary and secondary schools, Lo and Haron highlighted the contribution of Muslim Institutions of Higher Learning in providing education and training for many people across Africa (Lo and Haron 2016).

FBOs are also instrumental in the provision of health care in Africa. Studies indicated FBOs provide 50% of health care services in Africa (Bompani 2011). While other studies indicated FBOs provides up to 70% of the health care in Africa (Kagawa *et al* 2012). In addition, Dilger highlights the involvement of FBOs in the health care system of urban Tanzania (Dilger 2014). For Dilger, both Muslim organizations and neo-Pentecostal churches have been involved in the provision of health services in Tanzania through hospitals, health centres, and mobile clinics (Dilger 2014). In the same vein, Olivier and others point out the centrality of faith-based health care services in Sub-Saharan Africa. In particular, the Salvation Army church provides health services in 124 countries through 73 hospitals, 56 Specialist clinics, 135 health centres and 64 mobile clinics (Olivier *et al* 2015). These figures thus signify a central role that FBOs play in delivering health care services.

Apart from providing healthcare and education, FBOs are also well known as providers of humanitarian aid in Africa. Some of these organisations include World Vision International and Christian Care Ministry, both of which were instrumental in responding to rural poverty in Zimbabwe (Bornstein 2005, p. 7). Khan give examples of Muslim FBOs in South Africa that emerged with a humanitarian agenda. These include the Gift of the Givers Foundation and Crescent of Hope which were both founded in 1992, and Islamic Relief South Africa, which was founded in 1994. These organisations provide charity in the form of clothing and blankets, feeding schemes and food hampers (Khan, 2011). Sadouni adds how Gift of Givers and South African National Zakah Fund (SANZAF) both cooperate with the government in their social and economic activities (Sadouni 2012, p. 46). All these examples show the importance of charitable FBOs in providing humanitarian aid to disadvantaged communities in Africa.

However, FBOs are sometimes critiqued for poor services. Scholars indicate that in some locations, services of faith-based health facilities tend to be lacking in quality. In some cases, faith-based facilities are associated with weak governance. For example, managers are hired

based on being devoted Christians rather than on merit as qualified health facility managers (Olivier et al 2015). It is against this background that Olivier and others propose the need for more improved data to provide support at management and policy level in faith-based health care facilities (Olivier *et al* 2015).

Kabonga also problematizes donor aid as some form of a syndrome that creates dependency. Humanitarian FBOs are criticized for hidden agendas beyond providing aid. Miller and Rivera conclude that in the era of religious identity politics, some humanitarian work provides a morally acceptable platform for FBOs to pursue their religious objectives (Miller and Rivera 2011). While I acknowledge this critical assessment of FBOs, these organizations play a significant role in providing aid in most African countries.

2.3.5 FBOs and Violence Against Women

FBOs' involvement in healthcare, education, and humanitarian aid are the areas of social welfare provision that have made FBOs popular and received attention in FBO literature. However, there are several FBOs in Africa that have also been responding to other social problems. Despite the contributions of such FBOs in responding to violence against women, for example, the work of these organisations remains largely under-researched. In the section to follow, I provide a review of the few studies available on FBOs and violence against women.

Several FBOs play a major role in responding to violence against women. In a 2015 study, Le Roux and others highlighted that a report mapping faith-based responses to violence against women and girls in Asia-Pacific region identified fifty-eight FBOs responding to violence against women. According to the report, this number represented a small portion working on violence against women in the region (Le Roux *et al* 2016, p. 23). Findings of my preliminary research showed that there are several FBOs that address violence against women in Africa

and South Africa. However, there is no scholarly research on how these organizations do their work.

According to Le Roux, ‘evidence for faith-based sexual- and gender-based violence prevention and response is lacking, little or weak’ (Le Roux 2015, p. 42). She thinks that this is because the work of FBOs is not systematic and programmatic. She further argues that another reason for the dearth of studies on FBOs in relation to violence against women is the lack of funding for such research. She says that funding is directed towards the implementation of gender-based violence programmes rather than research on these programmes (Le Roux 2015, p. 42).

Nevertheless, there are studies that have offered some insights on what is being done. Accorrding to Khallaf-Elledge, religious actors have raised awareness on the prevalence and consequences of violence against women. They used religious teachings and texts to highlight the negative impact of violence against women (Khallaf-Elledge 2021). Khallaf-Elledge also adds that religious leaders have also supported the banning of early and forced marriages as well as female genital mutilation She gave examples of how religious leaders in India, Somalia, Tanzania and Ethiopia encouraged fellow religious actors to preach about prevention of child marriages and female genital mutilation in their congregations. Somali and Mauritanian Islamic scholars issued *fatwas* (an interpretation of Islamic law given by qualified legal scholar) against such practices (Khallaf-Elledge 2021).

Magezi and Manzanga document the responses of the church in addressing violence against women. They highlight an example of the Anglican Diocese of Manicaland Province in Zimbabwe that launched a campaign for reinterpreting scriptures that seemed to promote violence against women. Another purpose of the campaign was to open dialogue between men and women on issues of violence against women (Magezi and Manzanga 2019, p. 5). Magezi and Manzanga show that the church assists pastors to interpret texts in life giving and mutually

respectful ways. The church offers pastoral counselling training to equip pastors with the capacity to handle sensitive gender-based violence issues (Magezi and Manzanga 2019, p. 5).

Some Muslim communities in Johannesburg have also responded to the challenge of violence against women. According to Rasool and Suleman, Muslim religious leaders have responded to the problem of violence against women. They have started to speak out against abuse of women in the public domain. To substantiate their argument, these scholars cite the speech of Sheykh Ebrahim Bham in Johannesburg who said that gender-based violence goes against Islamic jurisprudence values (Rasool and Suleman 2016, p. 44). Rasool and Suleman also cite the intervention of the Jamiatal Ulama through suggested sermon material on its website on domestic violence ('How do l stop violence against women and children?) (Rasool and Suleman 2016, p. 44). These examples reflect how one Muslim community in South Africa has responded to the challenge of violence against women.

In addition to religious pronouncements, several other Muslim organizations in South Africa have been responding to the problem of violence against women. For instance, Islamic Careline offers counselling, play therapy and trauma debrief for victims of violence (Hassem 2008, p. 43). Rasool and Suleman notes that the needs of Muslim women who escaped abusive relationships motivated the establishment of shelters for abused women that cater for the dietary and needs of Muslim women. These organizations include Kenilworth Respite Centre and Baytul Noor organisation in KwaZulu Natal, Islamic Resources Foundation of Southern Africa in Cape Town (now Ihata Shelter for abused women) and Nissa Institute for Women Development in Johannesburg (Rasool and Suleman 2016, p. 43).

In a 2017 study, Njagi examines the role played by four FBOs in curbing violence against women in Nairobi, Kenya (Njagi, 2017). According to Njagi, the Circle of Concerned African Women Theologians (The Circle) is an ecumenical or interfaith body of African women

theologians who come together as women of faith to reflect on their experiences of religion, culture, politics and socio-economic structures in Africa (Njagi 2017, p. 44). Chitando and Chirongoma also indicate that the Circle has been consistent in its call for justice in the face of violence against women and HIV/AIDS (Chitando and Chirongoma 2013, p. 10). According Njagi, the Circle responds to gender-based violence by publishing books and journal articles on religion, culture and violence. She adds that the Circle names, challenges and condemns the teaching of cultural practices and values that are oppressive to women. This FBO believes that challenging patriarchy will reduce violence against women. Among the examples of feminist theologians is Teresa Okure who advocates for the reinterpretation of biblical texts that seem to oppress women. Njagi also cites the example of feminist theologian Musimbi Kanyoro who challenges harmful cultural practices and values that are oppressive to women (Njagi 2017, p. 47). The aim of these publications, says Njagi (2017, p. 49), is to raise awareness and get members from different communities to fight gender-based violence. Apart from research and publications, the Circle has made efforts to introduce compulsory gender studies in some universities (such as St Paul's University in Kenya). Pastors who have studied at such a university are then equipped to challenge gender-based violence (Njagi, 2017).

The Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa (FECCLAHA) is another example Njagi cited of an FBO involved in the issue of violence against women. FECCLAHA is a council of churches from several African countries whose aim is to promote peace and harmony in communities. FECCLAHA responded to violence against women through a campaign called the Tamar Campaign, which was aimed at breaking the silence on gender-based violence. The campaign was derived from the biblical story of Tamar who was raped by her half-brother. According to the story, Tamar was tricked and raped by her half-brother but found the courage to speak out about the rape. The story portrays Tamar as a symbol of strength. Njagi explains that this story is used to encourage individuals to speak

up in communities where many people are fearful of speaking up and challenging sexual crimes. FECCLAHA uses other biblical stories to address and challenge violence against women (Njagi 2017, p. 58).

The third FBO Njagi pointed out is the Muslim Advocacy Network Against Domestic Violence (MANADV) which addresses domestic violence against women in Muslim communities in Kenya. MANADV addresses violence against women by bringing together legal and health professionals, activists, researchers and community-based organisations to strengthen advocacy, dialogue and collaboration in responding to gender-based violence (Njagi 2017, p. 60). Through this network, stakeholders share ideas, exchange knowledge and strategize about interventions and prevention of gender-based violence. Njagi also indicated in her study that this network empowers survivors (Njagi 2017, p. 60).

The fourth organisation that Njagi cited as an FBO that responded to violence against women is Amani Communities Africa (ACA). This organisation was founded by a group of women lawyers in their quest for peace, justice and equity. The ACA promotes peace, non-violence and respect of the legal and human rights of women (Njagi 2017, p. 60). ACA responds to violence against women through advocacy. The ACA sensitizes communities to the harmful cultural practices such as female genital mutilation, wife inheritance and ritual cleansing (Njagi 2017, p. 177). The ACA plays a central role in reducing gender-based violence by providing shelter to young girls who run away from harmful cultural practices (Njagi 2017, p. 181). Based on the findings of her study on these four organisations, Njagi concludes that faith-based organizations hold great potential for the prevention of gender-based violence as well as for providing care and support to victims of such violence (Njagi, 2017).

In their 2013 study, McCleary-Sills and others also highlight the contribution of FBOs in responding to violence against women in Tanzania. They discuss different services that existed

for survivors of violence against women in selected districts of Dar es Salaam, Iringa and Mbeya in the country. Their study identified FBOs as one of the key services providers to survivors of violence against women (McCleary-Sills *et al.* 2013, p. 11). These FBOs in Tanzania are known for offering advice and counselling to survivors of violence against women (McCleary-Sills *et al*. 2013, p. 30).

Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Lewis and Cole (2017) explain the work of a Christian organisation named Tearfund in preventing gender-based violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Tearfund criticizes that many gender-based violence interventions tend to focus only on women's rights and the survivors of gender-based violence. Tearfund believes that interventions should also be engaging men and boys, who are the main perpetrators of violence against women. The FBO implemented a programme that focuses on engaging men in addressing violence against women. Tearfund believes that religious teachings also influence expectations of masculinity and manhood. They add that some of these teachings are based on the misinterpretation of biblical texts which regard men as superior to women. Such misinterpretations lead to inequalities which result in violence against women (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Lewis and Cole 2017, p. 140). Tearfund's intervention thus focuses on grooming men and boys to be non-violent and to be men who promote equality between the sexes. Tearfund aims to promote 'positive masculinities' based on models of manhood that accept the concept of equality between men and women. Their intervention redefines constructions of masculinities as dominant, which are accepted as the norm. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Lewis and Cole highlight another strategy Tearfund uses to promote positive masculinities: retraining religious leaders to interpret biblical texts in a manner that show equality between men and women (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Lewis and Cole 2017, p. 140).

While some studies argue that religious teachings and scriptures promote patriarchal values and perpetuate violence against women (Rakoczy 2004, Rwafa 2016), and some studies

conclude that religious communities are not well equipped to respond to the problem of violence against women in a way that is safe for women (Pyles 2007, p. 281), the above studies clearly documented that several FBOs in Africa concern themselves with the scourge of violence against women. Many of the studies point to the task of re-examining religious texts and teachings that seem to be promoting gender-based violence. Others advocate teachings that are not well known. On a practical level, the FBOs offer shelter to victims of abuse. Building on these studies, my study will be closely examining the interventions of the FBOs. It will show that FBOs offer victims of gender-based violence a rite of passage that promises to transforms them from one state to another.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the place of religion in the public sphere. Although the secularisation theory predicted the demise of religion in the public sphere as societies modernise, the continued presence of religion in the public spheres of politics, international relations, and social services, among others, clearly showed otherwise. Contrary to the secularisation experience of Europe, where religion was separated from the public sphere, I have shown how religion has been a persistent part of the public life, civil society and constitutional policies in post-apartheid South Africa. I pointed out that FBOs which are religiously motivated organisations have become the most common representatives of religion in the public sphere. FBOs have gained much prominence in Africa as non-state providers of social services, especially where states lack the capacity or are unwilling to provide these services. The involvement of such FBOs in delivering social services that are the primary responsibility or mandate of the state suggests some form of relationship between FBOs and the state. The FBO-state relationship can sometimes be ambiguous. The presence of FBOs is sometimes politicized and their agenda and operations are closely monitored by the state as the

latter regards itself as the legitimate controller of the public sphere. Despite this, FBOs continue to be respected as the main non-state providers of social services.

FBOs, in some instances, do deliver more social services than governments. These organisations are mostly known for providing social services such as healthcare, education and humanitarian aid. However, FBOs have also been noted to respond to social problems such as violence against women. They have responded through education and training programmes on violence against women, as well as advocacy and the establishment of shelters that provide refuge and therapy to female survivors of violence. Very few studies have focused on how FBOs intervene in the lives of the victims. There is a great need for more studies that assess the nature and work of FBOs in responding to violence against women. My research begins to fill this gap in the literature by presenting and assessing the ways in which three FBOs in Cape Town implement their interventions in addressing this issue.

Having provided a broader framework of religion in the public sphere through the work of FBOs, in the next chapter I turn to discussing the theoretical lens that guided my analysis of the ways in which the three faith-based organisations carried out their interventions. I adopted the rite of passage theory to understand the processes that each of my study sites adopted in responding to violence against women. I also discuss the methodology I used in this research.

3 CHAPTER THREE: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the theoretical framework I adopted to understand how FBOs intervene in violence against women. I adopted the rite of passage theory as the theoretical lens that guided my analysis. In this chapter I also describe the research process that I followed. I explain the research type, study population, methods of data collection and ethical issues that I observed in this research.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

While this research is located within the broader framework of religion in the public sphere as discussed in the previous chapter, I adopted the rite of passage theory to specifically understand the interventions of three faith-based organisations in public life. I was not only interested in the interventions of the FBO's in public debates and deliberations, but the way they were engaged with victims of GBV in their practices.

The rite of passage or *rite de passage* theory was first promulgated by French ethnographer Arnold van Gennep and later developed by a British cultural anthropologist, Victor Turner. Van Gennep understands a rite of passage as a system of transformation which consists of three stages: separation, transition and reincorporation (Gennep 1960, p. 1). According to Van Gennep, rites of passage 'accompany every change in place, state, social position and age' (Van Gennep 1960, p. 1). Human life is in constant motion.:

> For groups, as well as individuals, life itself means to separate and to be united, to change form and condition, to die and to be reborn. It is in fact to cease, wait, rest then begin acting again but in a different way (Van Gennep 1960, p.189).

According to van Gennep, rites of passage mark transformation or change. They mark the before and after, and their effect is to transform individuals who go through them. Well known examples of rites of passage in cultural and religious traditions include birth, puberty, the transition from childhood to adulthood and marriage. Pilgrimages is another example of a rite of passage particularly prominent in religious traditions.

In his extensive development of van Gennep's theoretical frame, Victor Turner sees pilgrimages as a network of processes that involve a journey to and from a particular structure (Turner 1975,189). Turner adds that spatial separation from the familiar and habitual environment in different rites of passage have purificatory, instructional, therapeutic, and transformative aspects (1975, 196). Turner did extensive work on different rites of passage among the Ndembu of Zambia. Some of the rites of passage he studied included circumcision rites and chief installation rites. In the sections that follow, I discuss the processes in each of the three stages of a rite of passage in greater detail. This discussion will show the value of this theory for the data that I collected on FBO practices in later chapters.

3.2.1 Separation Stage

Separation, which Van Gennep also calls the preliminal stage, is the first stage of a rite of passage. In the separation phase, one is alienated from one's everyday life or location. One feels disconnected from one's previous place and position. Van Gennep explains that the separation phase takes individuals away from their previous world so that they may become attached to the members of society that they are joining (Van Gennep, 1960). Turner uses religious studies language to explain the separation phase. He says that it consists of symbolic behaviour that shows detachment from a previous social structure (Turner 1969, p. 94). For example, Turners shows in the *Mukanda* circumcision rite among the Ndembu people of Zambia that boys remove their secular clothing when they pass through a gateway. They are

also conferred a common name, '*mwadyi'* which means novice. (Turner 1969, p. 108). Turners emphasizes the symbolic dimension of the practices.

In some rites of passage, Turners sees separation as a symbolic death. He explains the separation process in tribal initiation rites as death:

> The initiand may be buried, forced to lie motionless in the posture and direction of customary burial, may be stained black, or may be forced to live for a while in the company of masked and monstrous mummers representing, inter alia, the dead (Turner 1967, p. 96).

In another example, the circumcision rites among the Ndembu of Zambia metaphorically kills the boy's childhood state and prepares him for manhood (Turner 1967, p. 96). Another good example of separation in a rite of passage as death can be seen in the installation rites of chief Kanongesha, a senior chieftainship among the Ndembu. According to Turner, the rite begins by the building of a smaller hut of leaves about a mile from the capital village. In this separation ritual, the chief elect, together with his senior wife clothed in ragged waistcloth are called by the ritual leader to enter the small hut just after sundown (Turner 1969, p. 100). This marks the separation of the chief elect from his everyday environment to a secluded place of initiation. Significantly, the hut is called *kafu* or *kafwi* which is derived from the Ndembu word *ku-fwa* which literally means 'to die.' This symbolizes a place where the chief-elect dies from his earlier common state (Turner 1969, p. 100). These practices in the separation phase are highly symbolic, representing dying to an earlier stage of life as one prepares to enter another.

In a rite of passage, then, the separation phase is characterized by alienating the ritual participant from the everyday environment and going to a secluded place. This stage in the rite of passage involves stripping off a status or position from the past. In many cases, symbols of death are employed to represent this separation from the past. Given that the FBOs are

committed to help women and communities against gender-based violence, the separation phase of death offers a vivid model for their practices.

3.2.2 Transition Stage

The transition stage is the second phase of a rite of passage. This is a crucial phase in the rite of passage where ritual participants are prepared for their new life. Van Gennep and Turner provide key insights on what constitutes a transition phase in religious and cultural contexts. I will begin with van Gennep but focus on Turner for providing the major features evident in the transition phases. These features will be shown in FBO interventions in subsequent chapters.

Van Gennep calls this stage the liminal phase. During this stage, attention is placed on the transition. If the first phase symbolized death, this phase draws on the idea of being born, learning, growing, entering adulthood or recovering. The verbal nouns used by van Gennep indicate that the transition phase is under construction. Van Gennep characterizes the transition stage as a phase where initiands wander between two worlds (Van Gennep, 1960).

Following Gennep, Turner calls the transition stage the 'betwixt and between' (Turner 1969, p. 359). During this stage, initiands are neither here nor there. It is a period where an initiand has separated from the previous stage but has not yet entered the new state or has not yet received a new identity. Giving an example of initiation or puberty rites, Turner recognizes the symbolism of having nothing in the transition phase. Initiands may go naked to show that they have no status or property that show rank or status in the cultural system to which they belong (Turner 1969, p. 95). Not having rank or status is translated as complete equality during the transition phase. The initiands in transition are like each other, irrespective of their status before and the status they would hold later.

Furthermore, the relationship between ritual leaders who conduct the rite of passage and the initiands is that of total authority. Initiands submit to the authority of ritual leaders and obey all instructions (Turner 1969, p. 95). Turner illustrates this submission by showing how initiands sometimes accept arbitrary punishment without complaint (Turner 1969, p. 95). Initiands face ordeals and humiliations during the transition stage:

> … the ordeals, and humiliations that the initiands face partly represent a destruction of the previous status and partly a tempering of their essence to prepare them to cope with their new responsibilities and restrain them in advance from abusing their new privileges (Turner 1969, p. 102).

For example, during the initiation rites of chief Kanoshenga among the Ndembu, the chief elect sits silently with downcast head showing patience and humility. The chief elect is treated just like a slave the night before succession (Turner 1969, p. 101).

The authority of the ritual leaders is illustrated by the rules laid down for the transition phase. Rules of the everyday social structure do not apply in the transition phase, and another set of rules applies. Following rules laid out by the ritual leaders is a key feature of the transition stage of a rite of passage. For instance, the place of initiation is only accessible to initiands and ritual leaders. Thus, the Mukanda circumcision lodge in the bush is off-limits to everyone except certain ritual officiants and male kin (Bell 2009, p. 53). Eidse also describes certain rules and taboos that initiands of the Mukanda rite of passage among the Lunda and Chokwe people in the liminal phase. Some of these rules include avoiding contact with fire, avoiding touching sharp objects and abstaining from certain foods (Eidse 2015, p. 52). In addition, there are also rules that govern the installation rite of chief Kanongesha among the Ndembu. For example, the chief elect is supposed to refrain from sex before the installation rites. Another rule that governs this installation rite has to do with the wood that is used to put fire in the

initiation hut where the rituals are conducted. This wood must not be chopped by an axe but must be found lying on the ground to resemble that it is a product of earth, and not human made (Turner 1969, p. 100).

Initiands in rites of passages are also expected to follow a prescribed order in ritual activities. For example, as explained by Turner, during the installation rites of chief Kanoshenga of the Ndembu people, the chief elect and his wife sit crouched in a posture of shame and modesty while they are washed with medicines (Turner 1969, p. 100). Similarly, the Mukanda boys' rite of passage also follow a specific order of practices. On the day before circumcision, ritual leaders collect strengthening medicine, and offer prayers to the ancestors of the village. On the same night, the community conducts a night ritual dance which is led by the parents of the initiands. On the day of circumcision, the boys begin with a ritual of washing with medicines, eat their meal and proceed to the circumcision site. After the circumcision, the ritual leaders conduct another ritual washing and initiands will have another meal (Turner 1967, p. 186). In each case, order and form are emphasized.

There are tangible benefits in accepting the authority of ritual leaders and following their order and rules. Initiands in the liminal phase enjoy and cultivate a spirit of comradeship. A spirit of togetherness pervades the stage. In addition, they acquire knowledge for their future after the rite of passage. Liminality includes access to knowledge that was previously hidden or unknown (Turner 1969, p. 359). In the Mukanda male circumcision rites among the Ndembu of Zambia, boys receive teachings and instructions to prepare them for the responsibilities of manhood (Turner, 1967). In *Chisungu* girls' initiation rites among the Bemba of Zambia, girls were taught about sex and responsibilities of motherhood. These girls learn about womanhood through symbolic actions, dance and allegorical riddle singing (Richards, 1957). During the installation rites of chief Kanongesha among the Ndembu, the chief elect is instructed on appropriate leadership. For example, the chief elect is instructed to put aside anger, adultery

and selfishness. He is also instructed to refrain from preparing witchcraft medicines and abstain from witchcraft. The chief elect is also instructed not to kill people. In summary he is taught moral values that a chief is expected to follow (Turner 1969,101). These examples show the central importance and value of comradeship, and knowledge acquisition during the transition stage of a rite of passage. This epistemological value of the transition phases has been found repeatedly in religious rituals.

The liminal phase has been identified by van Gennep and Turner as the important in-between phase of life before and after the rite of passage. Closer attention to the transition phase in rites of passage that I have discussed above has suggested that it includes a suspension of the previous order and the creation of a new one. The phase is characterized by the total authority of ritual leaders, which implies submission to sometimes arbitrary rules. But the transition phase offers initiands a camaraderie among themselves and access to knowledge and values that were previously denied to them in their life before the rite of passage. I will be showing in my study how the practices of the FBOs created a similar transition phase for victims of violence.

3.2.3 Incorporation Stage

Incorporation is the new state of the individuals who went through transition. Some rites of passage are clearly marked with ceremonies (Turner 1969, p. 359). In this phase, people who have experienced liminality in the transition phase are declared ready to return to their everyday communities and embrace the responsibility and commitment that comes with the new status or position (Van Gennep, 1960).

In Mukanda rites of passage, the incorporation stage of the rite is when the circumcised initiands return from seclusion and reintegrate into their communities. While the initiands were separated from their communities as boys, they return with a new status as men. This is marked

by a communal celebration that acknowledges the change of status from boys to men (Bell 1997, p. 53). Turner found that the incorporation of boys among the Ndembu is called *kwidisha* meaning, 'the rite of return'. Rites of return include the burning of the circumcision lodge the boys stayed in during the transition period. The ritual leaders also carry out the final purification ritual in which they give their final speech. The process ends with a dance ceremony and celebration of the new state of the initiands as men (Turner 1967, p. 186).

The incorporation phase of boys' circumcision rite of passage has been studied among the Lunda and Chokwe people. Slightly different from the Ndembu, the initiands and ritual leaders move to the village centre while dancing, playing drums and singing. They pass through an enclosure made of a blanket. All the initiands enter the enclosure and continue singing and playing drums. They then exit from the enclosure one at a time to dance, while joined by happy family members who dance with them for a few minutes. At the end of this ceremony, the initiands would have transitioned from boyhood to manhood (Eidse 2015, p. 53).

The incorporation phase of a rite of passage is also clearly marked in the installation rites of chief Kanongesha among the Ndembu. After a series of rituals in the initiation hut, the chief elect comes out of seclusion and one of the sub-chiefs, who also plays a priestly role at the installation rites, makes a ritual fence around the new chief's dwellings and prays before the people who come to witness the installation of the chief. This subchief then says:

> Listen, all you people. Kanongesha has come to be born into the chieftainship today… He must look after the children, he must care for all the people, both men and women, that they may be strong, and that he himself should be hale. Here is your white clay. I have enthroned you, O Chief. You, O people, must give forth sounds of praise. The chieftainship has appeared (Turner 1969, p. 105).

The installation rites of the chief end with ceremony and celebration. The chief-elect, who went into the initiation hut as a commoner, comes out as Chief. These examples of circumcision rites and chief-installation rites of incorporation provide detailed examples of practices that mark the incorporation phase of a rite of passage. They show that in the incorporation phase the initiands assume new roles, status and titles, along with new understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Thus, the initiands are no longer what they were before transition. I will show how this stage, too, is reflected in the FBO interventions of my case studies.

Having explained the three phases of a rite of passage theory, it is perhaps appropriate to reiterate that a rite of passage generally entails a process of moving from one social state to another. With rites of passage, an individual symbolically dies to his or her life before and is born to another stage or state, with a new identity. Rites of passage divide life into 'before and 'after' and their effect is to transform individuals who experience them.

3.2.4 Critical Reflection on Rites of Passage

Though this rite of passage theory was developed in 1909, the theory is still significant and has been applied for understanding change or transformation in contemporary societies (Janusz and Walkiewicz 2018, p. 151). While earlier work was developed through the study of religious rituals, the value of rites of passage has been recognized for the study of human action and human societies in general. This was evident in the foundational theoretical reflection of the rites of passage in van Gennep and Turner.

Before offering some examples of the value of the rite of passage outside the practices and rituals of religions, I would like to address one critical comment on the theory by the prominent theorist Pierre Bourdieu. According to Bourdieu, the transformation that Van Gennep speaks of is illusory. The rites of passage make it look as if something has changed, yet the assumed changed is influenced by a priori beliefs. They justify what was invented and set by society.

He calls the transformation in a ritual *fatum*, which literally means 'what has been spoken' (Bourdieu 1991, p. 122). Bourdieu also criticised rites of passage as practices of exclusion that separate those who undergo the rite from those who are not subject to it. To emphasize his point, he gave an example of how a circumcision rite creates a division between boys or men who are the subjects of circumcision and girls or women who are not subjects to it. In general, Bourdieu criticizes rite of passages for legitimating men and women as different and institutionalizing these differences. Rites of passage confirm inequalities and maintain the social order (Bourdieu 1991, p. 118). For this reason, Bourdieu prefers referring to rites of passage as 'rites of legitimation,' 'rites of consecration' or 'rites of institution' (Bourdieu 1991, p. 117).

> ...this theory does not conceal one of the essential effects of rites, namely that of separating those who have undergone it, not from those who have not yet undergone it, but from those who will not undergo it in any sense, and thereby instituting a lasting difference between those to whom the rite pertains and those to whom it does not pertain. That is why, rather than describing them as rites of passage, I would prefer to call them rites of consecration, or rites of legitimation, or, quite simply, rites of institution (Bourdieu 1991, p. 117)

Bourdieu's criticism has some value and alert us to the possibly negative impact of rites of passage. However, his comments do not discount the place of rites of passage as part of the structure of a society. In fact, recent work may be read as a response to this criticism by pointing to the value of rite of passage for transformation. Grof has shown how teachers, researchers and scholars have recognized the value of rites of passages in contemporary societies (Grof 1996, p. 6). Therapists and others who work with the emotional and psychological needs of their clients appreciate the value of sanctioned rituals (Grof 1996, p. 6). Steven Foster and

Meridith Little founded a youth educational program called the Vision Quest Program. In describing the process of the Vision Quest Program Stephenson indicated that;

> Foster and Little have designed the Vision Quest Program around three phases: *severance*, a time of preparation during which the initiate separates himself from "mother, father and home, to cut umbilical cord of childhood;" *threshold*, a time of testing and seeking insight and vision; and *return*, re-entering the world left behind as an adult with "new responsibilities (Stephenson 2003, p. 32-33).

Although the Vision Quest Program is based on the Native American culture, it follows the three stages of a rite of passage like the rites of passage studied by Turner (Stephenson 2003, p. 32). Stephenson noted that the purpose of the program to initiate adolescent boys into adulthood.

Psychotherapy has become one of the most well-known sites for the application of contemporary rites of passage. Beels highlights that there is a convergence between therapy and rites of passage. Beels believe that some therapies work because of how they resemble the experiences of a rite of passage (Beels 2007, p. 421). Wozniak and Allen show that mental health professionals recognize that rituals can create change in the lives of their clients. Using an example of women recovering from domestic violence, Wozniak and Allen indicate that liberating rituals can challenge the negative effects of violence and can promote post-traumatic growth (Wozniak and Allen 2012, p. 82). In a later publication, Wozniak hypothesized that healing from intimate partner violence reflects a rite of passage that entails the completion of three stages of separation, transition, and incorporation (Wozniak 2016,455). In the same vein, Kearney also looks at the healing process of young children suffering from chronic illness as a rite of passage. For Kearney, ‘fun camps experiences can be a life enhancing ritual process for healthy social transformation in chronic severe childhood illnesses’ (Kearney 2018). These examples clearly show how the rite of passage theory has been valuable to understand the

process of therapy, healing, and youth programs. It shows that rites of passage are transformative.

Following the lead of contemporary rites of passage applications, I adopted the rite of passage framework to understand the process that the three FBOs that I studied employed in their interventions in responding to violence against women. I focus on the transformative nature of rites of passage. I will show how the rites of passage framework is embedded and enacted in the ways in which these organisations carry out their intervention. Separation, transition and incorporation were clear in the practices of the three FBOs I examined in my study: Ihata Shelter, St Anne's Homes and SAFFI. I interpreted the interventions as highly symbolic gestures which follow the logic of rites of passage. The experiences of my study participants reflected processual journeys in the FBOs.

3.3 Methodology

My research was based on a close study of the interventions of the FBOs participating in this study. Although violence against women is a social reality in the whole of South Africa, the scope of my study was Cape Town. Cape Town is the second largest South African city and is the parliamentary capital of the country (Scott 1955, p. 149). After Johannesburg, Cape Town makes the second largest contribution to the South African economy (Wilkinson 2000, p. 198). The city is in the Western Cape province. It is one of the most popular tourist sites in South Africa. Cape Town's population is dominated by people of mixed race popularly known as 'coloured people'. In terms of religious representation, the city is dominated by Christians, followed by Muslims. Other minority religious groups in Cape Town include adherents of African Traditional Religion, Hinduism, the Bahai Faith and Judaism.[9] This diverse religious

[9] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_Town This is a link to the background information of the City of Cape Town. The article provides general information on the history of the city, geography, suburbs, population, and religious representation, among other things. Date accessed: 15 March 2020.

representation in Cape Town influenced my selection of FBOs that represent different religious groups in the city.

3.3.1 Sampling

I purposively selected each of my study sites: St Anne's Homes, a Christian organisation that provides shelter to abused women; Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children, a Muslim organisation that also offers shelter to abused women; and South African Faith & Family Institute (SAFFI), a multifaith organisation that also represents other minority religions in Cape Town such as Hinduism, Judaism, Bahai Faith and African Traditional Religion. SAFFI offers education and training on violence against women to religious leaders and religious communities. These three FBO's provided a diverse perspective of faith-based interventions in addressing violence against women in Cape Town.

To understand the practices of the FBOs, I interviewed and interacted with FBO workers and FBO beneficiaries. I observed and interviewed abused women who were staying at both Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children (hereinafter sometimes referred to as Ihata) and St Anne's Homes (hereinafter sometimes referred to as St Anne's) to understand their experiences. I also observed how the staff in these organisations facilitated different programmes in the shelters. Similarly, I observed and interviewed religious leaders and people from various religious communities at SAFFI's education programmes and training sessions on violence against women. I also conducted interviews with the workers at SAFFI and observed their method of facilitation in the violence against women education and training programmes.

Ihata Shelter for Abused Women

At Ihata Shelter for abused women I had a total of forty-two participants. These included twenty-four women who were staying in the shelter, twelve members of staff, two religious

leaders who offered religious services to the women in the shelter and four facilitators who came to the shelter to teach arts and craft skills and yoga. Of the twelve members of staff, only two were men. Concerning religion, the majority were Muslims with the exception of two females and one male who were Christians. The four facilitators that came on specific days to offer skills services were all women and they were Christians.

The twenty-four women stayed in the shelter during my observation. These women, between ages of nineteen and fifty years, grew up in Cape Town and were all people of colour, mostly known in the city of Cape Town as 'coloureds'. All the women reported to had been in abusive relationships. Gender based violence was the reason that brought them to this shelter for abused women. Some were legally married, and some were cohabiting with their partners. Most of them had children and some stayed in the shelter together with their children. Their children were between the ages of zero and eight years. One of these women was six months pregnant. In terms of religious affiliation, all the women said were religious. Fifteen were Muslim and nine were Christians. Most of these women did not complete their secondary school except for on who reported that she had a degree. At the time of the study, all of these women were unemployed.

St Anne's Homes

At St Anne's Homes, I observed and interviewed twenty-nine individuals. These include twenty-one survivors of abuse who were living in the shelter. The staff interviewed were the Director of St Anne's Homes, two housemothers, one social worker, one social auxiliary worker, one administrator, one Director's personal assistant and one creche teacher. Out of the nine members of staff at St Anne's only one was male. Seven of them were 'coloured' and two were Xhosa. They all reported to be Christian.

The twenty-one women who were living in the shelter were between the ages of twenty-one to thirty-five years. Some of these women were staying in the shelter together with their children who were between the ages of zero to five years. One of the women was pregnant and she gave birth during the time I was collecting data at St Anne's Homes. In terms of racial categories, nineteen of these women were 'coloureds' who were born and bred in Cape Town, one was Xhosa who grew up in the Eastern Cape province of South Africa and one was a foreigner from the Democratic Republic of Congo. In terms of religious affiliation only one was Muslim and twenty were Christians. Concerning education, all the women reported that their highest level of education was secondary school. During the time of my research all of them were not employed.

South African Faith and Family Institute

My participants at SAFFI were members of staff who included the Founder and Director of the organization, the Training and Programme Development Manager, the Atlantis Fieldworker, and a Social Worker. All were female except the Social Worker. SAFFI workers were all Christians. Religious leaders and members of the religious communities that joined SAFFI's workshops and trainings were SAFFI's key beneficiaries. On average, the number of all the participants that I observed in all the workshops I attended during my study was over three hundred. I then purposively selected participants for detailed study. I selected participants who regularly attended the workshops offered by SAFFI. Among these include eighteen pastors from Atlantis area and fourteen pastors from Khayelitsha township.

Fourteen Pastors from Atlantis were men and only four were women. The age group of these pastors were between the ages of thirty-five to sixty-five. Concerning race, sixteen were 'coloureds' and two male pastors were Congolese. All the pastors from Khayelitsha were Xhosa and they were all men. The age group of these pastors ranged from thirty-eight to seventy-eight. Two of the pastors in this group were Bishops in their churches. The majority

of both Pastors from Atlantis and Khayelitsha were from Pentecostal churches such as The Gospel Church of Power in Life, Powerful Jesus, House of Hope Ministry, God's Merciful Ministries, Living Waters Ministries of Christ, and the Acts of the Apostolic Church. While some pastors were from mainline churches such as the Methodist Church and Anglican Church and from a Zionist church, the Christian Catholic Apostolic Church.

Apart from these pastors, thirty-two women attended women's workshops on violence against women and seven men attended men's programs. Several religious leaders who presented at a conference on violence against women organized by SAFFI were also key to this study. Representatives from organisations South African Police Services, National Prosecuting Authority, Department of Correctional Services, Thuthuzela Care Centre and two NGOs who also presented at the same conference also became key participants of the study.

3.3.2 Methods of Data Collection

I relied heavily on interviews and participant observation in this research. I also obtained some of the data from the three organisations' literature, which includes pamphlets, annual reports and newsletters. I was also granted access to South African Faith & Family Institute archival material.

In accordance with the University of Cape Town research ethics, I sought consent from people who participated in this study. I informed all my participants of the nature and aim of my research through participant information sheets. Apart from the information sheets, I also verbally explained the background of my research to all my participants. I distributed consent forms, which my study participants signed to show their willingness to participate in the study. I clearly stipulated in the information sheet that participation in the study was voluntary, and then verbally emphasized to participants that they had the right to withdraw from the research

process at any given time. For the sake of confidentiality and to minimize harm, I made use of pseudonyms throughout the thesis to protect the identities of my study participants.

I collected most of the data for this research over a period of six months, from April to September 2018. However, I began attending SAFFI's activities from as early as May 2017, and it has been an ongoing process even after September 2018. I also had follow-up telephonic interviews with women who were living in the shelters in June and July 2020. The approach that I used to collect data from the three organisations involved devoting two months to each organisation. In April 2018 I spent one month at SAFFI, and from May to June 2018 I moved on to collect data at Ihata. The decision to move to Ihata before finishing my two months at SAFFI was deliberate. I made this decision to take advantage of the Ramadan period, which in that year ran from 16 May to14 June 2018. I moved to Ihata to observe the activities of this shelter during the Muslim month of fasting. In July and August of 2018, I collected data at St Anne's Homes. In September, the final month of the six-month period, I returned to SAFFI.

I mostly collected my data from Mondays to Thursdays, from 9am to 3pm. These were the times in which these organisations conducted their programmes. However, there were also instances where I collected data at weeknight and weekend events. For instance, in April 2018 I attended two of SAFFI's workshops, each on a Saturday, and in May 2018 I attended another workshop on a weeknight. In August 2018, I attended a Sunday church service to observe the experiences of the women that were living at St Anne's Homes.

Although I spent much of the time at the shelters and at SAFFI's offices, I was flexible with regard to following my study participants whenever they attended off-site activities. While some of the places were close to Cape Town, some sites were as far as 72km away from the city. Some of the places that I visited include Atlantis, Grabouw, Pella, Edgemead,

Ravensmead, Lavender Hill, Khayelitsha, Valhalla Park, Zonnebloem, Bonteheuwel and Durbanville.

3.3.3 Interviews

This research study also included interviews that enabled me to be in direct contact with my research participants. Although they sometimes present the challenge of participants' potential unwillingness or reluctance to share information (Merton 2008), interviews remained a key technique of data collection in my research. I conducted semi-structured interviews; this allowed my study participants to speak for themselves.

Although I had informal conversations with all key participants, I selected some participants for in-depth interviews. At Ihata Shelter I interviewed the Director of the organization and six other members of staff that included the social worker, social auxiliary worker, the housemother, and three skills facilitators. The reason I purposively chose these people for in-depth interview is their work was linked to the violence against women intervention that I was investigating. I also used the same criteria at St Anne's Homes and interviewed a total of six people.

At SAFFI I interviewed the Director, Training and Programme Development Manager, the social worker, and the fieldwork. The work of these members of staff was directly linked to the interventions on violence against women that the organization provided. Indepth interviews were conducted with seven religious leaders who went through SAFFI's programs and one ex perpetrator of violence against women who was also receiving ongoing support from the organization.

Across the three organizations, I conducted all interviews in person. The interviews were conducted in two phases. The first phase consisted of one-on-one interviews that I conducted

from May to September 2018. The second phase comprised telephonic interviews that I conducted in June and July 2020 as follow-up interviews with the women who were staying in the shelters during the course of my fieldwork. In phase one, with the consent of my study participants, I audio-recorded most of these interviews. Before starting each interview, I distributed interview consent forms and information sheets to each interviewee. The information sheet explained the background of the research and the ethical issues involved. I also verbally clarified all the information on these information sheets. I conducted all the interviews in English. These interviews were conducted in places where my participants felt comfortable. Some of the interviews were conducted in offices, boardrooms, gardens, and in the bedrooms of the women living in the shelters.

Although I used an interview guide, new questions occasionally emerged after an interviewee's response to some of the questions. Thus, my interviews were semi-structured. A challenge that I encountered in some of the interviews with women living in the shelters related to studying people who were recovering from experiences of abuse. Sharing experiences of abuse sometimes triggered strong emotions. Some participants would cry in the middle of the interviews. As a researcher I was aware that interviewing women on a sensitive topic such a violence against women would provoke the emotions of my participants. In such cases, I applied the skills that I acquired in an interviewer training on violence against women research that I participated in 2015 as preparation for my master's research fieldwork. I gave my participants a moment to collect themselves and encouraged them to bring out their emotions. As participation in this study was voluntary, I also reiterated that they were free to withdraw from the interview whenever they wished to do so. All my participants volunteered to continue regardless of their emotional responses. I observed that some of the participants shared deep personal experiences when they were emotional.

As an additional measure to minimize harm to my participants, I liaised with qualified social workers in both shelters to provide immediate professional counselling to my participants if they needed such services after the interview sessions. This was also emphasized to the participants during the start of each interview session.

3.3.4 Participant Observation

I also utilized participant observations as another core method of data collection. I spent a period of six months observing the activities of research participants at Ihata, St Anne's Homes and South African Faith & Family Institute in their naturalistic settings and in unscheduled events. While collecting my data, I was guided by the fieldwork principles of establishing a good relationship, bracketing preconceived ideas, maintaining empathy, paying attention, being present, recording and analysing data (Harvey, 2011).

As part of fieldwork ethics, I respected the organisational beliefs and protocols of all my study sites. During my data collection period at Ihata, as a Christian I had to observe modest dressing and head covering as a sign of showing respect to the religious values of that organisation. In addition, SAFFI has an organisational culture of beginning the day with morning devotions which are compulsory for staff members, student interns and researchers to attend. As a sign of respect, I attended these devotional prayers and Bible studies. Attending these devotional services also provided an opportunity to gather data on the importance and place of religion within this organisation.

With consent from my study participants, I collected observation data through taking fieldwork notes, photographs, audios, and audio visuals. I took visuals of buildings, billboards and objects on my study sites. In some cases, I took visuals of my participants in their naturalistic settings. Although consent to take photographs and audio recording was granted at both shelters and in all sessions, I refrained from doing so in some cases. In some of the therapy sessions where

some of the women became deeply emotional, I did not take photographs or videos. I captured the data in a fieldwork notebook.

The purpose of the images and videos was to assist me to capture every detail which is difficult to quickly capture in fieldwork notes as a researcher observes. Going back to these visuals which had detailed information of events triggered memory and it helped me to re-examine my observations during my fieldwork. As I analysed my data, the visuals provided an opportunity to produce further analysis which I could have missed if I had only relied on fieldwork notes. Thus, analysing these visuals allowed me to present a nuanced analysis in my writing. I also had a fieldwork diary where I recorded all my daily fieldwork experiences. I recorded annoying moments, delays, or challenges that I faced each day in this diary. The diary also helped me to remember key information during the writing stage of this thesis.

At South African Faith and Family Institute I mainly observed how the workers run their day-to-day business at their office space. In cases where they were conducting workshops and seminars with various faith communities and religious leaders, I took note of the facilitation process of the programmes as well as the reaction of the audience.

At Ihata shelter and St Anne's Homes I observed the workers and women who were staying in the shelters. The shelters had various programmes, including individual and group therapy sessions. These therapy sessions are aimed at helping the women to heal and recover from experiences of abuse. The shelters also had skills programs such as jewellery making, arts and crafts, and sewing. Other services at these shelters were prayer sessions. I attended and observed how all these sessions were conducted. On one occasion I followed some women who were living at St Anne's Home to their Sunday church service in Woodstock.

Overall, combining both participant observations and interviews as methods of data collections allowed me to gather in-depth data. While at times, participants tend to exaggerate information

in interviews, with participant observation, I could see my participants in action. This allowed me to see and identify distortions and inaccuracies in some of the descriptions provided in interviews (Kawulich 2005). Participant observation also allowed me to obtain data from non-verbal expressions. Interviews helped me to get clarity on information that was unclear from my observations. Thus, interweaving these two methods helped me to obtain thick and rich description of how Ihata Shelter, St Anne's Homes and SAFFI carried out their interventions to counter violence against women.

3.4 Positionality and Reflexivity

My positionality as a female researcher was an advantage in my interactions with the women who were staying at both the Ihata Shelter and St Anne's Homes. I felt that the women believed that I could easily relate and sympathize with their experiences. On different occasions, some of my study participants used the following phrases in expressing their points: 'you know how it feels as woman...'; 'us women...'; 'you are a woman, you know how it is...'. While at times I had to nod my head to reflect that I agreed or affirmed with their views, I was conscious not to be too sympathetic. I maintained a healthy dose of reflexivity to avoid distorting the results of my research. Overall, being a female researcher made most of my participants feel comfortable enough to share their experiences of abuse. The rapport that I established with my participants made the interviewing process much easier.

Although immersing is a key component in participant observation, given the sensitivity of the subject I was researching, I tried to be careful, to know my role in the setting. I tried to uphold my position as a researcher (Cozby 2009). According to Merriam and Tisdell, with participant observation, a researcher usually participates in certain activities while at the same time avoiding becoming totally absorbed by the course of events. I tried to stay detached to be able

to observe and analyse at the same time (Merriam and Tisdell 2015). Hence, I adopted moderate participation. According to DeWalt and DeWalt and others,

> Moderate participation occurs when the ethnographer is present at the scene of the action, is identifiable as a researcher, but does not actively participate, or only occasionally interacts, with people in it (DeWalt and DeWalt 2002 p. 20).

With moderate participation, I maintained a balance between the insider and outsider roles. This allowed both involvement and necessary detachment to remain objective. Although I would at times help my participants in the shelters with watering and weeding the plants as well as cleaning, in most of the activities I observed only, to maintain that necessary detachment.

My interaction with pastors was a bit different. The religious status, age differences and sex differences required that I adjusted to fit within their frames. The religious status of the religious leaders required that I adopt some level of respect. I adopted the language of respecting the religious leaders as I interacted with them. Although most of them addressed themselves pastors, some had preferred titles that they wanted to be addressed with. These titles were Apostle, Man of God, Papa and Bishop. I was conscious to know specific religious leaders who preferred specific titles to avoid offending them. Despite the differences in sex, age and religious status I did not face any challenges in my interaction with these religious leaders. My personal background as a Christian was an advantage as it helped me to quickly understand the discussions of these leaders and their references to the religious scriptures which I was already familiar with.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the theoretical framework and the methodology that guided my research. I have shown that the rites of passage theory continues to be used as a transformative

model for interventions for social transformation. Relying on the work of van Gennep and Turner, I discussed the theory and the three stages or phases in it. The examples of rites of passage studied by Turner offered key terms and practices that mark the phases. These examples from African religions outlined a process in rites of passage and an understanding of its key characteristics in each stage. I will use these characteristics and practices to guide my analysis of the interventions of the FBOs in my study.

In this chapter, I also discussed the methodology I used in this ethnographic research. My study was purely qualitative research. My scope of study was limited to Cape Town, where I purposively selected three faith-based organisations: a Christian and a Muslim shelf, and a self-styled multifaith organisation. These three organisations represented different religious groups in Cape Town. In terms of data collection, I relied heavily on participant observation and interviews. Interweaving these multiple methods allowed me to get a thick description of how the FBO's carried out their interventions. The limitations of one method were compensated for by alternating it with another method.

In the following chapter, I go on to discuss the background and nature of these study sites. I present the life trajectories of key persons in each of these organisations in relation to the organisation. I identify and describe the kinds of interventions promised at SAFFI, Ihata Shelter, and St Anne's Homes.

4 CHAPTER FOUR: FAITH BASED ORGANIZATIONS RESPONDING TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN CAPETOWN

4.1 Introduction

Several FBOs have responded to the problem of violence against women in Cape Town. Some established shelters to provide refugee to survivors of violence against women, while others offer training and advocacy programmes on violence against women for religious leaders and religious communities. In this study I selected only three organisations which are South African Faith and Family Institute, Ihata shelter for abused women and St Anne's Homes. My justification for selecting these three is firstly that these organisations give a diverse perspective of how FBOs in Cape Town have responded to violence against women. One of these organisations is concerned with training and advocacy programs, the other two organisations offer shelter and refuge to abused women from different religious perspectives. Secondly, these three organisations capture religious diversity and are representative of major religious traditions in Cape Town.

I identify and provide the backgrounds as well as the religious identities of these three FBOs that are responding to the problem of violence against women in Cape Town. On the background of these organisations, I focus on their histories, visions and missions, major activities, leadership structures and their sources of funding which Sider and Unruh 2004 and Hefferan, Adkins and Occhipinti 2009 use to understand the nature of FBOs. The work and activities of these FBOs reflect the presence of religion in the public sphere and their relationship with the government and other public organisations. The activities of these religious organisations reflect the role of religion in responding to challenges in public life. But for each FBO, I begin with the life trajectories of one key person to illustrate the hopes, achievements, changes and personal and religious investments in the organization.

4.2 South African Faith and Family Institute (SAFFI)

4.2.1 *History of SAFFI*

South Africa Faith & Family Institute is a multi-faith organisation concerned with addressing issues of gender-based violence and family. SAFFI is based in Cape Town, Central Business District. This organisation indicates that it intends to bring people from different faiths together to address gender-based violence, and notes that its primary goal is to mobilize faith leaders and faith communities to address violence against women. According to its founder, Elizabeth Petersen, SAFFI was established in 2008 because there was no organisation in South Africa that particularly worked with religious leaders and religious communities in addressing violence against women from a religious perspective. As the founder of SAFFI, Elizabeth Petersen is the key person at the organisation. Her life history is significant in understanding the history of this organisation and her motivation for founding it.

4.2.2 *Elizabeth Petersen*

Elizabeth was born and raised in the Cape Flats with eight siblings.[10] Her family was deeply religious, with strong ties to the Pentecostal Church. Elizabeth said she grew up in a non-violent home, and she never saw her father abusing her mother. At the age of eight, she had an unusual experience for someone of her age. 'When I was playing in the sand, I had an ache in the heart. I had an extraordinary sense that I am supposed to help people...' (Petersen, 2013). In the same documentary, her sister indicated that Elizabeth was very confident and convinced that she had a calling to help people in need.

[10] Elizabeth Petersen's life documentary broadcasted on *I Am Woman Leap of Faith* TV series Season 2, Episode 21, aired on South African Broadcasting Cooperation (SABC 3), 1 September 2013. I have used this documentary and my observations and interviews with her.

Elizabeth and her sister used to teach the word of God through gospel music to a group of men in their church who had been released from prison after serving their sentence for rape and murder. She strongly believes that her current work with perpetrators of domestic violence started from the time she was ministering to ex-offenders at church.

Petersen went on to study at the University of Western Cape. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in Social Work, she began working as a volunteer social worker at St Anne's Homes. Elizabeth was deeply affected by seeing women who had been abused, raped, rejected, and abandoned in their intimate relationships. She spoke of how her dream of helping others was realized through working as a social worker at St Anne's Home. After working there for three years, she was appointed as the Managing Director of St Anne's Homes. Sharing her experiences at St Anne's Homes, Elizabeth said:

> I have heard a lot; I have seen a lot; I have been disturbed a lot by just listening to women. They had a quest for intervention with perpetrators who most of the times were the fathers of their children… my heart was filled with what I was hearing daily. The women in the shelter did not necessarily want to end their relationship, but they wanted the violence and the abuse to stop (Petersen, 2013).

These experiences seemed to have shaped and motivated her work on interventions that included the perpetrators of violence against women.

Elizabeth later left the Pentecostal church and joined the Anglican Church. According to her sister, Elizabeth knew and believed that she would be able to get support from the Anglican Church to do the work she wanted to do. She met the late Anglican priest, Father John Oliver, who was well known for his interfaith initiative of uniting religious leaders in the Western Cape province of South Africa. Father Oliver became her mentor and helped her to develop her inter-faith spirituality:

> Father Oliver was the first priest and pastor that I shared with this vision of working broader than the church, in an inter-religious context…faith from whichever tradition is a source of hope in dealing with domestic violence... my heart was constantly moving me to an inter-religious context. (Petersen, 2013).

In 2006, Petersen pursued a master's degree in Social Work at the University of Western Cape. She did research on the challenges experienced by the clergy within the Anglican Church in Southern Africa in dealing with domestic violence. She highlighted the lack of training in the clergy's theological education with regard to dealing with domestic violence issues; the lack of guidance on how to address patriarchy in the church; as well as lack of guidance in interpreting scriptures (Petersen 2006). Her research motivated her to train religious leaders to understand and address the root causes and effects of domestic violence and gender-based violence. Elizabeth believed that religious leaders have immense power when it comes to influencing people's beliefs. For this reason, religious leaders may play a key role in influencing healthy relationships and curbing gender-based violence.

In 2008, the year that she established SAFFI, Elizabeth received the Hubert H Humphrey Fellowship at the University of Minnesota, United States of America. The fellowship is a one-year course for mid-career professionals sponsored by the United States of America Department of State to honour the public service career of the late 38th Vice President of the United States (humphreyfellowship.org, Date accessed: 08 February 2021). Elizabeth says that attending this course allowed her to refine and reflect on the focus of her organisation. She adds that the fellowship was also a platform to develop international relationships and establish partnership with colleagues in America who were also working in the same sector (Petersen, 2013).

4.2.3 SAFFI's Vision, Mission, and Key Values.

SAFFI aims to end gender-based violence in South Africa. Although its mission statement does not explicitly make reference to religion, the organization believes that religions have positive religious scriptures and traditions that have the potential to curb violence against women. Its mission is to challenge patriarchal traditions and other root causes of violence against women from a religious conviction. SAFFI promotes positive scriptural and religious teachings that challenge the abuse of women. One of SAFFI's goals is to be a resource for religious leaders and religious communities from various religious traditions by offering training and advocacy programmes on violence against women. SAFFI's motto is 'Transforming Hearts, Minds, and Relationships.'

SAFFI says that it is guided by values of respect, human dignity, compassion and ubuntu. They cite ubuntu as the foundation of their work, and that their efforts to address violence against women are embedded in cultivating ubuntu. The philosophy of ubuntu posits that a human being is human because of other human beings (Mbiti, 1969). SAFFI moreover believes in conversation, dialogue and collaboration with organisations that share the same vision of ending violence against women (http://saffi.org.za/ Date accessed: 09 October 2019).

From my observations, interviews and SAFFI's archive materials, it appears that the organization's main work is providing education and training on violence against women to religious leaders and religious communities. SAFFI shares the view of scholars such as Le Roux, Kramm, Scott, Sandilands, Loots, Olivier, Arango and O'Sullivan who recognize the potential of religious leaders in addressing violence against women (Le Roux *et al*, 2016). The organization believes that:

> If religious leaders are transformed in their thinking and knowledge about hierarchical gender power relations, their teaching, preaching and pastoral care intervention will transform the way women and men relate to each other in society. (SAFFI Research Report, 2017)

SAFFI carries out its activities through conducting workshops, conferences, pilgrimages and campaigns. The organisation mostly visits its beneficiaries in their respective religious communities to offer training on violence against women. These activities of SAFFI show the presence and potential of religion in responding to social challenges in the public sphere of South Africa.

Organisational Management

Elizabeth Petersen is the founder and Executive Director of the organisation at the top of the management structure of SAFFI. SAFFI has two patrons. During the time of my study, the patrons of SAFFI were Reverend Dr Thabo Cecil Makgoba, the Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town, and Reverend Mpho Tutu van Furth who is an Episcopalian priest (SAFFI Annual Report, 2018). and a daughter of former Archbishop Desmond Tutu who is well known for his opposition of the apartheid system in South Africa. Although both patrons of SAFFI were from Christian religious backgrounds, SAFFI selected its patrons across faith traditions. The 2010 patron of SAFFI was Imam Rashied Omar, a Muslim.

SAFFI has a managing board which comprises a chairperson, secretary, treasurer, and four board members. The board is integral to the leadership structure of SAFFI. From the Annual General Meetings of SAFFI that I attended, and having analysed past annual reports of the organisation, religious criteria seem irrelevant in the selection of SAFFI board members and members are elected solely on their capability and expertise. For instance, the incumbent treasurer of the organisation during the period of my study had years of experience in accounting and finance. The vice chairperson had a legal background with experience in the

justice system, particularly in the area of human rights as well as women and children's rights. One of the board members was experienced in interfaith activities and another was a qualified Social Worker with 27 years' social work experience in preventative and statutory services to children (www.saffi.org.za/ Date accessed: 12 August 2020). Although religious criterion is irrelevant in the selection of board members of SAFFI, some of the board members of SAFFI were religious leaders.

SAFFI's structure includes a board of religious leaders called the Theological Advisory Council on Gender-based Violence (TACGBV). This is a council of both male and female religious leaders from Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, African Traditional Religions and the Bahà'ì faith. The main purpose of this council is to assist in developing resources that the organisation uses in its workshops and seminars with religious leaders and faith communities. In 2016, the each of the Council members contributed a section in a booklet titled, *Theological Reflection on the Root Causes of Abuse of Women in Intimate Relationships: A Resource for Faith Leaders*. This booklet discusses factors that causes violence against women in different religious traditions. In 2017, it produced another booklet titled, *Faith-based Interventions with Male Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Abuse: What Guidance Can We Get from Holy Scriptures and Ancient Teachings?* This booklet contains resources that could be used by religious leaders when dealing with perpetrators of violence against women (SAFFI Report 2017).

4.2.4 *Religion at SAFFI*

SAFFI self-identified as a multifaith organization in which religion plays a central role. This was clear in the content of the programs of the organization as well as in the day-to-day activities within the organization. Given that SAFFI's goal is to address violence against women from a religious perspective, religion is explicitly included in the content of most of its

programmes. In the SAFFI workshops I observed, the facilitators always referred to religious traditions and religious scriptures when discussing violence against women. SAFFI believes that different religions have teachings and scriptures that have positive values for curbing violence against women.

The SAFFI routine is to start every programme with an opening prayer and end with a closing prayer. These prayers were mostly done by religious leaders from the different religious traditions. Religious leaders also attended workshops in their respective religious regalia, and some brought sacred books from their religions. Religious symbols marked the programmes from beginning to end.

Religion was also central in the day-to-day operations of the organisation. The day at SAFFI offices began with a morning devotion. It was compulsory for every staff member to attend these daily devotions as well as the daily Bible study sessions. The daily devotions were mostly led by the Director of the organisation, and each staff member had an opportunity to speak in the Bible Study sessions. Most staff members said that they are motivated by their religious duty to help those affected by abuse. In one of the sessions, a social worker intimated that God placed him at SAFFI to be able to help people who were experiencing abuse. At the same session, the programme facilitator said her professional work cannot be separated from her spiritual life. She said that that she constantly prays for God to guide her in her work.

Although SAFFI says that it is a multifaith organisation which aims to bring different faith traditions in dialogue for the purposes of addressing violence against women, the daily religious sessions were Christian sessions, and all staff members, including the Director of the organisation, were Christians. Most of the faith communities that SAFFI offered trainings to were Christian communities. While this was largely because Christianity was the dominant religion in SAFFI's operational areas, it was also influenced by the lack of staff with the

capacity to train religious leaders from other religions. Thus, though SAFFI self-identified as a multifaith organisation, its operations revealed it to be a Christian faith-based organisation which was open to other faiths.

4.2.5 *Source of Funding*

The sources from which SAFFI cultivates funding is also an important factor in understanding the nature and operation of this organisation. SAFFI is a non-profit organisation and is also approved as a public benefit organisation. Thus, it is exempted from paying income taxes according to the South African Income Tax Act 58 of 1962 (Income Tax Act 58 of 1962).

SAFFI mostly relies on donor funding from private stakeholders who included individuals, companies, and religious organisations. The organisation sometimes receives funds from the South African government's Department of Social Development. It has also sought donations through an online fundraising organisation for charities called GivenGain. SAFFI has this online fundraising link on its website (SAFFI Website. Date accessed: 11 October 2019).

SAFFI has a systematic administrative system regarding its finances. It has detailed annual financial statements audited by registered accountants and external auditors. I accessed the financial statements from 2011 to 2018 that showed that SAFFI was funded by several organisations. The regular and biggest funders of SAFFI were national: Vanessa Padayachee, The Desmond and Leah Tutu Foundation, the Rev Dr. Marie Fortune, Community Chest of Western Cape, National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund, the Nussbaum Foundation, The Joint Gender Fund and the Department of Social Development (DSD). According to its 2017/2018 Annual Report, the Department of Social Development was SAFFI's biggest funder in 2017 and 2018. In 2017, it received R309 023.00 from the DSD and in 2018 it received an amount of R351 408.00 (Annual Report 2017/2018).

SAFFI derives financial resources from both religious and non-religious sectors, including the South African government via the Department of Social Development. This suggests a relationship between the FBO and the state, which seems a mutually beneficial one. SAFFI cultivates funds for its operations from the government, and the state benefits from SAFFI's interventions on violence against women. This indicates a cordial and collaborative relationship between the state and this FBO.

Despite the funding SAFFI has received from various organisations in its Annual Reports, the organisation highlighted a lack of funds as one of the major challenges affecting its operation. In the organization's 2015/2016 Annual Report, the treasurer indicated that in 2015 SAFFI had a revenue of R1 352 100, whereas its operating expenses were R1 528 036, which resulted in an operating loss of R175 936 (Annual Report 2015/2016). She added that such a financial challenge resulted in the organization retrenching staff to cut expenses (Annual Report 2015/2016). At the time that I was conducting my fieldwork, SAFFI had four staff members only. The Director indicated that the organisation was short-staffed due to lack of funds.

4.2.6 SAFFI in Media

SAFFI uses various platforms to make its work and activities known to the public. It has a wide media coverage. The organisation uses the mainstream media as well as newsletters, its website, and social media platforms to market its activities. SAFFI has been invited to talks on gender-based violence on both national and local television and radio stations. These include Muslim radio stations such as Voice of the Cape and Cape Community FM, and national television channels such as SABC 3.

SAFFI has a regularly updated website which elucidates its mission statement, vision, key activities, annual reports, and its activities. This website is also used as a platform for seeking donations. It also has an active Facebook page. As of July 2020, SAFFI's Facebook page had

1148 followers and a total of 1115 likes. I have been following this Facebook page since May 2017. This Facebook pages has updates of SAFFI's activities as well as invitations to SAFFI's workshops. However, I observed that most of the posts did not receive many comments. Most had an average of 20 likes and 10 comments. These numbers are relatively low, suggesting that this media platform does not reach a wider audience of SAFFI.

SAFFI embarks upon various of its own campaigns to educate on violence against women and participates in others such as the 16 Day of Activism for no Violence Against Women and Children, an annual international campaign to curb violence against women. These 16 days of activism are some of the most important days on SAFFI's calendar. Every year, SAFFI joins this international campaign to speak out about violence against women. Other campaigns include the national Women's Month campaigns run in August annually. In 2018, SAFFI collaborated with other organisations in Cape Town in the Women's Humanity Walk campaign to celebrate and honour the dignity of women during Women's Month.

In 2013 SAFFI also released a video campaign titled *We Take a Stand!*. These were 30-second video clips of religious leaders from the Christian, Muslim, Jewish, African Traditional Religion and the Bahà'ì faiths sharing religious scriptures and traditions that denounce any form of violence against women. These videos were posted on YouTube and they are sometimes replayed in SAFFI's workshops. Below are the transcriptions of the messages of each of the religious leaders:

> African Traditional Religious Leader: I am Bongile Mawawa, an *injoli*, a leader of African Traditional Religion. In our tradition we say, '*Induku haivake umuzi*', which means you cannot build your house with violence. As religious leaders, we say you cannot unite a nation with violence. We call upon all South Africans to treat each other with respect. As people of faith, we take a stand – will you? (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-dJ760BSL8 Date accessed: 13 January 2020).

Hinduism: I am Guru Krishna, spiritual head of the Hindu community in the Western Cape. Hinduism teaches non-violence to women through thought, word, and action. Violence against women and children is a sinful act and has its own karmic consequences. I call upon all faith leaders to step into true leadership on this issue. Let's send a message of love, peace and blessings. Love ever, hate never! As people of faith, we take a stand – will you? (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prRhV-GKoaU Date accessed: 13 January 2020).

Islam: I am Imaam Dr Rasheid Omar, chairperson of the Western Cape Religious Leaders Forum. As people of faith, it is our moral responsibility to reflect seriously on how we can support the struggle of women and children for full dignity in our homes, in our communities and in our religious institutions. We call for gender-based violence to be placed high on the agenda of all religious institutions and communities. As people of faith, we take a stand – will you? (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yXrOtSV0KGU Date accessed:13 January 2020).

Judaism: Hi, my name is Warren Goldstein, the chief rabbi of South Africa. The Talmud says to destroy one life is to destroy a world and to save a one life is to save a world. And if there is one woman or one child out there anywhere in South Africa that is harmed in any way, that means the whole world has been destroyed. If we as people of faith across the country come together to protect our women and children, even if it's only one person, we would have saved the entire world. As people of faith, we take a stand – do you? (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omrZtmm6_i8 Date accessed: 13 January 2020).

Christianity: I am Stephen Brislin, president of the South African Catholic Bishops Conference. Family is fundamentally important in our Christian tradition, yet so much violence and abuse take place within the family and beyond. We believe that each and every person is made in the image of God. We as people of faith, we need to break the silence on violence against women and children. We need to take it into our own hearts to act with integrity and courage. As people

of faith, we take a stand – will you? (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=omrZtmm6_i8 Date accessed: 13 January 2020).

Bahà'ì faith: I am Tahirih Matthee, representative of the *Bahà'ì* community in South Africa. The Bahai community is founded on the principles of unity and peace. Our sacred teachings implore us to take care of women and firmly uphold the principles of gender equality. Violence against women and children is society's yardstick that measures violation of all human rights. We call upon all South Africans to embrace peaceful living. As people of faith, we take a stand – will you? (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4_WrA5FSmkM Date accessed: 13 January 2020).

Islam: I am Moulana Abdul Khaliq Allie, secretary general of the Muslim Judicial Council SA (South Africa). The honour of women and children is the foundation of a healthy society. Almighty Allah in the glorious Quran says *wa 'ashiruhunna bi al-ma'ruf:* 'and live with women in kindness'. We cannot turn a blind eye to domestic violence, and we cannot deny that it exists. I call for a decisive stand for the protection and dignity of women and children. As faith leaders, we take a stand – will you? (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nN4eA9kQnYA Date accessed: 13 January 2020).

In the above video clips, religious leaders stated the positions of their respective religion on violence against women. They all indicated how their religions is against violence against women. Some quoted religious scriptures to explain how they oppose violence. These religious leaders went on further to offer religious resources from their religions that emphasise peace and equality between men and women. They ended by calling religious communities, institutions, and the government to also commit to addressing violence against women. They all ended their message with the same campaign statement, 'As people of faith we take a stand-will you?'

I observed that all the religious leaders in these videos addressed themselves with their respective religious titles, and some were wearing their religious regalia. SAFFI believed that the religious titles and regalia of the religious leaders' command authority in their respective religious communities. Thus, the messages were likely to be quickly accepted and followed by adherents who respect and trust religious leaders. SAFFI believes that religious leaders have the authority to influence change in addressing violence against women. It therefore used these video clips of religious leaders to challenge and teach about violence against women in different religious communities.

I have given a short history of SAFFI and the reasons that led to the emergence of the organisation. I began with the personal life of Elizabeth Petersen, the founder of SAFFI. SAFFI self-identifies as a multifaith organisation that brings different religions together in addressing gender-based violence. My discussion of the services of SAFFI, the management of the organization, sources of funding and the day-to-day activities at this organisation reflects how religion is at the centre of this organization. Although SAFFI claims a multifaith religious identity, the influence of Christianity in the operation of the organisation makes SAFFI more of a Christian FBO than a multi-faith organisation.

I have shown how SAFFI's role in teaching and training religious leaders about violence against women prevention does not only show the presence of religious organisations in the public sphere, but also demonstrates the role they can play in responding to social problems affecting the public. It is also clear that SAFFI cultivates funding from the government for its operation. It offers to addresses the problem of violence against women which the South African government cannot solve on its own. This form of exchange suggests a mutually symbiotic relationship between this FBO and the government that confirms Dixon's

observation (Dixon 2016). I will investigate how far this collaboration goes when discussing the manner of SAFFI's interventions later in the study.

4.3 Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children

Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children popularly known as 'Ihata', meaning 'to encircle or to protect',[11] is a Muslim shelter for abused women and their children. The shelter is located in the crime- ridden Cape flats suburb of Heideveld. Ihata is registered as a non-profit organisation and self identifies as a faith-based organisation: 'We are a faith-based organisation accommodating women from all walks of life regardless of race, religion, culture, language and creed. (Facebook Page. Date accessed: 18 August 2020).

Ihata was founded in February 2006 by Gadija Essop and Mymuna Solomon[12]. Originally the shelter was named Islamic Resource Foundation of South Africa (IRFSA), which started life as an organisation that empowered anyone in the community. The organisation later realized that women needed more assistance, and changed its focus and established a shelter for abused women.[13] The organisation later changed its name to Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children. According to Ihata's Facebook page, the rationale for changing the name from Islamic Resource Foundation South Africa to Ihata was to dismiss the perception that the shelter helps or accommodates only Muslim women.

4.3.1 Nuraan Osman

Nuraan Osman was the Managing Director of Ihata Shelter during the time of my research. Although she is not the founder of the organisation, she is one of the key persons at Ihata, and

[11] Project Sakinah an Initiative of Dar al Islam provided information of Ihata as one of its collaborators on their website. http://projectsakinah.org/Project-Sakinah/Our-Collaborators/Islamic-Resources-Foundation-of-South-Africa Date accessed: 16 June 2020.
[12] Telephone Interview: 14 July 2020.
[13] Nuraan Osman Director of Ihata Shelter for Abused Women Interview with Accidental Muslim.com https://accidentalmuslims.com/nuraan-osman-director-ihata-shelter-for-abused-women-and-children-human-rights-activist-s06e124/ Date accessed:11 October 2019.

developed some of its major programmes. Nuraan is a Muslim woman who was born and bred in Cape Town. She indicated that she has always been concerned about the welfare of humanity and had a passion to help the vulnerable and the poor. From a young age, she always helped her grandparents to run a soup kitchen. Prior to working at Ihata, she had worked as a secondary school teacher. She has also worked at Positive Muslims a faith-based organisation in the field of HIV & AIDS, and at Islamic Relief Worldwide.

Nuraan joined Ihata as Managing Director in 2010. She indicated that she had already been part of Ihata Shelter's board. Nuraan says that her work with abused women was influenced by the Islamic values of love and compassion that encourage Muslims to assist the oppressed, and by the intensity of violence against women in South Africa. Nuraan is interested in any work that aims to address violence against women.

Nuraan uses every opportunity to raise awareness of the plight of victims of gender-based violence: 'So many women are abused and so many don't have a voice, and I would like to be that voice' (Nuraan, Telephone Interview: 24 October 2020). She presented a paper on children and women's rights at the World Aids Conference in Australia. But most of her advocacy is done in Cape Town, directed particularly at religious leaders. She presented several talks on violence against women at the Claremont Mosque. She relates that in one of her talks there she spoke about what faith leaders could do in addressing violence against women. She has trained several Muslim religious leaders, including members of the Muslim Judicial Council on gender-based violence. She explained that she teaches religious leaders how women should be treated and reminds them that all genders are equal before God. Nuraan notes that she uses the Quran, the religious text of Islam, in training sessions (Nuraan, Telephone Interview: 24 October 2020).

Nuraan Osman is a qualified social worker and psychologist who studied at the University of Cape Town. Her educational background is central to her work at the organisation. She

introduced key programmes for the shelter that I will be discussing as some of the shelter interventions. These include long- and short-term therapies, programmes for the youth, a counselling programme for female prisoners, and an orphanage. While her main mandate is driving the overall operation and running of the organisation, she also provides individual professional counselling to abused women in the shelter.

4.3.2 The Mission and Vision of Ihata Shelter

Ihata aims to be a provider of care and shelter to women affected by violence against women. It helps women heal and recover from experiences of abuse through various therapy programs. The organisation has a goal of promoting independence and self-respect in women. Ihata emphasizes that its overall goal is to help in building a society that is free from violence against women. This organisation's literature notes that it is motivated by the values of love, respect, compassion and dignity in its efforts to assist women affected by violence (*Ihata Shelter Resident Policy*, Date accessed: 16 May 2018).

3.3.3 Services at Ihata Shelter

Ihata Shelter is well known in Heideveld and surrounding areas for offering shelter, food and support to abused women for a period of up to six months. During their stay, the women receive individual counselling and participate in group therapy sessions. According to the facilitators of the therapy programme, the purpose is to help women recover from their experiences of abuse. Some of the therapy programs include a group therapy session, which they call the 90-day programme, garden therapy, and yoga. Ihata also offers vocational skills such as sewing, beading and weaving. They also function as forms of therapy for abused women in the shelter.

As a shelter that accommodates women and their children, Ihata offers services for children too. The organisation has an onsite crèche facility and a nursery for children under two years

of age. The shelter also has an aftercare programme for school-going children. One of the purposes of these facilities for children is to allow women with children the time to go through the programmes offered in the shelter. In these facilities, Ihata runs learning and play therapy programmes. According to Nuraan Osman, the other purpose of these children therapy sessions is to stimulate the development of children who were abused and neglected, and who witnessed their mothers being abused.

While Ihata's core service is providing refuge to abused women, the organisation also facilitates other activities. Closely related to its work on violence against women, Ihata runs a youth program called Academy for Growing Exemplary Members (AGEM). This is a programme that focuses on character building and self-discipline for the youth living on the Cape Flats. According to one of the 'Captains' of AGEM, many of the townships and suburbs on Cape Flats areas are affected by crime, gangsterism and violence against women. In such areas, youth lack positive role models (AGEM Captain Munyaradzi, 8 June 2018). AGEM aims at instilling good values, its main motto being 'manners maketh a man.' Youths in this programme are taught that all relationships must be in perfect harmony. The programme aims to groom boys to respect girls and women so that they do not become perpetrators of violence. It also teaches both girls and boys about healthy relationships, with the aim of preventing young women from becoming victims of gender-based violence (*Annual Report 2017*, Ihata 2017). The youth programme closely resonates with the shelter's vision to build a society free from gender-based violence.

Ihata also has an orphanage aid programme that caters for the basic needs and education of orphans. It has a programme at Worcester Female Correctional Facility for women in prison. that is called the Sisters Sitting Sentences programme. The aim of the latter is to help women in prison rebuild their self-esteem and self-awareness. It also teaches these prisoners skills on how to reintegrate in societies where ex-offenders are not easily accepted

(http://ihatashelter.org.za/prison-outreach/ Date accessed: 11 October 2019). The shelter also runs feeding schemes, distributing food to vulnerable people in the communities of Valhalla Park, Lavender Hill, Heideveld and Manenberg. During the month of Ramadan, Ihata runs a weekly soup kitchen, hosts mass *iftars* (evening meals at the breaking of the fast), and distributes food packages to pensioners and struggling families (http://ihatashelter.org.za/project/community-outreach/ Date accessed: 11 October 2019). These services clearly reflect the wide range of philanthropic work of Ihata and its involvement in providing different social services in Cape Town. My focus in this research is only on Ihata Shelter's work with abused women.

3.3.4 Organisational Management

Ihata Shelter consists of a female Muslim Managing Director and the Executive board. The executive board had members from Muslim communities as well as a female police officer from Manenberg Police Station. In the course of this study, I attended and enjoyed observer status at the organization's 2017 Annual General Meeting. In the Annual General Meeting that I attended most of them used religious expressions in their conversations. Some of the statements included *Inshallah* (if Allah wills it) and *alhamdulillah* (praise be to God). Such religious language reflected Muslim identity of some of the board members. Most of the members in the management team were Muslims. While there were no explicit religious criteria for the selection of the management team, all the board members were religious. However, selection was based on expertise, one of the board members was a male Muslim who was selected based on his expertise in accounting. Another non-Muslim female was selected based on her expertise in gender issues yet another female police officer was selected based on her expertise in law enforcement.

3.3.5 Religion at Ihata Shelter

Religion was central in some of the services that were offered at Ihata. It was central in the lives of staff, volunteers, and even the beneficiaries at Ihata. Such presence and place of religious beliefs and practices at the shelter showed the centrality of religion to the operation of Ihata shelter. However, despite being a Muslim organisation, Ihata Shelter accepted other religious values and teachings to be taught to women in the shelter. During the time of my study, I witnessed Christian pastors and lay leaders offer religious services in the shelter.

Ihata embraced diversity by accepting women who espoused other religions and being tolerant towards religious values from other religions. Nuraan Osman, however, emphasised that the work of Ihata is influenced by Muslim principles:

> Our role is to ensure that the practice of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) is adhered to. He said: 'If a person relieves a person of his trouble. Allah will relieve him of his troubles on the Day of Resurrection' (*2017 Annual General Meeting Report*, Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children Date accessed:11 May 2018).

While Osman says the work of Ihata is a response to the problem of violence against women in South Africa, she also explicitly emphasizes that Ihata's work as an Islamic duty, as demonstrated here in the sayings (hadith) of the Prophet Muhammad (Annual Report, 2017). This shows the importance and influence of religious values in the work of Ihata Shelter. While FBOs actors may be concerned with meeting the needs of the less privileged, or fill the gap caused by the incapacities of governments to provide social services, it appears that they are also motivated by the need to fulfil their personal religious duties. Based on the above quotation, it is possible that Muslims at Ihata Shelter are also motivated to help abused women so that Allah may help them on the Day of Resurrection.

A noticeable feature at Ihata Shelter is their strict observance of the Islamic code of *halaal* food, that is foods and the preparation thereof that are lawful or permissible according to Muslim belief. In addition, although it was not mandatory, I also observed the housemother encourage women both Muslims and non-Muslims to fast during the month of Ramadan. The housemother emphasized the importance of fasting; she believed that women had to fast for Allah to help them with the problems that they were going through (Aunt Chiedzo, 15 May 2018). Ihata also celebrates both *Eid al-Fitr* and *Eid al-Adha*, Muslim holidays that are important to all Muslims. A day before *Eid* celebrations the shelter prepared for meals to share with the community and women and children in the shelter received gifts. These practices at the shelter ensure a prominent Muslim identity. But this prominent Muslim identity at Ihata Shelter does not mean that other religious practices or values are not present. Every Wednesday at 3pm, the women at the shelter observed prayers and Bible study services with a Pastor. Both Christian and Muslim women attended the Christian religious sessions led by a pastor, while Christian women also observed fasting during Ramadan. During the period of my fieldwork, only Christian religious leaders offered these services. Nuraan Osman told me that although Ihata is a Muslim shelter, it accepts diversity. This inclusivity reflects Ihata's tolerance of religious differences. This suggests harmony and cordial relations between Christians and Muslims in the context of this organisation.

Religion was also explicitly present in the way the arts and craft skills programme was facilitated. This programme was also run by Christian volunteers who visited the shelter every Tuesday. The sessions always began with an opening prayer and ended with a closing prayer. These volunteers always read Christian motivational stories to provide hope to the women in the shelter. They also distributed Bibles and took prayer requests from the women.

Unlike SAFFI, there were no organized religious practices for staff at Ihata. But most of the staff constantly referred to their respective religions in their facilitations of different

programmes. And most of the permanent staff were Muslims. Out of the 12 staff members that were at Ihata during the time of my fieldwork, eight were Muslim while four were Christian. Ihata was clearly a shelter that emphasized its specific Muslim identity. But a closer observation of its routine indicated that it accepted and incorporated Christian values and practices in its intervention strategies.

3.3.6 Source of Funding

Ihata Shelter obtains funding from different sources, which include Muslim organisations, Muslim businesses, South African businesses in general, and individual donors. The organisation also generates funds through the PayFast online donation platform. In 2019, the organisation opened a second-hand charity shop. The profits made from this venture are used to fund the shelter.

When this shelter was founded, the organisation declared:

> '…we receive no government and corporate funding and we survive with the Grace of Allah (SWT)…Most shelters receive funds from the Lotto (directly or indirectly) and we are unable to accept these funds http://www.muslim.co.za/organisations/irfsa Date accessed: 15 October 2019).

However, that position has shifted. While from the perspectives of the founders of the shelter the organisation strictly could not accept Lotto funds as they regarded it as unlawful according to Muslim principles, according to Nuraan, the organisation now applies for Lotto funds and has also received donations from the City of Cape Town (Nuraan Osman, Telephone Interview, 23 June 2020).

The main donor of Ihata Shelter is Muslim Aid Australia (MAA), which has been funding Ihata since 2011. Apart from funding Ihata's Shelter for Abused Women and Children, MAA also

funds other Ihata projects such as their orphanage, prisoners', and youth programmes. Ihata also receives donations from other Muslim organisations such as Al Imaad Foundation (*Ihata Billboard*, May 2018). However, I observed that Ihata does not publicize its financial statements on its online media platforms.

As mentioned, Ihata also relies on donations from Muslim businesses. On 26 October 2019, the Ilk Nur in conjunction with Suriy and Faya Cotton Kids retail clothing shops hosted a High Tea Show in aid of Ihata Shelter. The tickets for this event costed R160 per person and all the profits were donated to Ihata (https://www.facebook.com/ilk.nur.94009841 Date accessed: 27 October 2019). In addition, in December 2019 Ihata Shelter also received a cheque of R10 000 from Management College of Southern Africa (MANCOSA) which is also an Islamic institution https://social-tv.co.za/proceeds-of-womens-leadership-event-donated-to-a-good-cause/ Date accessed: 17 June 2020).

Ihata also receives donations from various South African businesses such as Fashion World, Woolworths Foods (Pinelands branch) and Dis-Chem. Every Tuesday during the period of my fieldwork, Ihata Shelter received donations of various food items from Woolworths Foods Store (Pinelands branch) (Ihata Shelter May/June 2018). In August 2018, the organization received a donation from The Dis-Chem Foundation of a brand-new washing machine, educational toys and books for children, and a DisChem store voucher to purchase goods worth R8000 each month for a period of one year.[14]

Some of the donations Ihata receives come from individual donors. In 2016, Jimmy Nevis, a South African pop singer, donated winter goods worth R40 000 to the shelter. In Ihata's 2017 Annual Report, several individuals were thanked and acknowledged as donors who supported the shelter both in cash and kind (*Annual General Meeting Report*, Ihata 2017).

[14] The Pippa Hudson Show, 'Random Acts of Kindness', Cape Talk, 12 August 2018.

Ihata's funding pool is highly diverse. The funds Ihata receives from their main donor, Muslim Aid Australia, reflects a relationship the organisation has with international organisations and Islam. It appears that Ihata mostly receives donations from Muslim businesses and individuals who share the same religious orientation as Ihata. However, the funds the organisation also receives from other South African businesses reflect their flexibility and the relationship that Ihata enjoys with non-religious organisations. I found it interesting, however, that an organisation that could not receive government funds due to religious reasons has recently begun to seek government funds. This therefore reflects how FBOs do not remain static and change over time.

3.3.7 Ihata Shelter in the Media

Ihata markets itself on media platforms such as Facebook, newspapers and local radio stations. The organisation also has a functional website. This website provides the history of the organisation and its satellite projects as well as its mission, and the services it offers. Ihata also uses this website to seek online donations.

Ihata has an active Facebook page were regular updates on the organisation's activities are posted. I started following this page from May 2017. As of July 2020, this Facebook page had 2391 likes. Although some of the posts do not receive many comments, shares and likes, it appears that some others the posts are well received. From the Facebook posts of Ihata Shelter that I followed, some received over 70 likes, while others induced about 50 shares. Ihata's Facebook page therefore seemed to have active followers.

Ihata also features on local radio stations such as Voice of the Cape, Heart FM, CapeTalk radio. On 4 April 2017, Ihata Shelter was invited onto the Voice of the Cape's *Breakfast Beat Show* to appeal for donations for the operations of the shelter. In this show, the Director of the organisation explained some of the key activities of Ihata and their value to the community.

This was also published by News24 news platform. Ihata emphasized the centrality of its work in Heideveld community and how closing of the shelter due to lack of funds may negatively impact the community (https://www.news24.com/news24/southafr<?says Date accessed: 15 October 2019). On 12 August 2018 Ihata was also invited onto Cape Talk Radio's *The Pippa Hudson Show* where, as part of the Dis-Chem 'Random Acts of Kindness' initiative, they were awarded the donation from Dis-Chem mentioned in a previous section of this study.[15] These examples illustrate that media platforms were mainly used to seek donations and gain publicity for the organization.

Ihata Shelter self-identifies as a faith-based organisation. The organisation has a strong philanthropic ethos. It provides social services to abused women, youths, women in prison and orphans. From my observations, I conclude that Ihata has a strong religious orientation. This is clear from the name of the organization which has a religious meaning, the ways in which the activities of the organization are influenced by the Islamic principles of helping others, the influence of religion in the lives of its staff members, as well as the presence of religion in the content of its programmes. My discussion above also reflected how religious practices such as praying, fasting and observing a *halaal* diet are clear at this shelter. These practices show the Islamic identity of Ihata Shelter. However, despite being a Muslim organisation, Hata Shelter embraces diversity and accepts Christian values and teachings within the shelter.

Ihata Shelter's services to victims of violence against women clearly reflect the presence of religion in the public life of South Africa in providing social services. Its relationship with South African business funders and its presence on local radio stations also show that this religious organisation is a part of the public sphere. Religious groups like Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children are an important part of the public landscape of South Africa in

[15] The Pippa Hudson Show, Random Acts of Kindness radio program, Cape Talk radio, 12 August 2018.

addressing violence against women. It appears that the relationship of Ihata Shelter and the South African government is characterized by cooperation given how the organization collaborates and partners with the government through delivering social services to abused women. As I elaborated in Chapter two, the South African government White Paper or Social Welfare policy recognizes organizations such as Ihata Shelter as partners (Van der Merwe, Swart and Hendricks 2009, 133). Whether Ihata Shelter might directly or not be directly motivated by the need to help the government, providing social welfare services which is the responsibility of the state makes it a key partner of the government.

4.4 St Anne's Homes

St Anne's Homes is an Anglican shelter located at 48 Balfour Street, Woodstock, in Cape Town. At the time of my fieldwork there, this organisation was already 117 years old. Part of that history was summarized in a booklet entitled, *A History of St Anne's Homes 1904-2004* which was compiled as part of its centenary celebrations.

4.4.1 History of St Anne's Homes

St Anne's Homes was established in 1904. According to Reverend Njongonkulu Ndungane, who is the former patron of St Anne's as well as an anti-apartheid activist and former Robben Island prisoner, the organisation was founded on the Christian vision of supporting vulnerable women with children. The name is taken from the mother of the Virgin Mary and the grandmother of Jesus. According to the booklet, the name Anne means 'full of grace'. But this was not the original name of the facility.

St Anne's Homes was started by a small group of Anglican women led by Miss M.H Curry, who rented a small apartment in Chapel Street in District 6 with the aim of accommodating any woman in need, irrespective of race or creed. The facility was first named 'The Refuge of

Good Shepherd.' At the time of its establishment, the house accommodated only six people. The following year, the organisation rented an adjoining house in order to provide accommodation for more women. The project grew, and two more adjoining houses were acquired. By 1922, the organisation was renamed The Cape Town Diocesan House for Friendless Girls. In 1927, organization was certified to include prison remand cases. Many women with suspended sentences or detention cases were offered accommodation at the shelter. Gradually, more houses were added and a whole block of Chapel Street was acquired, comprising three houses and two cottages.

St Anne's Home faced many difficulties through the years. In 1939, the organisation was struggling financially. It eventually secured a grant through the Central Housing Board and a new building was erected on the site (now 107 Chapel Street) which opened on 9 April 1942. In 1989, the focus of St Anne's broadened to include destitute women and children, and battered, raped and abused women. In 1990, however, St Anne's Home was threatened with closure as the organisation slid into bankruptcy. It decided to sell the 107 Chapel property and purchased a smaller property. On 5 March 1991, St Anne's Home moved premises to 48 Balfour Street, Woodstock, which is its current address.

In 1993, St Anne's realized the need to have a second-stage house for residents who find employment but are not yet ready or able to provide a home for themselves. The organization then bought a house in Listowel Street, which is a few blocks away from Balfour Street. The house accommodates six women and their children. Women can stay at this house, paying affordable rent, for up to a period of one year. This gives the women enough time to prepare for full empowerment. After acquiring the second home, the name of the organisation changed from St Anne's Home to St Anne's Homes.

Joy Lange

Joy Lange was the Executive Director of St Anne's Home at the time of my research there. Joy was born and bred in the Cape Flats township of Bridgetown during the time of apartheid. She holds a post graduate diploma in Child and Family Studies from the Department of Social Work at the University of the Western Cape and, at the time of this study, was studying towards a master's degree in Child and Family studies at the same institution.

Joy grew up in a religious family who attended Anglican church in Silvertown. She told me that her mother was rooted in the church; that she was a pillar in that community in rearing abandoned children and assisting abused women. Joy explained that her family was very involved in humanitarian work, and that this was one of the major factors that motivated her to help others:

> My mother was visionary so was her mother. My grandmother was called in different homes whenever there were cases of domestic violence. This was the same thing with my mother. My first experience of seeing domestic violence I was eleven. In the middle of the night our neighbour banged our front door in her pyjamas because her husband was beating her. She slept in our house and she was safe for that night (Joy Lange, Interview: 18 October 2020).

Joy emphasized that her current work with abused women was motivated by her mother and grandmother's work in assisting abused women: 'I see myself and my work as an extension of my mother's legacy, which was the same for her and her mother.' Joy herself has passed this legacy of humanitarian work onto the next generation. Her children, nephews and nieces are also involved in humanitarian work. One of her nieces is passionate about assisting abused women in her community.

Joy joined St Anne's Homes in 2009 after 20 years of working at Woolworths, a retail company. She had worked in the Finance and Human Resources Department at Woolworths

but in 1998 was redeployed to their community development projects. Joy was part of the Woolworths philanthropy corporate social responsibility team that directed Woolworths funds and goods to various non-governmental organisations, and this was how she got to know about St Anne's Homes. Elizabeth Petersen, founder of SAFFI was the Director of St Anne's Homes at the time and invited Joy to sit on the board of St Anne's Homes. Joy served from 1999 to 2009, when she applied for the post of Director: 'What drove me to start volunteering on the board of St Anne's is that I wanted to make the world a better place.' Joy adds that violence against anyone is not from God. It is a violation of human rights and it strips a person of her dignity and self-worth. She explained how cases of violence against women affects her and drives her to help the abused.

Joy sees working at an Anglican shelter as part of God's Plan:

> Our steps are ordained. I believe that God ordered my steps and he prepared me for the work at St Anne's. God set me at a company where I was able to learn all the skills through community development before I came to St Anne's. Serving in the board for 10 years was also God's plan to prepare me for my current work (Joy Lange, Telephone Interview: 18 October 2020).

Joy's role at St Anne's involves giving strategic direction to the organisation and overseeing the overall running of the shelter. One of her major milestones as the Director of St Anne's Homes was being able to come up with projects that raise funds to sustain the shelter.

> When I got to St Anne's it never generated its own income. I started a sustainability program where every month we had a breakfast sale and a second-hand clothing sale. I remember in 2009 we raised R11 000 from a single breakfast sell. We are currently able to generate R350 000 from these projects. In August 2020 we decided to open a

> charity shop and that shop generated R29 900 in August alone, my dream is for St Anne's to become more self-sustainable (Joy Lange, Interview: 18 October 2020).

Joy also managed to look for bursaries for the women at the shelter to further their studies. At the time of my fieldwork, these scholarships had helped about twenty-two women. One of the recipients was a woman who had been illiterate and later went to school. Joy encouraged another staff member to finish her high school education with a bursary. This particular staff member now has a National Qualification (NQF) Level Five in Early Childhood Development. Joy also encouraged another staff member, a shelter cook, to study. This staffer went on to become an auxiliary social worker.

Apart from her work as the Director, Joy is involved in other advocacy work for abused women. She is a member of the Global Network on Women's Shelters (GNWS), and a member of the Africa Network of Women Shelters (ANWS). She serves as an executive member of the National Shelter Movement of South Africa (NSM). With the aim of taking their grievances to the government collectively, Joy formed the Western Cape Shelter Movement with members from other shelters in the Western Cape. In 2011, she personally assisted with registering this movement as a non-profit organisation. This organisation is now affiliated to the National Shelter Movement of South Africa (NSM).

Joy has joined several public campaigns against the abuse of women, including #EnoughIsEnough, a campaign against gender-based violence which gained prominence in South Africa in 2019 following a series of rapes and murders of women in the country. Joy pointed out a major personal challenge that she faces in her work: how seeing and hearing the experiences of people affected by abuse every day emotionally affects her.

4.4.2 Mission of St Anne's Homes

St Anne's Homes states that it is motivated by its Christian principles to assist abused women. Its mission statement states that St Anne's Homes provides shelter and support to abused women to show God's love (*Annual Report 2016/2017* St Anne's Homes, 2017). St Anne's provides therapy and vocational skills to women in the shelter within a framework of Christian values of love, compassion and respect. St Anne's Homes explicitly state that;

> As an expression of God's love, we seek to provide shelter and support for pregnant, abused and homeless women with children; through a holistic self-empowerment program that develops social, personal, creative and vocational skills within a framework of Christian values and discipline and a culture of mutual learning, accountability and respect for the unique value of every human being St Anne's Home Annual Report 2015-2016).

4.4.3 Core Services at St Anne's Homes

St Anne's Homes accommodates up to twenty-one abused women and their children. The organisation provides meals, bedding and toiletries. Women can stay for a period of up to six months. St Anne's Homes' second stage house accommodates about four to six employed women who live in a communal accommodation. Women who are moved to the second stage house still require additional support before achieving complete independence.

St Anne's Homes provides individual counselling and group therapy sessions as part of the recovery process. The organisation teaches vocational skills such as candle making, sewing, baking, jewellery making, painting and computer literacy training. It also offers opportunities to study short courses such as home-based care courses.

St Anne's Homes also assists women with the process of obtaining protection orders. It provides support to women with cases in court and escorts them to court hearings. During my

time there, the organisation also assisted undocumented women and children to apply for national identity cards and birth certificates from the Department of Home Affairs.

This organisation has an onsite nursery and crèche for children from under the age of five years only. St Anne's Homes only accommodates women with children who are five years old or younger. According to the Director Joy, the reason for this age restriction is to avoid the challenge of having mothers who miss the shelter's daily programmes due to taking children to schools (Joy, 21 June 2018). The onsite crèche and nursery take care of all the children during the day to allow the women to attend all the programmes. The crèche also offers therapy to the children who were traumatized by their own or their mother's experiences of abuse.

4.4.4 Organisational Management

In St Anne's Homes history booklet, Brown highlighted that the management of the organisation was first carried out by charitable Anglican women who founded the organisation. From 1959 to around 1976, Anglican nuns and priests of the Order of the Holy Paraclete took over the management of the shelter. At the 1990 Annual General Meeting, new management was elected for its expertise in fundraising. Social workers and directors were appointed, and a committee comprising staff was appointed. This new system of management became the standard for appointing the management committee until today. The selection of board members is not determined by religious affiliation. The management board members are elected based on their ability, involvement and positive contribution to the organization (http://www.stanneshomes.org.za/who-we-are/ Date accessed: 18 October 2019). The St Anne's Homes 2016-2017 Annual Report states that two board members were welcomed to the board for their financial and accounting expertise (Chairperson's Report, Annual Report 2016-2017).

Although religious criteria are irrelevant in the management of the shelter, there are specific positions in the leadership structure that are reserved for religious leaders. According to the Joy Lange, the constitution of St Anne's Homes stipulates that the person ordained in the office of Anglican Archbishop of the province of South Africa automatically becomes the patron of the organisation. Furthermore, the constitution also mandates that the board of St Anne's Homes should have an Anglican priest for pastoral care (Joy Lange, Telephone Interview, 18 October 2020).

Religion at St Anne's Homes

Christianity is clearly central at St Anne's Home. Its importance manifested in different ways. Firstly, Christian practices are part of the day-to-day activities. The organisation had a culture of conducting daily devotions which were compulsory for all staff members to attend. Secondly, facilitators of therapy and skills programs included Christian teachings in their sessions. The social worker and the auxiliary social worker constantly referred to God in therapy sessions. The social worker expressed her appreciation for being able to work at an organisation with a religious orientation that was the same as hers:

> I had prayed long and hard to work at an organisation where I can speak about God openly and not to be afraid to share his goodness and grace with my clients… I have long discovered that social work chose me, and it's really a calling. I consider myself to be one of God's helpers (St Anne's Newsletter, Issue 11, November 2018).

The social worker was motivated by Christian religious values in her work with abused women at St Anne's. Although St Anne's Homes stated that it respects religious diversity through accepting women and staff from other religious traditions, in the conversations that I had with the women and staff at St Anne's Homes, all said that they are Christians except for one woman who said she was Muslim.

4.4.5 Source of Funding

St Anne's is funded by the government, non-governmental organisations, churches, South African businesses, and individual donors. St Anne's Homes annual budget was R4 million in 2020. The Department of Social Development is the main donor, providing 40% of the total budget, and the rest is raised through donations and fundraising projects (Joy Lange, Telephone Interview: 18 October 2020). In 2015, the annual budget of St Anne's Homes was around R2,8millon and the organization received R742 355 from the Department of Social Development. In 2016 it received R975 194 from the same department (*2015/2016 Annual Report,* St Anne's Homes 2016). Having the government as the main funder clearly reflects some form of relationship and collaboration between St Anne's Homes and the state. While St Anne's Homes benefits from government funds for their operation, the government benefits from the social services St Anne's Homes provides to citizens.

St Anne's Homes also gets donations from churches. Some of these include Pentecostal churches such as Edge Church, Christ Embassy and Celebration Church. It also receives donations from several Anglican churches around Cape Town. Some of these include St Oswald's, St Mark's, St Andrew's, St Martin's and St George's Cathedral. Joy indicated that the organisation receives donations from these churches both in the form of goods and cash. But Jou said that it does not formally receive any funds from the mother body Anglican Church of Southern Africa (Joy Lange, Telephone Interview: 18 October 2020).

Like other FBO's, St Anne's Homes also gets donations from several prominent South African companies. These include food retail shops such as Woolworths, Checkers and Shoprite. It also receives donations from hotels in Cape Town such as The President Hotel, Victoria Junction Hotel, Garden Court Hotel Woodstock, Grand Daddy Boutique Hotel and Cape Grace Hotel. Apart from retail supermarkets and hotels, St Anne's also gets donations from Vodacom, one

of the largest telecommunications companies in South Africa, and from First National Bank. These organisations donate to St Anne's Homes both in cash and in kind.

St Anne's Homes also seeks donations online through the PayFast donation link. (St Anne's Homes website, Date accessed: 18 October 2019). To supplement the donor funds it receives, St Anne's run a monthly second-hand clothes market, and on 1 November 2019, the organisation launched a Charity shop. The profits go towards the shelter's expenses (https://www.facebook.com/stanneshomes/?Date accessed: 31 October 2019). The Shelter also sells the different items made by the women in their arts and crafts skills classes, which include jewellery, aprons, candles and cushions.

St Anne's Homes has classified its donors under four categories. Category one consists of donors who donated R1000 and below, the second category are donors who donate R1000 and above. The third group are donors who donate R10 000 and above, and the fourth category comprise donors who donated R30 000 and more. The table below provides a summary of the number of donations that St Anne's received in the financial years 2015/2016 and 2016/2017.

Financial Year	Plus R30 000	Plus R10 000	Plus R1000	Less R1000
2015-2016	9	12	27	5
2016-2017	13	14	29	24

An analysis of the number of donors in this table highlights an increase in year 2016-2017. And small and large donors are evenly distributed. In general, however, Anne's Homes indicates lack of enough funds for its operations as one of its major challenges.

4.4.6 St Anne's Homes in the Media

The organisation has a functional website and an active Facebook page. As of July 2020, St Anne's Homes Facebook page had two thousand two hundred and seventy-two followers and the page had received a total of two thousand two hundred and thirty likes. This page was mainly used to share reintegration stories and successful beneficiaries. Secondly, it was used to raise awareness on issues of gender-based violence. Lastly, the platform was used to seek donations. Although some of the posts do not receive many likes and comments, other posts on this page receive over hundred and seventy likes and about fifty comments (St Anne's Homes Facebook Page, Date accessed: 22 June 2020).

St Anne's Homes also features on media platforms such as News24, Hear FM (radio) and SABC3 (television). The organisation markets its work through stories of beneficiaries. Selected women were interviewed by News24 and they shared their recovery journeys at St Anne's Home's. The narratives of these women illustrated how the organisation has changed and transformed them. Apart from this, St Anne's was also invited on various local and national television stations to speak about gender-based violence. St Anne's Homes mainly uses media platforms to market the nature of its work and to seek donations.

In summary, St Anne's Homes is the oldest shelter for abused women in Cape Town. It is a Christian shelter founded by the Anglican church. It clearly says that its role in helping women affected by abuse is an expression of God's love. Religion plays a significant role in the operation as well as in the lives of staff at this organisation. St Anne's Homes has a strong Christian identity which was explicit in its mission statement. The history of the organization showed that the organization was founded and governed by religious persons. Although the management of the organization changed over time, the organization still reserves certain leadership and management positions to religious leaders.

The involvement of St Anne's Home's in providing support for women against violence show the continued presence and influence of religious organisations in South Africa. According to Sider and Unruh (2004, 113), faith-based organisations with a strong religious ethos would strictly receive funding from religious communities, and have a policy to reject any funds that undermines religious mission and identity. This does not apply to St Anne's Homes. As I have shown above, the Department of Social Development is the main funder of St Anne's Homes. St Anne's Homes collaborates with the government in providing social services to abused women.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the history and structure of the South African Faith & Family Institute (SAFFI), the Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children, and St Anne's Homes. I selected these organisations to show their unique and diverse perspective on FBO interventions in addressing violence against women in Cape Town. SAFFI draws on religious values from different religious groups to provide training and education on violence against women to religious leaders and religious communities from Islam, Hinduism, and African Traditional Religions, Judaism, Christianity and the Bahà'ì Faith. Ihata Shelter is mainly motivated by Islamic values to provide shelter and support to abused women and children, but it does not avoid turning to Christian practices and values in its programmes. St Anne's Home is a more strictly Christian shelter motivated by Christian values.

The mission statements, organizational values, management, sources of funding, religious practices such as praying, fasting and bible study that I discussed above illustrate the centrality of religion within these organisations. These organisations self-identified as faith-inspired organisations concerned with addressing violence against women. Religion is central in the life of workers in these organizations, seen in the prayers and devotions that mark daily routines.

Workers regarded their jobs as a calling by God to help abused women. Despite the absence of a precise definition of what makes an FBO in the literature, the religious identities and importance of religion cannot be mistaken in these FBOs.

The life trajectories of key persons in the FBOs sheds light on another point that may be highlighted. The trajectories traced the development and engagement of these individuals to gender-based violence. Their religious development and engagement with various groups was clear. However, in each case, the trajectories also show how resources and values from social work (Petersen), counselling (Osman) and management (Lange) were incorporated into the FBOs.

The services offered by these three organisations reflect the presence of faith-based organisations in the public sphere in providing social services. These organisations use every opportunity to appear on national and local television, and radio stations. They use these opportunities to claim that religion can play a role in addressing gender-based violence. Through providing shelters and training on violence against women they show how they have responded to a public problem which challenges state and society in South Africa.

The continued role of these faith-based organisations in responding to the problem of violence against women suggests that religion is constitutive of the public life of South Africa. Their work reflects how FBOs compliment the state by providing social services that is the prerogative of the South Africa post-apartheid state founded on human rights values and socio-economic redress. These three organizations collaborate and partner with the South African government in dealing with the scourge of violence against women. The work of FBOs reflects the importance and continued presence of religion in public life.

Having provided the background and the identities of these three FBOs, and their important role in public social services, there is need to be show how they serve victims of gender-based violence. Beyond their claims in media and public life, what do they really do for women who turn to them when they are abused and violated? How do they offer training on violence against women to religious leaders and religious communities? These are the central questions of my study, the interventions of the FBOs in the scourge of violence against women. I will demonstrate that they seek to transform the individuals who come to them through rites of passage.

5 CHAPTER FIVE: RITE OF PASSAGE AT IHATA SHELTER FOR ABUSED WOMEN

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I identified three FBOs that offer a diverse perspective of how religious groups address violence against women in Cape Town. I now focus on how each of these FBOs carry out their interventions. As I have mentioned in Chapter Two, very few studies focus on how FBOs carry out their activities or interventions. My study fills this gap in research by identifying, analysing and assessing the interventions of these three organisations. I will discuss how these three FBOs carry their interventions in three separate chapters. This chapter is a case study of Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children (hereinafter referred to as Ihata or Ihata Shelter). In Chapter Six I will present a case study of St Anne's Homes and in Chapter Seven I will focus on the South African Faith & Family Institute.

Guided by the framework of rites of passage which I have explained in detail in Chapter Three, my focus is on the transformative nature of rites of passage. I will describe how Ihata Shelter assists victims of violence against women. According to Van Gennep, rites of passage are marked by three phases: separation, transition, and incorporation (Van Gennep, 1960). I describe how women left abusive environments to join Ihata Shelter as the separation stage of a rite of passage. Their stay at Ihata shelter represented the transition stage, during which they experienced a new meaning of life. After a period of training and therapy, they return to their communities which marked the incorporation stage.

5.2 Separation

In this phase, the abused women separated from their homes, families, familiar environments and routines, and joined Ihata Shelter. Ihata Shelter is a safe environment where the gates are always locked. This dramatized the process of alienation (Berry and Berry, 1984). Access to the shelter and the exiting of the women was controlled as well as watched over by security

systems and cameras. Women in the shelter were not allowed to leave the premises without a permission pass issued by the administrator. Those who received a pass to leave the shelter were required to inform the administrators where they were going, the telephone number of their destination, and a stipulated return time. Women who were issued gate passes had to return to the shelter by 5pm. The shelter has a warning system for those who break these rules. Following the first warning, one was not allowed to leave the premises. After the second warning, one would be denied a weekend permission sleepout. Upon the third warning, one would be evicted from the shelter.

Women who went to Ihata Shelter were taken through what Ihata refers to as the 'intake process.' I see this intake process as the first step of the separation stage. Women were assessed to see if they met the criteria to be admitted into the shelter. To be eligible, a woman was supposed to be a victim of any form of gender-based violence. Substance abusers were only admitted on the condition that they were also victims of violence against women. The assessment was done by the Director of the shelter, the social worker, or the social auxiliary worker. This marked the first counselling session with the abused woman.

In an interview that I had with the social worker to understand the intake process at Ihata Shelter, I was informed that women share their experiences of abuse upon arrival. She assesses whether the woman is a victim of abuse. She also said that once found eligible, the organisation requires her to produce her identity documents and details of her next of kin. If a woman is accompanied by her children, she must produce the birth certificates of her children. In cases of referral, one is expected to produce the letter of referral. After the registration process, clients are escorted to their furnished bedrooms and to a tour around the shelter facilities. These facilities included a communal dining room, bathrooms, a library, TV room and skills room. Clients were also shown the crèche and nursery where they could leave their children while

they attend shelter programmes (Social Worker, 16 May 2018). The day of intake marked the first day of the women at Ihata Shelter.

I conducted interviews with the women, who shared their separation experiences. They narrated their experiences living in abusive environments and the events that led them to leave those environments and join the shelter. One of the women, Tambudzai a twenty-nine-year-old coloured woman who also identified as a Muslim, said that her boyfriend was abusive. She elaborated on how overprotective and jealous her boyfriend was. He used to beat her whenever they had a misunderstanding. One day, after an argument, Tambudzai ran away and resorted to prostitution.

> After leaving my boyfriend I became destitute, and I was taking drugs. I was deep into prostitution. This was the only way for me to survive. Being in the street and sleeping with different guys, I started facing abuse again. There was one incident where I was by hijacked by one guy who forced me to sleep with him. I tried fighting back but he eventually forced himself on me and raped me (Tambudzai, 16 May 2018).

Tambudzai met her cousin's friend, who recommended that she seek help from Ihata Shelter. When she arrived at Ihata Shelter, she was sent to the social worker, with whom she shared her story. Tambudzai explained that after she had shared her story, the social worker counselled her and confirmed that she was eligible to stay at Ihata. After providing all her personal details, Tambudzai was taken to a shared bedroom. This marked her first day at Ihata Shelter.

Another woman at the Ihata Shelter also explained her experiences of separation at Ihata. Takudzwa was a twenty-five-year-old married woman who had two children. She was also a Muslim. When I had a conversation with her, she said she was unemployed. On arrival, Takudzwa shared her story with the social worker. Takudzwa had faced all types of abuse at an early age, including sexual, physical, psychological and financial. She was raped by her

uncle and her cousin. She later got married to an abusive husband. Takudzwa said that her husband took advantage of her financial dependence on him. He was a drunkard and sometimes he would not buy food for her and her children. Whenever she confronted him about his irresponsibility, he would beat her in front of her children. Takudzwa later realized that this was affecting her children. One day she shared her problems with a lady from her friend's church, who advised her to seek help. This lady knew Nuraan, the Director of Ihata Shelter, and she referred Takudzwa to her. Takudzwa called Nuraan and she was given the directions to the shelter. She collected her children and together they ran away from her husband. This is how Takudzwa separated herself from an abusive partner and joined Ihata Shelter.

When she arrived at the shelter, the social auxiliary worker took care of her children while she received counselling from the social worker. After receiving counselling, she was admitted into the shelter together with her two children. She was asked to supply copies of her identity document and her children's birth certificates. Her children were registered at the onsite crèche. After the registration process, Takudzwa said that she and her kids were taken to a shared bedroom and she was shown facilities around the shelter (Takudzwa, 22 May 2018). Being at Ihata Shelter meant Takudzwa was free from the abuse she experienced in her home. This separation from abusive experiences thus marked the beginning of her journey of healing and recovery from the trauma of abuse.

Separation at Ihata, then, entailed a formal process of interview, a sharing of experience and the handing over of identity papers. These practices may be seen as a rite that took victims of violence from their places of abuse to a new place. Handing over identity documents confirmed their names, but it also symbolized the giving up of old identities. It is also interesting to note that Ihata seems to be well-known to members of society, who referred abused women to this shelter. The rite of separation may be identified to be starting from this referral.

5.3 Transition

The transitional or liminal phase at Ihata shelter entailed the experiences of women living at the shelter. Ihata shelter uses the term 'clients' to refer to these women. The term client is a term that is used in Social Work to refer to people who receive any services from a social worker (McClaughlin 2009, p. 1). Ihata Shelter likewise used this term from the social work perspective. It is to be noted that this was a formal term that was used in the records and documentation of the organisation. In everyday interactions, the women were called by their names.

The stay at Ihata marked the recovering and learning process for these women. The transition stage at Ihata could take up to six months; however, the Director of the shelter has the discretion to extend the period of stay depending on the situation or the problem of the resident. As part of the transition, clients were introduced to activities such as individual and group therapy sessions, vocational trainings, and religious teachings. I will draw on rites of passage theory to identify key elements and processes at the shelter. The activities were conducted in a fixed manner, each imbued with meaning. The activities were symbolic and created a platform for clients to heal from experiences of abuse. Some of these activities provided opportunities for emotional outlet, while others provided opportunities to address the problems of these clients. There were also activities designed to teach skills and prepare the clients for life after the shelter. Above all, the activities that the clients were introduced to were a passageway that helped the clients to move from their former abusive state to a free and non-abusive state.

5.3.1 Rules at Ihata Shelter

Ihata Shelter was governed by a set of rules which all the clients were expected to follow. All clients were encouraged to live in solidarity. They were not allowed to fight or have any weapons during their stay in the shelter. The clients were a communion of equal individuals

who together submitted to the authority of the housemother, the Director of the organisation and the shelter staff. They were all expected to respect staff members. Regardless of their status and positions before coming to the shelter, all clients were all equal. The use of alcohol and drugs was prohibited. Staff members had the right to conduct a random drug test if they suspected that a client had used drugs (Social Worker, 16 May 2018). Smoking was only allowed in designated areas.

Clients were expected to take turns cleaning communal areas in the shelter. They were also expected to keep their personal living quarters clean. The housemother regularly conducted inspections of the clients' living spaces. It was compulsory to attend all the programmes that were offered at the shelter. Clients were expected to make prior arrangements with an administrator if they were not able to attend any programme. The use of cell phones was strictly prohibited during programmes and when the clients were on their cleaning duties. Inappropriate language and behaviours were prohibited.

Clients had a set timetable which they were meant to follow. All clients were instructed to wake up early. A typical day at Ihata began at around 5am. They were all required to shower and be appropriately dressed. This was followed by taking part in their daily duties as designated by the housemother. Some of these duties included cooking and cleaning of communal areas such as the dining room, toilets and the television room. After daily duties, clients who had children there had to prepare the children to go to the on-site nursery and crèche. Around 7am, all the clients and their children ate breakfast in a communal dining hall. After breakfast, the children were taken to crèche as the clients prepared for the activities of the day.

A day at Ihata was highly structured. A 2-hour group therapy session called the 90-day programme is scheduled from 9am to 11am, Monday to Friday. Every Tuesday, from 11am–12pm, clients attended Yoga sessions. After that, from 12pm to 1pm, they attended Arts and

crafts classes. Daily lunch hour was set for 1pm to 2pm. On Wednesdays, 11am to 12pm was reserved for Gardening sessions. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 12pm to 1pm was designated for sewing classes. From 2pm to 4pm on Wednesdays, clients attended spiritual upliftment sessions with a religious leader. Most of the time, the period after lunch and weekends were specified as free time for clients.

Rituals at Ihata Shelter

Following my theoretical framework, I am calling the therapy programmes, vocational skills and religious teachings 'rituals.' Together, they contributed to a phase of transition that prepared clients for life after Ihata. The purpose of the therapy programmes was to help the clients to share their experiences of abuse and to heal from the trauma caused by abuse. The vocational skills training intended to teach clients income generating skills that would help them after leaving the shelter. These skills also helped the clients to forget their sorrows, restore their confidence and heal from experiences of abuse. Religious teaching programs were spiritual upliftment sessions that provided hope to clients. I turn to discuss how each of these rituals were carried out when I was present at Ihata.

5.3.2 Therapy Programs

There were at least three main therapy programmes at Ihata. The first was individual counselling for clients. The second, a special group therapy programme called the 90-day programme was designed for all clients. And thirdly, a yoga programme was facilitated for clients on Tuesdays. The overall goal of these programmes was to help clients to recover from trauma that was caused by abuse.

Individual Counselling

Ihata Shelter had individual counselling sessions for clients. These were one-on-one sessions conducted by the social worker and the social auxiliary worker. Individual counselling sessions were confidential; therefore, I could not observe these sessions. Based on an interview that I had with the social worker, the purpose of these sessions was to allow each client to share her experiences of abuse and receive guidance to help her to recover from such experiences. The social worker elaborated on that, saying that although all the clients were victims of abuse, their experiences were different, and they therefore needed personal, individual attention (Social Worker 16 May 2018).

The social worker explained that she carefully listens to the stories of clients to build trust and promote a good rapport and relationship with them. She allows her clients to speak openly about their experiences and express their emotions. The social worker highlighted that this is one of the important steps in the process of recovery. She further noted that the counselling sessions help some clients to gain the confidence to leave abusive relationships. The sessions also help clients to forgive their abusers and move on with their lives. It is also in these sessions that she helps the clients to establish future goals and draw up a plan of what they intend to do after they leave the shelter (Social Worker, 16 May 2018). The individual counselling sessions revealed awareness of the process involved in a rite of passage.

In a conversation that I had with one of the clients, she indicated that individual counselling sessions were a good platform to share her story without feeling judged. Murombedzi elaborated that whenever she felt emotionally down and depressed, she requested to see the Social Worker. She noted that having a conversation with the counsellor helped her to feel better and to deal with her emotions. Murombedzi added that the advice she gleaned from counselling sessions helped her to feel confident to move on from an unhealthy relationship (Murombedzi, 21 May 2018).

90-Day Programme

The 90-day programme was a key group therapy programme for the clients at Ihata. I attended this programme for two months to observe how it was implemented. During my visit, there were twenty-one clients in this programme. According to one of the facilitators, the purpose of the programme was to help the clients recover from abuse and realize their worth (Facilitator Munyaradzi, 21 May 2018). The 90-day programme is divided into three stages, each 30 days long: the excavation stage, renunciation stage, and the liberation stage. In the excavation stage, facilitators created a platform for clients to share their experiences of abuse. In the renunciation stage, facilitators encouraged the clients to reject all forms of abuse that they had undergone. In the liberation stage, the purpose was to encourage women to be positive and to move on from the trauma that they experienced.

While there were general rules that governed Ihata Shelter, the 90-day programme had its own rules. Everyone was expected to be punctual. They were all expected to maintain confidentiality, behave appropriately, show respect and be honest. The clients were expected to be open-minded, accept criticism and be non-judgemental. In this program, clients agreed on a comradeship slogan. After each client shared her feelings, the rest of the clients affirmed by saying "we see you". The slogan was an acknowledgement that they were together with their fellow clients in their struggles.

I observed that each day of the program followed seven steps. Clients, together with the facilitators, sat in a circle with three candles of different colours in the middle of the circle. In the second step, any three clients were requested to each pick a candle, light it and say a prayer. These candles were left burning throughout the sessions. The third step was what they called the 'checking in' process. Each client was requested to give her name and share her current feeling. The fourth step was an ice-breaking activity. On each day, the facilitators introduced different ice-breaking activities. One of the facilitators told me that the ice-breaking activities

were to create an environment of teamwork among all the clients. The fifth step was the crucial step and changed according to the stage of the 90-day programme they were in. In the excavation stage, this was when clients shared their experiences of abuse. In the renunciation and liberation stage, they shared future plans. In the sixth step, all the women watched and listened to a five-minute motivational video which facilitators called the 'Dream video'. The concluding seventh step was called 'checking out'. This was for each client to share her feelings at the end of a session. This structure was followed every single day of the 90-day programme.

Excavation Stage

During the excavation stage, the facilitators produced creative activities that generated a platform for the clients to share their stories. In other words, these activities created an environment that enabled the clients to share their experiences of abuse. Explaining the essence of activities in the excavation stage, a facilitator of the stage said that 'It is dangerous to open a new door with a lot of baggage. This is to break you; we want to build a new foundation' (Facilitator Munyaradzi, 23 May 2018). The facilitators believed that it was important for the clients to first dig out or speak out all the experiences of abuse and express their emotions in the recovering process.

On the first day of excavation, everyone sat in a circle. In the middle of the circle there were three candles: one blue, one red and one green. Ropafadzo picked a red candle, lighted it and prayed; 'I pray for my children. A better life for me and my kids' (Ropafadzo, 21 May 2018). Dadirai picked a green candle and lighted it, saying, 'This symbolizes my growth' (Dadirai, 21 May 2018). Varaidzo picked a blue candle, lighted it and said 'I will stay positive' (Varaidzo, 21 May 2018). Then, the facilitator randomly picked one client to share her current feeling, followed by the client sitting next to her until everyone had shared what they felt at that moment.

Client 1: My name is Chido, I am feeling anxious.

Everyone: We see you!

Client 2: My name is Tinei, I am feeling scared.

Everyone: We see you!

Client 3: My name is Anashe, I am feeling *lekker* (Afrikaans slang, which means 'good').

Everyone: We see you!

Client: My name is Tambudzai, I have mixed emotions.

Everyone: We see you!

After 'checking in', the facilitators introduced an activity they called 'step a line activity.' One of the facilitators drew a straight line on the floor and instructed all the clients to stand on the left side of the line. He further instructed these clients to step to the right side of the line if they related to the question that he was going to ask. He began asking the following;

Who has a mother?

Who has both parents?

Who has ever stolen?

Who has neglected her children?

Who has ever used drugs?

Who has abused someone?

Who has ever been sexually abused?

As the facilitator asked these questions, clients who related to the given question stepped to the other side of the line. I observed that this exercise triggered emotional reactions from of some of the clients. Some cried and began to share their experiences of abuse. One client narrated how she was sexually abused twenty years ago. She expressed how she still remembered all the events. In tears, Tambudzai said: 'My own father raped me when I was eight years old. The memory of my father forcing himself on me is still fresh. It's been twenty years, but I still live with the pain that my own father took away my virginity' (Tambudzai,21 May 2018).

When I asked one of the facilitators the purpose of such an activity, he indicated that it was to help clients to acknowledge that some of their fellows in the shelter have experienced the same problem as theirs, and that they are not alone in their struggles. The facilitator added that activities of this sort make the clients feel more comfortable to share their stories.

At the end of 'step a line,' clients 'checked out.' during the 'check out,' clients expressed a diverse set of feelings. Chido, who expressed that she felt anxious during 'check in,' indicated in 'check out' that she felt relieved (Chido 21 May 2018). Tinei, who previously had indicated that she felt scared, expressed that she felt that she could trust her fellows (Tinei 21 May 2018). However, one of the clients who expressed that she felt anxious at the beginning of the session indicated that she still felt the same (Dadirai 21 May 2018).

'River of Life' Exercise

On another day, clients were introduced to an activity which the facilitators called the 'River of life'. This exercise allowed all the clients to share their life experiences in a creative manner. Each client was given a desk, a big chart and marker pens of different colours. In the form of art and description, clients were instructed to sketch their life journeys using a suitable colour that they believed represented events that happened in their lives.

This was a solo activity that was to be completed in total silence. Clients were given one hour and thirty minutes to complete the task. At the end of this task, one of the facilitators indicated that each client was to present her story to the group through the 'river of life' chart the following day. The day's session ended with the ritual of listening to the motivational video and checking out. During the 'check out', some women noted that there were feeling sad, while some felt anxious, and others felt scared.

The following day, the session began with an ice-breaker. With loud music in the background, the facilitators instructed the clients to walk into the room one at a time like beauty pageant contestants. The other clients cheered and screamed with excitement as each fellow client walked into the room. Unlike in the previous sessions, most of the clients 'checked in' on a positive note. Tinei said that she felt 'so happy and excited' (Tinei 23 May 2018). Another client noted: 'This makes me feel good about myself; I feel relieved and hopeful' (Chenai 23 May 2018).

After "check in", each client was given a chance to share her story through the 'river of life' chart they had all sketched the previous day. House rules were reaffirmed. No one could laugh or comment during the presentations. The facilitators emphasized that all the clients should maintain confidentiality. While all clients shared their life journeys, I will present the stories of only four clients in detail.

Tambudzai had shared this experience in the 'step a line' activity. The facilitators intentionally allowed clients to repeat their stories as part of the healing process. Tambudzai elaborated that she grew up with her father. At the age of six, she was molested by her uncle. In tears, Tambudzai re-narrated how her father raped her when she was eight years old, until she started enjoying being raped. Tambudzai got pregnant when she was nineteen. Her boyfriend refused to take responsibility for the pregnancy. She gave birth to a baby boy and she became a

prostitute to take care of her son. Tambudzai then fell in love with a man who was loving and caring. She and her son moved into that man's house. Tambudzai was happy and felt that life was good. After five months of staying with her new man, she fell pregnant. Tambudzai indicated that this was when the problems started in her new relationship. Her boyfriend started to abuse her. He would beat and scold her in front of her son. She decided to run away with her son and this was how she came to Ihata Shelter (Tambudzai 23 May 2018). When I first saw Tambudzai at Ihata Shelter she was five months pregnant.

Chenai was born in 1998. Her mother was an alcoholic. She grew up in an abusive environment; her parents used to fight a lot. Chenai never felt loved by her mother. She started taking drugs when she was twelve years old. Chenai dropped out of school when she was in Grade Ten. At the age of seventeen, she fell pregnant and gave birth to a baby boy. In 2018 she decided to move in with her new boyfriend. She only stayed with him for three months as he was abusive. She indicated that her boyfriend used to beat her. Her boyfriend's mother also never liked her. She decided to leave her boyfriend and seek help at the Shelter (Chenai, 23 May 2018).

Mandizadza was born in Cape Town in 1984. She self-declared herself as a lesbian. When she was fifteen, Mandizadza joined a gang and started taking drugs. She later changed from being a homosexual to being heterosexual. She got pregnant when she was nineteen and had an abortion. Mandizadza later got married to Rasta. At the time of my fieldwork at Ihata, Rasta was fifty-three years old, and the age difference between them was 19 years. Rasta used to abuse her both physically and sexually. She narrated how Rasta could force her to have sex against her will. Mandizadza said that although her husband was abusive, she missed him a lot (Mandizadza 23 May 2018).

Merina said she was a devoted Muslim who was born in 1988 in Mecca where her pregnant mother had gone for *hajj*. She indicated that she grew up in a happy home. She narrated how

she fell in love with her father's friend, who was twenty-two years older than her. Merina ran away from home and started living with this man. They married. Her father disowned her and did not want to see her. She later had two children with this man. She told of how she started stealing money from her husband to buy drugs. As she presented her story, Merina confessed that she also cheated on her husband. Merina said that she and her husband started having misunderstandings. She indicated that although she had problems with her husband, she still loved him (Merina, 23 May 2018).

The 'river of life' activity created a platform for the clients to share their stories. The mood became tense and most of the women cried as they shared their stories. Some explained how sharing their stories and hearing their peers' stories triggered emotions and reminded them of the events that happened in their lives. However, some of the clients did not feel free to share their entire stories in the group. They presented general information, then stopped. Some started crying after saying a few words and could not proceed. Looking at the charts of these women, I observed that these women mostly used yellow and green marker pens in their "river of life" diagrams to symbolize the times of joy and happiness. Black and red colours were used to show experiences of abuse.

In the third week of the 90-day programme, the facilitators introduced another activity. Each client was given a piece of modelling clay to play with. One of the instructors explained that the purpose of the activity was to allow the women to meditate and think about their childhood experiences.

> There is something really soothing about playing with clay. Close your eyes, take a deep breath in, close your eyes, take a deep breath in! Think about the earliest memory as a child. Think of something extremely painful that happened to you. Create something that represents that (Facilitator Tichafa 28 May 2018).

All the clients followed these instructions and moulded different items that resembled their stories. Mandizadza moulded a heart shape and broke it. She explained that it represented how her parents were never there for her:

> Both of my parents were addicted to drugs; they were never there for us as parents. It gave me the burden to be responsible for my siblings at a young age. My granny is the person I could look up to as a parent (Mandizadza 28 May 2018).

Chido moulded a man and started crying, explaining how the man she moulded reminded her of how her mother arranged for a man to sleep with her:

> My mother was a prostitute, and she was into drugs. One day she came back home and asked me to go with her to the town. I was very happy to go with her. When we got to town, we met a man who gave my mummy money. My mummy asked me to go with uncle. I was scared and didn't want to go with this man, but she forced me to go. This man raped me, and I cannot forgive my mother for this (Chido 28 May 2018).

Mampofu moulded a belt and explained how it reminded her of how her stepfather used to beat her:

> My stepfather was so cruel. He never liked me. He used to beat me for the things I did not do. He could accuse me of stealing money and beat me with a belt. My mother could watch him beat me and she could not do anything (Mampofu 28 May 2018).

As the clients were sharing their stories, Murombedzi continuously cried. One of the facilitators asked her if she wanted to share what was bothering her. Murombedzi narrated how her father killed her uncle when he caught him molesting her. While in tears, Murombedzi said;

> My uncle used to molest me. One day my father caught him molesting me and he killed him. Until today no one knows that it is my father who killed him (Murombedzi 28 May 2018).

There was a client who was always quiet in the sessions. She had shared with me earlier how anxious and uncomfortable she was about sharing her story in a group session. After Murombedzi's story, she started crying and explained how her grandfather molested her at the age of thirteen:

> My grandpa molested me three times, I was deeply hurt because when I told my grandmother she could not believe me. I told my nanny and she wanted us to go to the police, I could not go because I was scared to report (Maduve 28 May 2018).

The different activities that clients were introduced to were intended to allow clients to bring out their emotions and share their experiences of abuse. Hearing the experiences of fellow clients in the clay modelling activity created a platform for some clients to talk about the experiences of abuse that they had never shared before. Each activity allowed different clients to share their experiences.

To close the first stage of the ninety-day programme, one of the facilitators encouraged the women to forgive the people that caused pain to them.

> Write a letter explaining all the experiences of abuse that you went through and the people that you want to forgive. God is grace and grace is undeserving favour which cannot be bought. Forgive because God forgave you (Facilitator Munyaradzi, 18 June 2018).

This facilitator stressed the importance of learning to forgive: 'Forgiveness is key, forgiveness is what unlocks it all...There is healing in forgiving' (Facilitator Munyaradzi, 18 June 2018). The clients were encouraged to forgive their abusers for them to heal and the facilitator kept emphasizing that forgiveness is the first step in the healing process. Clients were given a day to write 'letters of forgiveness' explaining all their experiences of abuse and reflecting their decision to forgive.

The following day, the facilitators staged a funeral. According to one of the facilitators, 'the funeral session was devised to bury all past experiences and forgive' (Facilitator Munyaradzi, 19 June 2018). All the clients and their facilitators dressed in black. The setup of the room resembled a funeral. A small box shaped like a coffin was placed in the front of the room and a paper inscribed with the letters 'RIP' (Rest in Peace) was pasted on this box. There were flowers and lit candles around the area where the 'coffin' was positioned. The Bible and the Quran were placed on a table next to the 'coffin.' Slow and peaceful music was playing in the background.

Picture to show the setup of the symbolic funeral at Ihata Shelter.

One of the facilitators acted as a religious leader and facilitated the funeral. He recited the 'Lord's Prayer.' The facilitator then instructed each client to come to the front to read their 'letter of forgiveness' and drop it in the 'coffin.' Clients started crying as they read their letters and listened to those of their peers. Some of the clients were hugging and comforting each other. After all the clients had read their letters, the facilitator asked them to stand and turn

their backs to the coffin: ‘This is how you should turn at your past experiences and see yourself as a new person’ (Facilitator Munyaradzi, 19 June 2018).

After this activity as well, clients were given a chance to share their feelings. Some were crying and expressed how they felt emotional and angry. Others indicated that they felt good, relieved, and grateful. Madhora, a client, pointed to the ‘coffin’ where they had dropped their letters, and said: ‘I am happy because I buried my old self in that box’ (Madhora, 19 June 2018).

The following day, all the clients gathered for the burial session. Like the previous day, they were all dressed in black. The facilitator advised the clients to bring any items that reminded them of their past experiences. Some brought jackets and others brought t-shirts. Ruva brought a jacket that her boyfriend bought her as a gift of apology after he had severely beaten her. She said the jacket reminds her of her abusive boyfriend (Ruva, 20 June 2018). Such items were all placed on top of the ‘coffin’.

During the burial procession, clients took turns to carry the ‘coffin’. Some were crying and singing funeral songs. These songs were English songs. Below are some of the lyrics of the songs they sang.

> *Song 1*: Do not think for a moment I never felt the pain. You cannot imagine the hurt and the shame… It was not easy... It was not easy.
>
> *Song 2*: Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost, but now am found, was blind but now I see.
>
> *Song 3*: Lord I give you my heart, Lord I give you my soul, I live for you alone. Every breath that I take...

While singing, they proceeded to the back of the shelter and dug a small pit. The ‘coffin’ was placed in the pit and the facilitator poured petrol on it and set it alight. All the clients were in total silence as they stood around the burning ‘coffin’. Clients were once again encouraged to

leave their past experiences behind and start to think positively. As they returned to the shelter, they were instructed not to turn back, to symbolize that they were leaving their past trauma behind. Some of the clients returned to the shelter singing and expressing joy and happiness.

The funeral activity was a powerful symbol of what the shelter wanted the clients to experience. According to one of the facilitators, the funeral and burial activities represented the death and burying of the experiences of abuse that the clients had faced. The black attire that the clients were wearing represented sorrow and mourning of their experiences. These symbols were intended to help the clients to experience a sense of detachment and a 'forgetting' of past experiences (Facilitator Munyaradzi, 20 June 2018). The symbols that I have outlined above conveyed a sense of sorrow and mourning, and they were a passageway for the clients to move from abusive experiences to a new state.

Although Ihata shelter self-identifies as a Muslim organisation, its activities were not limited to Islamic symbols. While the Qur'an was placed in it, alongside the Bible. Apart from the evident resources from counselling and social work, the funeral ritual enacted a Christian funeral. The writing of letters was a form of confession, blending Christianity and counselling. The facilitator recited The Lord's Prayer, and some of the songs that the clients sang as they walked to the symbolic grave were also Christian songs. All of this shows that the most visible symbols in this ritual were of Christian origin. In my interview with the Director of the organisation, who initiated the 90-day programme, I asked her to explain the Christian symbols in the burial ritual. Her answer was: 'We are South African, this means that we embrace diversity, we are all one' (Nuraan, Telephone Interview: 29 October 2020).

Renunciation

In this second stage of the 90-day program, clients were encouraged to be positive and forget their past experiences. One of the facilitators emphasized to me that the 'renunciation' phase

is the building or 'motivational' phase (Facilitator Munyaradzi, 22 June 2018), while the first phase was an emotional intervention in which they invited the clients to express their emotions through various activities. During this new phase, emphasis was placed on confidence-building for the women to be able to realize their potential. The facilitators indicated that this stage was going to focus on encouragement.

To mark the beginning of a new stage, clients were taken to Cecilia Forest for hiking and also to the Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden. Cecilia Forest is in Constantia, Cape Town, a thick forest with green vegetation and cool streams. Cecelia Forest is a popular area for hikes and walks. Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden is a popular picnic spot and a huge tourist attraction in South Africa, with its diversity of flora. The hiking route that the facilitators took connected to Kirstenbosch Garden. During the hike, clients explained how they felt excited, happy, refreshed, positive and renewed. Some were taking photographs with their mobile phones, others were jogging and singing. The facilitator explained how the process of being part of nature was healing and soothing to their clients. I observed that the energy of the clients had changed from what they expressed in the first stage of the programme. While in the excavation phase most clients had cried as they narrated their experiences, on this day, most of them were happy. When we got to Kirstenbosch Garden, some of the clients began to roll on the grass, and others were dancing and singing.

Whilst in the Garden, the facilitator introduced the clients to a meditation session:

> Everyone, be focused and listen to the sound of nature – breathing in and breathing out. Picture your greatest achievements. What is it that you want to do in life? Look at the things that hinder you from progressing and look at how you intend to change it (Facilitator Tichafa, 22 June 2018).

This activity followed the structure of the activities at the Ihata Shelter. Clients were asked to share their current feelings. Some said they were feeling motivated, some said they feel refreshed, and others said they were feeling happy and excited. The facilitator told me that the meditation activity was designed to give the clients the feeling that they are starting all over again.

In the first on-site session after the hike, in the 'check in', some of the clients said that they were feeling hopeful, blessed, happy, motivated, and energized. Mamoyo, a client, explained why she liked Ihata:

> It is so healing. It is so motivating, and you feel the change. At Gokwe [16] the previous shelter that I once stayed; it was not strict. We could smoke dagga (Mamoyo, 25 June 2018).

Some of the clients began to feel that the process at Ihata Shelter was providing some healing and change. Most of the activities that the clients were introduced to in the renunciation stage were centred on the dreams and hopes of these clients, and future planning. In one session, the facilitators gave each client a sheet of paper to write their goals and plans in relation to their health, career, money, relationships with people, and personal desires. Clients were later given a chance to stand in front of the group to present their written plans. Some shared various career goals which included becoming a teacher, an events planner, and human resource manager. Others had personal goals like starting to exercise and quitting smoking. Some specific examples present some of these plans and aspirations in detail.

Merina planned on eating healthy. She wanted to become a social worker. In explaining her relationship with money, she indicated that she does not budget and one of her goals was learning to budget. Merina admitted that she did not have a good relationship with others.

[16] Gokwe is a fictitious name. I changed the name of the shelter that this woman was referring to protect the identity of that organization.

According to Merina, she is a person who takes advantage of other people. She wanted to learn to set boundaries and work on her behaviour (Merina 25 June 2018).

Gufu wanted to play some sport. She desired to become a Sports Facilitator. She noted that she does not have good budgeting skills, which she planned on improving. Gufu said that she has a good relationship with people. One of her desires was to have a happy family (Gufu 25 June 2018).

Penia's goal was to stop smoking. She wanted to complete her High School diploma and then go on to study Social Work. Penia intimated that money gave her power. She also admitted that she had to learn not to judge other people. Her goal included a desire to be a good mother to her son and to get a home for her and her son.

Mashanga hoped to attend to her injured ankle. She wanted to develop a career in life skills – to teach people life skills. Mashanga knew that she was still financially dependent but wanted money to be able to live in her own house. With regard to her relationship with people, she said she was someone who can draw boundaries with others. Her personal desires were to reunite with her family members and be able to re-establish herself in the Community Development field (Mashanga 25 June 2018).

Assessing all the plans that were presented, the themes of reuniting with family, raising their children and getting a home were common among most of the clients. Many desired to be social workers and some wanted to teach life skills. It seems the Social Worker, Social Auxiliary Worker and Skills Facilitators at Ihata became role models for some of these clients.

Although the facilitators had planned to continue motivating clients with different activities, the 90-day programme did not develop as planned. One Monday morning, I arrived at the shelter and noticed that there were many new clients that were admitted over the weekends. A facilitator explained that some of the clients they had had from the beginning of the programme

had left the shelter. Three of the clients had decided to go back home. Two other clients had run away. Another was taken by her family and yet another was excommunicated for fighting in the shelter. The facilitators explained how this disturbed the process of the 90-day programme since the new clients did not go through the first stage of the programme. According to one of the facilitators, their plan was to continue encouraging women to be positive and to completely move on from the trauma that they had experienced (Facilitator Munyaradzi 03 July 2018).

In spite of these setbacks, the activities of the 90-day programme helped most women to speak of their experiences and forgive their abusers. These activities were liminal, and they helped some of the women to transition from the trauma of abuse to a state of healing. During this healing process, clients developed a spirit of togetherness. As indicated before, the clients came up with a slogan to affirm that they were together with their fellow in their struggle. Clients comforted each other. This resembles the camaraderie which Turner identifies as a key characteristic among people experiencing liminality together. As with any rite of passage, the activities that clients were introduced to in this programme were symbolic of a passageway from a state of abuse to a new state, of death and re-birth.

While the Ninety-Day program was one of the key therapy rituals in the transition phase at Ihata, there were other therapy sessions that the clients attended. In the section to follow I will describe the experiences of the clients in the Yoga session, which was one of the therapy rituals in the liminal phase at Ihata.

Yoga

Clients were introduced to yoga. Yoga sessions were facilitated by a volunteer who specifically came in for these sessions. This facilitator made it clear that whilst yoga has a spiritual aspect, the kind of yoga that she offered at Ihata Shelter was only aimed at meditation and fitness. She

told me that the reason for introducing clients to Yoga was to help them to heal from the trauma caused by abuse: 'Yoga helps these women to destress and regain their body again. It is for the purpose of helping them to heal from abusive experiences' (Yoga Facilitator Chichenga, 29 May 2018). Several studies have shown that yoga and meditation have a positive impact in the healing and recovering of women from experiences of abuse (Allen and Wozniak 2010; Franzblau, Echevarria, Smith and Van Cantfort 2008; Clark, Lewis-Dmello, Anders, Parsons, Nguyen-Feng and Emerson, 2014).

Yoga sessions at Ihata Shelter were conducted either in a big empty room, or outside in the driveway. In one of the indoor sessions that I attended, clients were instructed to sit on their yoga mats with their legs crossed. They were introduced to different body exercises and meditation. With slow and soft meditation music playing in the background, the clients were instructed to close their eyes and breathe in and out slowly. Most of the clients seemed to enjoy yoga. However, some felt that the exercise part of yoga was straining and painful. Merina, a client, said: "Yoga is extremely helpful when I am stressed, it is calming and relaxing" (Merina 29 May 2018). Another client commented that yoga helps her to forget her sorrows. The experiences shared by these two clients illustrate that some found this therapy session to be healing. Yoga therapy complemented the formal 90-programme of group therapy of remembering abuse and overcoming it.

5.3.3 Skills Training

Clients were introduced to skills training. These skills were sewing, arts and crafts, and gardening. The purpose of these skills was to introduce clients to income generating projects that could be of benefit to them after they leave the shelter. Most of the clients at Ihata Shelter were financially dependent on their partners. Some faced abuse because of economic dependence. Thus, skills training was an empowerment programme to equip the clients with skills so they could generate their own income after reintegration. Despite these explicit goals,

I will show that these practical skills programmes were not completely dissociated from the therapy interventions that we have discussed.

Sewing

In sewing classes, clients were divided into three small groups, which allowed the sewing teacher to engage more closely with her students. These sessions were conducted by Dzungaidzo, a full-time employee at Ihata Shelter. Dzungaidzo herself had experienced abuse from her ex-husband (Dzungaidzo, 7 June 2018). In her sewing classes, Dzungaidzo also shared her experiences of abuse and how she recovered from it as a way of encouraging and giving hope to her students.

The sewing sessions were both theoretical and practical. At the end of each topic, Dzungaidzo gave her students a test to assess if they had grasped the concepts. Some of the topics that the clients were taught included machine parts basics, hemming, button and buttonhole making, patching, and machine sewing. She informed her students about the places where they could find affordable sewing resources to start up their sewing schemes after leaving the shelter.

Although the shelter staff regarded it as it a helpful economic skill for the clients, I noticed two major challenges. Firstly, the training was elementary and insufficient for preparing the women to start their own sewing projects. The facilitator admitted that time allocated to the programme was insufficient to teach a practical subject. Secondly, most of the women in the shelter where not financially stable enough to be able to start their own sewing schemes.

While the purpose of the sewing session was to teach skills for economic empowerment, the sessions turned out to have a therapeutic effect. I observed that the clients established a *communitas* with their fellows in their sewing group. The sessions became a platform to share their experiences of abuse and encourage each other. Some found the process of sewing to be relaxing. Shingi, who had much interest in sewing, had this to say: ‘I really like sewing. It

occupies me and helps me to forget everything that I am going through' (Shingi 16 May 2018). Sewing became a coping mechanism for the trauma that she experienced. During her spare time, she mostly visited the sewing room to mend her clothes.

Arts and Crafts Sessions

Arts and crafts sessions were facilitated by three elderly Christian women. As with the sewing mentioned above, the arts and crafts sessions were likewise intended to provide the women with economic empowerment skills. Clients were taught how to do beading and make bags, gloves and morning shoes.

Again, as with the sewing sessions, this programme was mainly a skills program to teach the clients different craft work so they could generate money from it after leaving the shelter. However, this platform also turned out to be a space for spiritual upliftment and encouragement for the clients. The facilitators started and ended the arts and crafts sessions with an opening and a closing prayer. They distributed bibles and took prayer requests from the clients in the shelter. In one of the sessions a facilitator asked the clients to write down their names and the names of their children as well as their prayer requests. 'We pray for any of the challenges that you are going through,' she explained (Arts and crafts facilitator, 12 June 2018).

In each of the arts and crafts sessions, one of the facilitators read motivational stories which related to the experiences of the clients. Some of these stories were derived from religious scriptures. In one of the sessions, one of the facilitators read a story from a book entitled *Chicken Soup for the Soul: The Power of Positive Thinking: 101 Inspirational Stories About Changing Your Life Through Positive Thinkin*g (Jan Canfield et al. 2012). The story she read was 'The Tunnel: There is Light at the End of the Tunnel'. This was a story of woman who narrated her childhood experiences of playing in an abandoned old train tunnel which was dark and scary. The story was read to inspire hope in the light at the end of a tunnel of darkness and

despair. The facilitator likened the clients' experiences of abuse to the tunnel, and the light at the end of the tunnel was symbolic of a better future. She further encouraged the clients to always seek help when faced with problems:

> When you are in problems you need someone stronger to help you, the only person who can help you is God. God can help you in whatever problem you may face (Arts and crafts Facilitator, 5 June 2018).

In a similar session, one of the facilitators shared a story on the importance of friendship.

> We believe that you are all going through difficult times, but it is a phase. What you are going through is like a storm. It will soon be calm. You need friends. You need people to talk to. If you have things that you can't share, there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Just pray, and God will hear you (Facilitator, 12 June 2018).

The main aim of the stories that these facilitators shared was to provide hope and encouragement to the clients. These stories were effective. Some clients cried as the facilitators read. Merina told me that these sessions gave her hope that her problems would eventually end (Merina, 12 June 2018). Thus, the encouragement from the arts and crafts sessions assisted some of the clients to recover and heal from the trauma caused by abuse.

Gardening

Gardening was facilitated by Aunt Chiedzo, who was also the shelter's housemother and one of the longest-serving staff members at Ihata Shelter. In the gardening sessions that I attended, clients were taught how to grow potatoes, carrots, and spinach. They were also taught about the watering and weeding of plants.

As with the other skills, Aunt Chiedzo indicated how gardening sessions also help clients to relax their minds. Pointing to a heap of compost in one corner of the garden, she said,

> Look there, these women have a lot of baggage like that heap there. I was once a victim of abuse; I understand them. Although I want them to grow and sell vegetables, I bring them here to relax (Aunt Chiedzo 10 May 2018).

Vimbai, who always visited the garden during her spare time, explained to me what gardening meant to her;

> I always work hard in the garden as a way of forgetting my problems. To me, it's a healing process. Fungai, *[author]*, have you ever noticed that when you dip your fingers in the ground, it brings relief? (Vimbai, 20 June 2018).

From the above it is evident that Vimbai found gardening sessions to be therapeutic. This resonated with the findings of Kuh and Suh's 2008 study on women in a shelter for abused women in Korea. Kuh and Suh concluded that horticulture therapy programs significantly increased self-esteem and reduced depression in abused women (Kuh and Suh, 2008).

Skills offered at Ihata Shelter were important as they prepared the clients for life after the shelter programme. As mentioned earlier, the purpose of teaching skills was to equip or prepare clients with skills that would help them generate an income and become financially independent. This resonates with liminal experiences in the rites of passages studied by Turner (1967) and Richards (1956). Turner found that receiving teachings is a key aspect of the transition phase of a rite of passage. He observed that during the transitional stage of a circumcision rite of passage among the Ndembu people, boys received teachings and instructions that prepared them for the responsibilities of manhood (Turner, 1967). Likewise, in the transition stage of the *Chisungu* girls' initiation rites among the Bemba people, girls received teachings about sex and the responsibilities of womanhood and motherhood (Richards, 1956).

While the lessons intended to provide skills that would help clients after they leave the shelter, the skills helped the clients to recover and heal from experiences of abuse. Sewing and gardening were therapeutic for some of the clients. These skills helped some of the clients to recover from abuse. Secondly, skills sessions became support structures where clients shared their experiences and comforted each other. The clients also found hope in the stories of the skills facilitators who were once victims of abuse. Thus, skills sessions also helped the clients to recover from traumatic experiences of abuse.

5.3.4 *Religious Rituals*

Although religion was infused in the general activities that I have discussed so far, I want to focus specifically on formal religious activities that were central to the transition phase of Ihata's intervention. These rituals helped clients to recover from the trauma caused by abuse. Clients used religious teachings and practices as a coping mechanism to heal from experiences of abuse. There were organized religious services at Ihata which the clients attended. The messages that were taught in these religious services provided hope to the clients.

Whilst it was not compulsory, some of the clients fasted during the month of Ramadan, which is the month in which Muslims observe fasting. At Ihata, Muslim and some Christian clients fasted. The housemother encouraged the clients to fast because of their problems. In my conversation with a non-Muslim client, she said she fasted because she wanted to be closer to God and she believed that God would hear her prayers and relieve her of the problems she was going through (Mandizadza, 16 May 2018). Another client elaborated that she was fasting because she wanted God to forgive her sins and find peace and joy in her marriage (Penia, 16 May 2018). Of course, some of the Muslim clients noted that they were fasting because it is an act of worship and one of the fundamental beliefs in their religion.

Clients also attended religious services every Wednesday. These were prayers and bible study sessions which were conducted onsite. Although the shelter stipulated that both pastors and imams lead these sessions, during the time of my study, I only saw Christian religious leaders. In these religious sessions, clients prayed, sang Christian songs and listened to the sermons of the pastors.

Some of the values raised by the pastor included forgiveness, love, endurance, unity and gratitude. In one of the prayer and bible study sessions, the pastor distributed papers and instructed each client to write down three things that there were thankful for in their lives. Some indicated that they were thankful for being mothers, others were grateful for being believers in the Lord, and some were thankful for the Grace of God. Most of the clients stated that they were thankful for the opportunity that Ihata gave them to rebuild their lives again (Wednesdays Prayer sessions, 16 May 2018).

On a different day, the pastor preached a message which she derived from Psalms 103:1-6. This scripture indicated that God promises justice to the oppressed, heals those in pain, is loving and compassionate, and forgives sins. The message was centred on providing hope for healing to the clients. The message also encouraged the clients to forgive the people who abused them. This pastor went on to say:

> Nothing can separate us from the love of God. God sometimes allows us to go through challenges. We are in a school of life. This is just a stepping-stone… This is not permanent; we should forgive and move on (Pastor, 23 May 2018).

Some of the clients cried as the pastor spoke. I observed the same sense of togetherness in this session as I had witnessed in the others. Clients were hugging and comforting each other. I interviewed Varaidzo to gain an understanding of her experiences in this religious ritual. She said the prayers and bible study sessions uplift her spirit and draw her closer to God. Varaidzo

believed and hoped that God will eventually heal her from the pain she was going through (Varaidzo, 23 May 2018).

Scriptures, the teachings and encouragement of the religious leaders, fasting and prayers were central to the transition phase of Ihata Shelter's intervention. These religious teachings and practices sustained the women and gave them hope during their recovery process. The religious experiences helped the clients to cope with trauma and heal from their experiences of abuse. Similar research carried out in different regions also point to how religious teachings work as coping mechanisms among abused women. Studies by Bryant-Davis, Ullman, Tsong and Gobin (2011) in America, Zakar (2012) in Pakistan and India, Itimi, Dienye and Gbeneol (2014) in Nigeria and elsewhere in Africa all highlight the importance of religious teachings in the healing process of abused women, irrespective of race and creed.

The therapy programs, skills teachings and the religious rituals at Ihata Shelter encapsulate the liminal experiences of clients in their journeys of recovery from the trauma caused by abuse. All activities were intended to help the clients recover and heal from experiences of abuse and to prepare them for life after they leave the shelter programme. As in any transition stage of a rite of passage, clients in the liminal phase at Ihata were governed by rules, which they all duly followed. Clients respected the authority of their facilitators, and they had camaraderie, or a spirit of togetherness. Above all, their experiences in this liminal phase created a new framework from which to view their abusive partners and family members. Many practices helped clients to 'see' their abuse and abusers, leave this history of abuse behind by symbolically burying it, and create new identities without abuse. Each of the activities, from the rules and prayers to gardening, supported this transformation. After this immersion, Ihata prepared their clients to return to society, to which I now turn.

5.4 Incorporation

Incorporation was the third stage of the Ihata rite of passage. This was the women in their new state, after separating from abusive environments and going through all the therapy programmes, skills programs and religious rituals. This exiting of the clients from the shelter and going back to their everyday structure was a rite of return.

On the day of exiting a client would be congratulated by staff members as she prepares to start her new beginning. The social worker or social auxiliary worker conducts a one-on-one counselling session in which she encourages the client to stay positive and watch out for signs of abuse in a relationship. Apart from these, there were no communal or highly symbolic rites or practices that marked incorporation. Perhaps this had to do with the fact that each client could stay at Ihata Shelter for a period of six months, and the day of exiting depended on the day of intake.

Ihata believes that when released into society, the women who were at Ihata Shelter were no longer victims of violence. They believed that in this phase, the ex-clients had transitioned from a state of trauma and abuse to a state of healing and empowerment. They were also no longer called clients, as they were, in the transition phase. Some were taken in by their families; some went to live with their partners, and others became independent and began to stay on their own.

After my fieldwork, I remained in contact with some of the women on Facebook. I also met one of the women in November 2018 when I visited Ihata five months after my fieldwork there. I later had telephonic interviews with some of them in June 2020, about one year and six months after their stay in the shelter. In these telephonic interviews, the women explained how they left the Ihata shelter and their experiences after leaving. Their conversations gave me insight on how they experienced the phase of incorporation in society.

5.4.1 Chenai's Incorporation

I met Chenai at Ihata Shelter in November 2018 and later had a telephonic interview with her in June 2020. When I saw her in November 2018, she was working as an assistant nursery teacher at Ihata. She stayed there for one and a half years. Chenai left the shelter after completing her six months and went to stay with her mother. Chenai said her experiences at Ihata shelter taught her independence: 'Ihata shelter helped me to stand on my feet. I am now clean from drugs for two years now and I moved on from an abusive boyfriend.' Her boyfriend used to beat and kick her whenever he was drunk. She decided to leave her past behind and moved on with her life.

> Although I decided to forgive my boyfriend when we were taught about forgiveness in the 90-day programme. I decided to leave the past and not go back to him again (Chenai, 5 November 2018).

When I interviewed her again in June 2020, she was working at the Muslim AIDS Programme, which is also a project of Ihata Shelter. Chenai was grateful that she was now financially independent, and proud that she had completely stopped drugs. She said she started taking drugs when she was 15, and she had been to several rehabilitation centres which did not help her with her drug addiction. The programs at Ihata helped her to deal with this drug addiction:

> I am grateful for what I learnt at Ihata. Ihata taught me discipline and responsibility. I can now help my mother to clean the house. I can now look after my daughter (Chenai, 21 June 2020).

Chenai had indeed transitioned from one state to another. Chenai explained how she had become a responsible and disciplined person. She was financially independent and made the decision to move away from an abusive relationship. The liminal experiences at Ihata helped Chenai to move from a state of being a victim of abuse and a drug addict to a state of independence and discipline.

5.4.2 Tambudzai's Incorporation

Tambudzai left the shelter in January 2019 after a stay of 10 months. During the time of my fieldwork in May 2018, Tambudzai was five months pregnant. The Director of the organisation extended her stay because she had a new-born baby and was not yet ready to go. Tambudzai was offered a job at the Muslim AIDS Programme. She indicated that the job she was offered gave her financial independence: 'I learnt to stand on my own and had some form of security and stability,' she told me. Tambudzai emphasised that her experience at Ihata had helped her to heal from the trauma of abuse, and she was able to forgive and move on. She forgave her ex-boyfriend, the father of her second child, and they reconciled.

Tambudzai went back to her boyfriend's house and for a while, they were happy together. After two months of staying with her boyfriend, she started taking drugs:

> I got carried away and I started using drugs with my boyfriend. Because of this, I was too ashamed to go back to work and face the people who helped me to heal from abuse. I then decided to resign from work (Tambudzai, 29 June 2020).

When she resigned, her situation changed:

> I was now dependent on my boyfriend again. I was now desperate for food and nappies for my baby, but I didn't want to go back to prostitution; what I learnt in class (referring to the 90 Day programme) made me to realize my worth. Although I was tempted by my situation, I didn't want to go back to that life (Tambudzai, 29 June 2020).

Tambudzai explained how it became difficult to take care of her two children without food and money. Out of desperation, she decided to go and steal at a shop. Crying while she spoke, Tambudzai said;

> I decided to go for shoplifting, and I got caught. I was incarcerated for three months. While in prison I realized that I was pregnant again. I am expecting my baby this August. When I got

> out of prison, I went to my boyfriend's house, he beat me and chased me away. I was told that my children were being taken care of at Ihata Shelter (Tambudzai, 29 June 2020).

Tambudzai said that although she was ashamed, she decided to go back to Ihata shelter. At the time of my telephonic interview with her, she was staying at Ihata Shelter. Tambudzai explained how her experiences at Ihata from April 2018 to January 2019 changed her and helped her to heal from experiences of abuse. She added that she gained some self-worth and discipline from what she learnt at Ihata. She also managed to forgive and start again with her boyfriend. But when Tambudzai returned to society, she went back to her boyfriend and was abused again. And she then returned to Ihata for another chance to change. It is clear that Tambudzai realized the cycle of violence and dependence in her life with her abusive boyfriend. However, she did not fully realize incorporation as healing, empowerment, and independence.

5.4.3 Mandizadza's Incorporation

Mandizadza left the shelter after six months, with the feeling that she was ready. She went back to her boyfriend's house. According to Mandizadza, the funeral exercise helped her to completely forgive her boyfriend. She decided to give him another chance. Mandizadza says she is now in a happy relationship with her boyfriend. I am friends with Mandizadza on Facebook, and she constantly posts photos with her boyfriend and her son. At the time of our interview, Mandizadza and her boyfriend were receiving couples counselling in their church. She explained that her boyfriend had changed: 'I can see that he is a changed man now'. (Mandizadza 24 June 2020).

Recalling her experiences at Ihata, Mandizadza said:

> Staying at the shelter and learning from the other ladies made me a responsible woman. I felt the need to look for a job and help my partner financially. I am now working at

> the hospital and I am proud of myself. This might sound funny, but before going to Ihata I didn't know how to sew on a button. I am grateful that I was able to get basic skills that a woman should have (Mandizadza 24 June 2020).

The story of Mandizadza illustrates that the teachings she received at Ihata helped her to deal with her experiences of abuse. She was able to forgive her boyfriend and she reconciled with him. Although Mandizadza returned to the same social structure, her case was different from Tambudzai's. From her story, Mandizadza transitioned from a state of abuse to happiness with her partner. She also became more responsible, drawing on the teachings she received at the Ihata Shelter.

The experiences recounted above are those of three ex-clients of Ihata Shelter after they had left the shelter. When they incorporated back into society, two returned to their boyfriends and one went to live with her mother. Forgiveness for their former abusers seemed to feature as an important value for incorporation. But forgiveness went along with a strong sense of responsibility. Two of the clients seemed to be more successful at reintegrating in society than the third. But all seemed to have become aware of the cycle of abuse and their power and responsibility in relationships. Ihata marked incorporation with a counselling session and a reminder to remember what clients or ex-clients had experienced in the shelter. As in a rite of passage, the women returned to their former lives, but now with a new purpose and self-worth. As with other rites of passage, there was no guarantee of the outcome of the intervention staged and prepared by Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has shown how the Ihata Shelter's intervention may be interpreted as a rite of passage for victims of abuse. Women left their abusive partners and joined Ihata Shelter through referral. They were introduced to a ritual of separation in the form of counselling, and

physical separation from a life of abuse. The liminal phase at Ihata included an elaborate structure of rules, practices and skills training. The women, who were called ‘clients’ at Ihata Shelter, were engaged in several activities such as therapy programmes, skills programmes and religious rituals. The purpose of these programmes was to help clients to recognize abuse, bury the abusive relationships, and heal and recover from trauma caused by abuse.

Having gone through the shelter programmes, and satisfied that they were ready to do so, clients were sent back into their former communities as changed people. I interpret this as the incorporation stage of a rite of passage. The experiences shared by some of the ex-clients of Ihata Shelter showed that they had become aware of their previous states and the possibilities of new relationships and lives. Some moved on from the abusive relationships, all forgave their partners and tried to continue their relationships. They recognized the cycle of violence from which they needed to save themselves.

6 CHAPTER SIX: ST ANNE'S HOMES RITE OF PASSAGE

6.1 Introduction

Although Ihata Shelter and St Anne's Homes appeared to be quite similar, some of the activities that women in the shelters were introduced to were unique. I have mentioned in Chapter Four, that these two shelters are from two different religious traditions and follow a different understanding of shelter intervention. It will be shown that St. Anne's is more closely integrated in its religious ethos than Ihata. This will be pointed out in my analysis of the three stages of a rite of passage. I will begin by describing how women left their homes and went to St Anne's. I will then move to discuss the practices and experiences of women during the transition at St Anne's Homes. I will finally present the experiences of these women after the shelter programme.

6.2 Separation

St Anne's Homes was located in a secluded environment which was access-controlled with cameras. No visitors were allowed without the knowledge of the staff. Women were not allowed to leave the premises without permission from the administration. Upon arrival at St Anne's Homes, women were screened for eligibility by the social worker. One needed to be confirmed to be a victim of any form of violence against women. Women with children were only accepted on the condition that their children were under five years of age. The Director of the shelter justified the rationale for the age restriction on the unfeasibility of transferring school going children to schools closer to the shelter, given that women only stayed in the shelter for a short period of time. She also said taking children to and from schools could be time-consuming, resulting in the women missing some of the programmes of the shelter (Director Joy Lange, 21 June 2018).

Once found eligible, St Anne's Homes requested documents of the applicant and the details of her next of kin. New residents were given three days to settle and attend individual counselling sessions with the social workers before they could join group sessions. The women at St Anne's Homes, as at Ihata Shelter, were also referred to as clients. St Anne's Homes also derived this labelling from the social work profession.

I interviewed two women to gain an understanding of how they separated from their homes and joined St Anne's Homes.

Munoda was a twenty-seven-year-old married woman. She had two children and she identified as Muslim. She narrated her experiences of abuse and how she chose to take refuge at St Annes Homes. When I saw Munoda, it was her third time of being at St Anne's Homes. The first time, her husband repeatedly beat her until one day he stabbed her on the lip. She reported the case to the police and her husband was arrested. The family of her husband asked her to drop the charges, which she did. Munoda told her mother of her experiences of abuse. Her mother told a friend, who at that time was serving on the board of St Anne's Homes, who in turn advised Munoda to seek help at St Anne's Homes.

After a few months of staying at St Anne's Homes, her husband came to see her at the shelter. They received marriage counselling from the social worker. She decided to return home with her husband. Three weeks later, the abuse started again, and she went back to the shelter, staying another 10 months. When she returned home, the abuse started again, and by that time she had two children. Her husband was not supporting her financially. She took her children, and they went to live under a bridge, begging for food to survive. Some people reported her to the Child Welfare Department, complaining that she was begging on the streets with her children, which is illegal in South Africa. Her children were taken by social workers and by the time we had our interview, they were in the care of foster parents. When her children were

taken away from her, Munoda went back home. Her husband continued to abuse her. Crying, she narrated to me the events that led her to go to St Anne's Homes for the third time:

> One day he told me that he will kill me. That got me scared. I told myself that enough is enough; if I don't do anything, no one will help me. I decided to go back to the shelter again and Aunty Joy welcomed me. That is how I ended up here for the third time (Munoda 29 August 2018).

When Munoda arrived at the shelter, she went for counselling with the social worker and narrated her record of abuse. After counselling, she went through the registration process, where she provided her personal details and the details of her mother as her next of kin. After the registration she was taken to one of the shared bedrooms. Leaving her abusive partner and becoming a client of St Anne's Homes marked the rite of separation. During this separation phase she was not allowed to leave the shelter premises or receive visitors without the permission of the shelter administration.

Tariro also narrated how she left her partner and joined St Anne's Homes. Tariro was thirty-four years old and had one son. She lived in a house with her boyfriend and their son, and twelve other people who were abusing drugs. Tariro was physically, financially and emotionally abused by her Congolese boyfriend, who is also the father of her son. She suspected that her boyfriend was cheating on her because sometimes he would not return home. When she confronted him with this suspicion, he would get angry and beat her:

> The father of my child was never there for us, he barely came home and I struggled to take care of the child. He was abusive, he could beat me and I was always stressed. (Tariro 29 August 2018)

Tariro felt that the stress made her turn to drugs. She later decided to seek help. Her friend, ex-client of St Anne's Homes, suggested she seek help at St Anne's Homes and helped her

with the application process. Tariro's experiences of abuse pushed her to detach from an abusive environment and join St Anne's Homes.

When she got to the shelter, she was taken to the social worker, whom she described as friendly and welcoming. Tariro said that she does not like sharing her problems, but she felt comfortable sharing her story with this social worker. After a counselling session with the social worker, she completed the registration process, and her son was also registered to attend the on-site créche. She was taken to her shared bedroom and shown the facilities around the shelter including the on-site créche where she could leave her child when attending shelter programmes. This intake process marked the separation of Tariro from the home where she had experienced abused. As per the policy of the shelter, Tariro spent her first three days going for individual counselling with the social worker before she joined the group sessions.

The separation phase at St. Anne's Homes, then, was very similar to the separation phase at Ihata. They were introduced to an extensive counselling session where they spoke about the abuse and were then escorted to the secure and protected shelter. The counselling sessions were designed to mark a decisive break from the past. Women who were victims of gender-based violence were referred to by former clients and other community members. This suggests that St. Anne's Home is well-known in the communities in which it offers its services.

6.3 Transition

The transition stage at St Anne's Homes was also up to a period of six months, however, some women stayed longer than six months if the Director supported and justified reasons for extension. In this stage, clients were introduced to therapy programmes, vocational skills training, and educational programmes. I interpret these activities as rituals in the transition phase. The goal of these rituals was to assist clients to transition from a state of trauma that was caused by abuse, to a state of healing. St Anne's Homes did not have organized religious

services. However, it permitted clients to attend religious services during their stay at St Anne's Homes. Some clients attended religious services at a nearby church.

The characteristics of the transition stage of a rite of passage were clearly apparent at St Anne's Homes. Drawing on the theoretical framework of rites of passage by van Gennep and Turner, I will identify and analyse its key features. These include symbols, rules, authority of counsellors and other staff, a feeling of togetherness, knowledge and skills. As with any rite of passage, there were rules at St Anne's Homes that the clients were required to follow. All the clients were equal, and they respected the authority of staff members and facilitators of programmes. Clients cultivated a spirit of solidarity or camaraderie. Clients at St Anne's Homes were also taught skills that were intended to help them after they leave the shelter.

6.3.1 Rules at St Anne's Homes

Clients at St Anne's Homes were governed by a strict set of rules. The use of drugs and alcohol was prohibited. Smoking was only permitted in designated areas. Fighting was also prohibited. Clients were not allowed to leave the shelter without the permission of the shelter staff. They were also not allowed to take their children along to shelter programmes. All the clients were expected to help the housemother with the cooking and cleaning duties. It was compulsory for clients to attend all the programmes that were offered at the shelter. Clients were also not allowed to use their mobile phones during programmes.

Clients at St Anne's Homes followed a set timetable with a structured routine – with minor adjustments. A typical day at St Anne's began with clients preparing their children for crèche. St Anne's Homes did not have a set time for waking up. However, all the clients were expected to be ready for breakfast, which was served from 7:30am to 8am daily. Monday to Friday, from 8am to 9am, clients were expected to take part in duties on a rotational basis. From 10am to 12pm on Mondays, clients attended classes on violence against women. However, some weeks,

the same time slot was designated for Candle making. Lunch was served from 12pm to 1pm daily. The period from 10am to 12pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays was set for what the social workers referred to as the Restoration and Healing sessions. This was also not fixed. On certain Tuesdays, clients were taken to Durbanville for Horse Therapy sessions. On Wednesdays, the 10am to 12pm slot was dedicated to Fabric Painting sessions. Lunch was served from 12pm to 1pm daily. Fridays, 8am to 3pm were set for Spring cleaning. Weekends were leisure time for clients and their children. On Sundays, some clients attended Church services from 8am to 12pm.

6.3.2 Therapy Programs at St Anne's Homes

The interventions in the transition phase included group therapy sessions, individual counselling, Horse therapy and Beauty and pampering. They were together designed to help clients to develop a better image of themselves, to refuse to be the target of abuse. They learnt from others who were in a similar situation. One may say that the transition continued to emphasize a decisive separation from the past as it opened the door to a new life. Forgiveness occupied a vital role in the interventions. While clients were encouraged to develop a better sense of self, they were also encouraged to be forgiving. This included forgiving their abusers.

There were several therapy sessions at St Anne's Homes. These included individual counselling, a group therapy session called Restoration and Healing and horse therapy sessions. Clients were also introduced to beauty and pampering sessions. Some of the activities in these therapy sessions allowed clients to share their experiences of abuse and express their emotions, some allowed clients to think about forgiveness, yet others helped clients to build their self-esteem and feel confident.

Individual Counselling Sessions

Individual counselling sessions at St Anne's Homes were highly confidential, and I was not allowed to be present. The social worker said that individual counselling is personalized therapy to suit the needs of each client. The purpose of these individual counselling sessions is to allow clients to heal and move on from their past experiences. She elaborated that she was professionally trained to help clients deal with their emotions. While the first three days a client spent at St Anne's Homes were devoted to only one-on-one counselling sessions without attending any group sessions. These sessions continued throughout the stay of a client in the shelter. The social worker focused on building a good relationship with the client. She also created room for clients to continue sharing all their experiences of abuse and allow emotions and frustrations to surface. It is also in these sessions that the social worker assessed clients who requires immediate medical attention.

The social worker, who was once a victim of abuse, shared that her past experiences of abuse helped her to empathise and easily understand her clients. In assisting clients to recover and heal from abuse, she uses her story to motivate and give hope to her clients. From her experiences with the clients, she had seen that her story gave some of her clients hope and confidence to move on. The social worker also said that experiencing abuse causes one to have low self-esteem, thus, in the individual counselling sessions she helps clients to boost self-esteem, which helped a client to realize her self-worth and be confident in making decisions (Social Worker Taurai, 16 July 2018).

Rindai, a client at St Anne's Homes, told me that she was there because of intimate partner abuse. The one-on-one conversations she had with the social worker allowed her to reflect on her childhood experiences of abuse which she had never shared with anyone before (Rindai 12 July 2018). She noted that sharing these experiences helped her to feel better and take off the burden she had carried since childhood.

Restoration and Healing Programme

This was a group therapy session which was facilitated by the social worker and the social auxiliary worker. In this programme, clients were introduced to different activities. Some of the sessions of this program were conducted outdoors, depending on the nature of the activity of the day.

The facilitators of this program used a participatory approach, which allowed each client to get a chance to share her story. Clients cried during activities that appealed to their emotions. However, the social worker did not want most of the sessions to turn emotional as she felt that that could 'break' the clients instead of 'building' them. I observed that this approach was quite different to the approach that was employed at Ihata Shelter. At Ihata Shelter, the social worker and the group therapy facilitator believed emotional outlet was an important part of the healing process.

In the first session of the 'restoration and healing' that I attended, clients were introduced to an activity intended to build solidarity and comradeship amongst the women. The Social Worker called it the 'trust activity.' Clients were split into four groups. In each group, each client at a time was blindfolded and was guided to walk around the shelter by her group members. Some of the clients were scared to walk blindfolded. After all the clients had done the walk, they all gathered as a group to share their experiences of the activity. Some clients said they were scared that they could fall. One client noted how she felt that she was being led to a dead end. Another said she was confident that her team was guiding her in the right path. The rationale for conducting the activity was to help the clients gain and build trust with each other since they were all coming from diverse backgrounds (Social Worker Taurai, 10 July 2018).

After the trust activity, the social worker instructed the clients to stand in four rows. While standing in rows, the clients were supposed to join hands and form a circle without untangling their hands. At first there was no proper communication among the clients. Each person was trying to figure it out independently. Later, they all worked together and finally formed the circle. The facilitator explained that the task required teamwork to be able to figure out how to form the circle. According to the social worker, the reason for introducing this task was to create team spirit and solidarity among the clients.

The social worker then asked the clients to share their thoughts on the activity of forming a circle. One of the clients expressed how the tangling of hands with the other clients reminded her of how she got entangled in an abusive situation. She said she had hope that God will take her out of that situation. Rindai said she had been in an abusive relationship which was difficult for her to leave because she loved her husband: 'I did not leave my husband because I believed that one day he will change, and we will be happy together' (Rindai, 10 July 2018). Another client said the activity led her to appreciate hope in God. Gambiza said that at first, they did not have hope that they could form a circle, but they finally figured it out. She likened this to her own situation. She did not have hope that she would leave an abusive marriage which she had endured for a long time, but she finally made the decision to leave and seek help. Now she was hopeful that she will heal from her experiences of abuse (Gambiza, 10 July 2018).

While the social workers intended that the activity would create solidarity and teamwork, it had another meaning for these two clients. For them, it symbolized their experiences of abuse and how they found hope. Rindai and Gambiza's interpretation of the activity encouraged other clients to also share the hope that they found in their own experiences. Tarisai narrated how she was physically and sexually abused by her husband until she decided to run away. She said she became homeless, and she found hope when she came to St Anne's Homes:

> When things are fall out of place they are actually coming into place. Coming here is a blessing. My children are in creche, and I have a place to sleep. (Tarisai,10 July 2018)

Runyararo, who had been a victim of sexual abuse from childhood and later experienced abuse in her marriage, said that she had found hope in God and in the encouragement that she gets from her fellow clients: 'I now have faith in God that everything is possible. I thank God for my life and what we share here as ladies' (Runyararo, 10 July 2018).

Some of clients became emotional and started to cry as they shared their stories; the social worker controlled the session by encouraging them to remain hopeful:

> Things happen in life whether good or bad, but it is for us to learn. I have also been in an abusive relationship with a partner. Don't take it as a bad thing that you ended up here because there is a reason why you did so. Your coming here is a blessing in disguise because you came here to recreate yourself. You cannot leave St Anne's the same (Social Worker Taurai, 10 July 2018).

Some sessions of the 'Restoration and Healing' therapy programme took a classroom approach. In one of these sessions, the social auxiliary worker facilitated a lesson on trust. She handed out printed documents on this topic to all the clients. The main themes in the document were formulated as questions: What is trust? Why do people have trouble in developing trust in others? What are some of the beliefs of people who cannot trust or have problems in trusting? What do you need to develop trust again?

As the clients were discussing these questions, some shared how they were hurt by people they trusted. One client narrated how she was disappointed by her partner, whom she trusted so much:

> I once had a boyfriend that I dated for four years. I was known by his family and friends, only to find out that another girl was pregnant for him. I loved and trusted him, and I never imagined that my boyfriend could betray our love (Tireve, 12 July 2018).

Triggered by the story of Tireve, Rindai began to cry, as she narrated how her partner kept on cheating on her to a point where she stopped trusting him: 'I trusted my husband, but he kept on disappointing me. He could cheat me and ask for forgiveness then repeat the same mistake again and again.' (Rindai, 12 July 2018). A client who was sitting next to her rubbed her shoulder and gave her a tissue to wipe her tears.

After some of the clients had shared their stories, the social auxiliary worker stressed that clients should put their trust in God:

> You need to trust God for what is happening in your life. There is winter, summer, autumn and spring. These are all seasons, and you have to go through them (Social auxillary worker Mamoyo, 12 July 2018).

This form of encouragement reflected how the social auxiliary worker believed in God as a source of hope. Clients' experiences of abuse were likened to seasons that needed God's intervention. This showed how trusting in God was used as a coping mechanism in therapy sessions.

In another Restoration and Healing session, clients were introduced to an activity called the 'letter of forgiveness exercise.' Each client was given a piece of paper to write a letter to people who had hurt and abused her. In these letters, they had to express their feelings and point out the reasons why they lost trust in these people. The social auxiliary worker encouraged the clients to forgive these people. Those who felt that they could not forgive were encouraged to express in the letter the reasons why they could not forgive.

The social auxiliary worker assured those who were struggling with forgiving that God will enable them to let go of their anger and forgive. I observed that both the social worker and social auxiliary worker stressed God's power in the healing process of the clients. In most of the 'Restoration and Healing' sessions the social worker and social auxiliary worker constantly

referred to God. Clients were encouraged to put their trust and hope in God. This constant reference to God was not dominant at Ihata Shelter.

The way the 'Restoration and Healing therapy session was conducted clearly reflected the features of liminality. As I have shown, facilitators introduced activities that created a spirit of teamwork and solidarity. Clients hugged and supported each other when they became emotional, which also showed solidarity amongst them. Such togetherness seemed to indicate a high degree of camaraderie which is one of the key characteristics among people experiencing liminality together. Another key feature of liminality at St. Anne's Homes was how the activities intended to help clients to transition from a state of abuse to a new state of forgiveness and hope. The Social Worker explicitly said that the aim of the programme was to recreate the clients. She believed that the clients were going to leave St Anne's Homes as changed people.

Horse Therapy

'Horse therapy,' an off-shelter activity which was conducted on Tuesdays in Durbanville, about 23km away from St Anne's Homes. In this activity, clients were encouraged to bond with horses. One of the facilitators explained to me that the purpose of the horse therapy was to heal women from traumatic experiences that they went through. 'We emphasise on them connecting with horses as a way of healing' (Horse Therapy Facilitator, 21 August 2018). Although some of the clients were scared and did not feel comfortable getting physically close to the horses, others found the process of connecting with horses to be relaxing.

In one of the sessions that I attended, the aim was to rebuild the confidence and boldness of clients. Each client was given a boiled egg to put on the horse's back and watch it so that it did not fall. As clients tried to put the eggs on horse's back, they kept failing. Some of the clients were afraid of the horses. Referring to their constant failure to put the egg on the horse's back, one of the facilitators said the following;

> This is the same journey with life. When you want to do something, you will feel fearful. All you need is confidence and boldness (Horse therapy facilitator ,Kudzanai 21 August 2018).

The egg that was put on the horse's back symbolized the life of the abused women and the constant failure to put the egg on the horse resembled the difficulties that women may meet in life. The facilitator used this symbol to allow women to accept their trauma as some of the challenges and social realities of life. The ritual also intended to show that experiences of abuse can be healed. In her explanation she pointed to confidence and boldness as key steps to step away from an abusive relationship.

Beauty and Pampering Therapy

Somatology students from Cape Peninsula University of Technology visited the shelter to offer free manicures, pedicures and massages to the clients. On this day, the clients seemed happy and relaxed. Some slept during the massage and later explained that the massage was relaxing and refreshing. Others were excited and they were taking selfie photos, singing and cheering. In conversation with one of the students, she explained;

> Our reason for coming here is we want them (women in the shelter) to feel that they are still women, and they are still beautiful. That is why we are doing their nails and giving them a massage (Somatology Student 02 August 2018).

The services offered by these Somatology students provided relief to some of the clients. As I have noted above, some of the clients slept during the massage. When one of them woke up, I asked her how she felt. While yawning and stretching, she said massaging gave her body relief, and it was relaxing. Another client, smiling and stretching both her fingers and toes after her pedicure and manicure, expressed how, after a very long time, she felt beautiful and good about herself.

The therapy sessions of Individual counselling, Restoration and Healing, Horse therapy and Beauty and Pampering constituted key rituals of the transition phase. Some of the activities of these sessions had the aim of creating solidarity and teamwork among clients. Some activities created room for clients to forgive their abusers, whereas some aimed at rebuilding confidence in the clients. Although these activities were different, they all had the same goal: all intended to help the clients recover and heal from experiences of abuse. These rituals were a passageway from experiences of abuse to a state of healing.

6.3.3 Skills Training at St Anne's Homes

St Anne's Homes provided several types of skills trainings to clients during their stay in the shelter. Clients were taught skills that could help them after leaving the shelter. At St Anne's Homes clients were taught candle making, fabric painting and computer skills. St Anne's Homes also funded some clients to do short courses in home-based care nursing and culinary arts.

Clients also received education on HIV and AIDS, sexually transmitted infections, and family planning methods. The shelter also had a volunteer qualified psychologist who provided educational sessions on the causes of abuse, types of abuse, healthy relationships, stress, and conflict management. The purpose of these classes was to raise awareness on causes of violence against women as well as on HIV/AIDS.

Candle Making, Painting and Computer Literacy

This program was facilitated by an elderly female volunteer. Clients were taught how to make candles from used wax. They melted wax in a pot and poured it in containers that had a string tied at the bottom of the container. These candles were set aside for a week and then wrapped in plastic in the next session. The candles were sold at R20 each and the money was used towards the upkeep of the shelter. In my conversation with the candle making facilitator, she

remarked that candle making is a skill that can help the clients to earn a living at the same time helping them to relax. She added that candle making was also a good way of recycling and saving resources.

I observed that most of the clients appeared to like candle making. While grating the candle wax, Chiratidzo said: 'Candle making is so creative and relaxing. You forget all your worries while making candles' (9 July 2018). Kudzai explained that she liked the skill because it was cheap and affordable because all the raw materials needed to make these candles can be found in the home (Kudzai 9 July 2018). She said she had plans to start her own candle making business when she leaves the shelter.

Clients were also taught fabric painting. This was a weekly session conducted by a female volunteer. Clients painted and decorated fabric which they later sewed into cushions. Some of the paintings were framed. Some of these items were also sold in the shelter's thrift shop. Thus, the purpose of this programme was to teach clients an income generating skill.

During the painting sessions, the facilitator always played slow and soft music in the background. She explained to the group how fabric painting is also a form of therapy: 'The colours that you choose in painting show me the space you are in' (Yemurai Fabric Painting facilitator, 21 June 2018). In my conversation with this facilitator afterwards, she explained to me that clients who chose brighter colours in their paintings were in a better space than those who chose dark colours.

Clients showed a lot of patience and concentration during painting sessions. In my conversation with some of them, they expressed why they liked fabric painting. Munoda said she loved painting because it occupied her:

> The day that we do painting is one of the better days for me, painting takes me away from my deep thought of always thinking about my problems. Painting removes the negative energy. (Munoda, 21 June 2018).

Another said she is interested in painting because the cushions and frames have a good market in Cape Town. She said she knew people who earn a living by selling paintings to tourists.

St Anne's Homes also offered computer literacy skills. Clients were taught the basics skills of using a computer such as typing and web browsing. The computer skills intended to help these clients when seeking jobs (Social auxiliary worker Mamoyo, 21 June 2018). Clients were taught how to type curriculum vitae and how to search for jobs online. Some of the clients explained how these classes were their first-time experiences of using computers. One client was excited about having a curriculum vitae, which she said she had never had in her life.

Vocational Training

A few of the clients at St Anne's Homes had the opportunity to do short courses. During my fieldwork there, Tariro was offered an opportunity to do a home-based care course. All costs for this course were paid for by St Anne's Homes. She was also provided with transport allowances to and from school. In a conversation with Tariro, she expressed her happiness at the opportunity she was given to study towards her dream career. She explained that her dream was to become a nurse, and the opportunity to study a home-based care course was a major milestone towards her career goals (Tariro, 16 July 2018). Munoda was offered an opportunity to do a chef's short course. She remarked that the course had improved her cooking skills and added that it is a skill she can use to look for a job in hotels and restaurants (Munoda, Telephone Interview: 14 July 2020). I interpret these vocational trainings as part of education that some women received during the liminal phase at St Anne's Homes.

Health Education

Nurses from a clinic about three and a half kilometres away from St Anne's Homes visited the shelter to teach and offer services on HIV and AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and family planning methods. Clients were taught how HIV is transmitted and how it can be prevented. They were also taught the causes and transmission of sexually transmitted infections.

Clients asked several questions in this session. Rindai asked about the transmission of HIV: 'Nurse, help me, I want to ask something my husband was very promiscuous I am scared that he gave me HIV, how long does it take for the virus to show' (Rindai, 5 July 2018). One of the nurses responded that HIV can be detected as early as six weeks after infection, yet in some people it can be detected as late as three months later. She encouraged her to get tested for her HIV status.

Most of the clients were not shy to ask questions. One client asked if a person infected with HIV could breastfeed a child and not spread it to her child. Another client wanted to know if HIV can also be contracted through kissing and oral sex. Runyararo asked about the connection between sexually transmitted diseases and the HIV virus: 'I also have a question. I once had an STI (sexually transmitted infections); does that mean I also have HIV?' (Runyararo 5 July 2018). While the nurses responded verbally to the questions that were asked in the discussion, they also handed out pamphlets which answered some of the questions these clients had raised.

After these lessons, the nurses encouraged the clients to get tested for HIV and screened for STIs. The nurses brought their test kits to the shelter. They were given a room for this purpose and all the tests and screening were done in privacy. Some clients got tested while others expressed that they did not feel the need to get tested. In a conversation I had with Tireve, who did not want to get tested, she said, 'My friend, I am not yet prepared to know my status. When

I get ready, I will definitely go for testing' (Tireve, 05 July 2018). Tarisai, who was in the queue to get tested said: 'I would rather get tested and face the reality than to wait for too long and get sick. It is better to know where I stand now' (Tarisai, 5 July 2018).

Clients were also taught various family planning methods. The nurses explained the advantages and disadvantages associated with each method. Having gained the information, some women chose family planning methods that best suited them. Some opted for oral contraceptives pills, injections, or condoms (Health Education Class, 5 July 2018). Most of the women asked the nurses to educate them on how to use female condoms. The nurses explained the steps of wearing a female condom.

I asked the social worker about the essence of the HIV and reproductive health lessons and services at the shelter, and she explained to me that it helps women in gaining more understanding about reproductive health and increases awareness about HIV and AIDS, sexually transmitted infections and family planning methods.

Violence Against Women Education

The main aim of this programme was to teach clients about violence against women. The programme created room for clients to share their experiences of abuse and comfort each other. It was facilitated by a volunteer psychologist. These classes were organized into topics that the psychologist systematically followed. Before the start of each class, the psychologist, Makanaka, distributed printed documents which explained the details of the topic to be covered. Some of the topics covered in these classes included types of abuse, healthy relationships, stress management, types of communication and conflict resolution.

The first topic that I attended was on types of abuse. After explaining the different types of abuse, Makanaka explained the signs that show that a woman is likely to be abused. She spoke of a cycle of abuse. In this cycle, an abusive man abuses his partner, later shows remorse, makes

loving gestures and apologizes. She explained this as the honeymoon phase. This phase creates hope to the victim that her partner has changed. From this honeymoon phase, the tension builds again, and he repeats the abuse. The cycle continues to rotate from abuse to honeymoon then back to abuse again. From her explanation, the loving gestures and apologies in between the abusive experiences make it difficult for the abused woman to leave (Psychologist Makanaka, 16 July 2018).

Munoda related her experience of this cycle of abuse:

> I did not know that it was a cycle. As you were explaining, I could see Tichaona's *[her partner's]* behaviour. Tichaona used to beat me. One day I ran away and came to the shelter, I went back home after six months. When I get home, all was fine, and I was happy that he is now a changed man. Two weeks later the abuse started again, and I came back here at St Annes. I stayed here for 10 months and when I went back home, he was loving and caring. Few weeks later he started abusing me again and he threatened to kill me; that is what pushed me to run away. I am here at St Anne's for the third time (Munoda, 16 July 2018).

This programme allowed Munoda to share her experiences of abuse and bring out her emotions. I observed that Munoda's example helped the clients to better understand the cycle of abuse.

The lecture also encouraged other clients to share their experiences. Clients began to connect what was taught in the session with their own life experiences. Most of the clients said they believed it was their fault that they were being abused. This was Chipo's admission: 'My belief was, keep quiet. If he comes in, just keep quiet. I was afraid of saying something; if I talk, it would be hell all night. Now I believe it's not my fault' (Chipo, 16 July 2018). Gambiza added her perspective: 'I thought since I never landed in hospital, it was just a small hit, it was not abuse' (Gambiza 16 July 2018).

Clients were also taught ways of managing stress. In some sessions, they received lectures on effective communication, conflict management and conflict resolution. Assessing from the comments and discussions of some of the clients in these sessions, I observed that the teachings that these women received changed their perceptions about abuse. The lectures helped the clients to transition from one state of understanding abuse, to another.

As I have shown above, the skills, vocational training, health education and violence against women classes provided clients with new knowledge that was essential for life outside the shelter. This echoes the liminal experiences in rites of passage. For example, during the transition phase of a circumcision rite, boys are taught skills on how to provide for their families (Turner, 1967). Likewise, the knowledge that the clients got in skills classes at St Anne's Homes intended to help them with income-generating projects. Health Education classes increased their knowledge on sexual and reproductive health, and violence against women classes changed some of the beliefs that clients had about abuse and educated them about healthy relationships.

6.4 Religious Rituals St Anne's Homes

Although there were no set programs for religious rituals for clients at St Anne's Homes, religious beliefs and practices played a significant role in the healing process of clients. As I have shown earlier, the social worker and the social auxiliary worker constantly referred to God as a source of hope and forgiveness in the healing process of the clients.

As I have discussed earlier, all the women at St Anne's Homes said they were religious. Twenty identified as Christian and one was a Muslim. I observed that some of these women found religion to be a coping strategy in dealing with experiences of abuse. Some of the clients believed that God solves all problems. In an informal discussion about intimate relationships, one client narrated how unfortunate she was to be in a relationship with an abusive boyfriend.

Another client encouraged her: ‘The Bible says if you want a husband, speak about the specific kind of husband that you would want’ (Rovesai, 23 July 2018). Yet another client believed that if they fast and pray to God, they will be blessed with good men. This illustrates the hope and belief these clients had that God’s intervention would help them get partners who were not abusive.

Rindai shared with her fellows how she manages the stress about her marital problems through prayer: ‘I pray three times a day. It helps me manage the stress of what I am going through. Whenever I am talking to God, I feel so good’ (Rindai, 23 August 2018). After Rindai’s contribution, some of the women responded by saying ‘Amen.’ Christians use this word in their everyday context to show that they strongly agree with something. This also shows their strong belief in the ritual of prayer in their healing process.

Although it was not part of the shelter programme, clients could attend church service at a nearby church called Grace Chapel Pentecostal Church. Some of the clients attended religious services at this church every Sunday. I attended one of the church services to observe the experiences of these clients in a church space. They were clapping, singing and dancing. They seemed happy and excited being in this space. The day I attended the service, the pastor preached about how people should trust and believe God when they are going through a time of crisis. He indicated that God has the power to break every curse, which he likened to chains. He read a verse from the book of 2 Corinthians 4, verse 8 which said: ‘We have troubles all around us, but we are not defeated. We often don't know what to do but we don’t give up’ (2 Corinthians 8:12, Easy-to-Read Version). As the pastor read and explained this verse, one of the clients cried.

At the end of the church service, I asked clients about their experiences. Some found the sermon relevant to what they were going through. The client who cried during the service said the

assurance that she got from the Word of God gave her hope that her problems would soon be over. Other clients shared that they loved the church because people from that church showed love and care towards them. Another client added that the singing during the church service drew her closer to God.

Three clients decided to get baptised in this church. These women showed excitement and an eagerness to experience the baptism ritual. Liesl said she felt she was something new after baptism. She felt less burdened after baptism.

> I was crying and crying; I couldn't stop crying as I was about to enter in the pool of water. When I came out of the water, I couldn't recognize the church, I thought I was an angel coming out of something, then a few seconds later I saw that I was at church. After baptism I felt lighter. I decided to change my name from Lameez, which is an Arabic name that I was given by my Muslim husband when we got married. My name is now Liesl, which means 'God is my oath'. Lameez was always troubled, and Liesl is a joyful person (Liesl 27 August 2018).[17]

Although religious experiences are deeply personal, I gathered that her baptism, which I also interpret as her liminal experience during the transition phase, made her feel changed. She also added that she stopped smoking after her baptism. The baptism ritual helped her to feel less burdened by her problems of abuse.

Clients at St Anne's Homes had a strong belief that God is at the centre of their healing and recovery from experiences of abuse. Clients found God and Christian beliefs as coping mechanisms in dealing with their trauma. The religious sermons, prayers and reading the bible promoted greater psychological well-being in these women. They found God as a source of

[17] My study participant gave consent to use the real names in this section. She indicated that she did not have problems with the use of real because her story on her experiences of abused is online. She indicated that she once had an open interview sharing her experiences of abuse on one of the News platforms. This story is also still available online.

strength and comfort. These experiences confirm findings by previous researchers such as Itimi, Dienye and Gbeneol in their 2014 study in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. According to these scholars, women abused by their intimate partners turn to religion as a coping strategy (Itimi, Dienye and Gbeneol, 2014).

The activities and experiences of clients during their stay at St Anne's Homes as discussed above mimics the liminal experiences in a rite of passage. Clients adhered to a set of rules. Clients were all equal and they respected the authority of staff and facilitators of the programmes. They experienced solidarity and comradeship with each other. The activities that the clients were introduced to intended to help them transition from one state to another. Re-birth best symbolized by the conversion at the Church was the goal of the various activities during the transition phase.

The therapy, skills, and educational programmes that the clients were introduced to were highly symbolic. Each ritual had a specific aim. As I have shown above, some of the activities aimed to create a platform for clients to share their stories and express their emotions and frustrations, while some allowed clients to forgive their abusers. Other activities aimed to rebuild the confidence of clients, yet some provided hope. The educational programmes intended to equip clients with skills and knowledge that they could use after leaving the shelter. The overall purpose of all these activities was to heal clients from their experiences of abuse. Thus, the experiences and activities at St Anne's Homes were a passage from a state of abuse to a state of healing. In the following section I move on to discuss the experiences of clients after they left St Anne's Homes.

Incorporation

Having separated from abusive relationships through St Anne's Homes intervention programmes, the women finally returned to the community. St Anne's Homes did not require

all clients to return to their homes. After six months, some clients moved into the second stage housing where the shelter deemed this was necessary. This stepped approach indicates that the incorporation was monitored and managed. But there were no formal rituals or practices as there were in the first two phases of this rite of passage. I remained in contact with some of these clients on WhatsApp and Facebook since my encounter with them in August 2018. In July 2020 I followed up with telephone interviews with three of these clients. I now present narratives of how these three clients experienced incorporation.

Munoda's Incorporation

During Munoda's time at St Anne's Homes, she was processing a divorce. In 2018, she explained how she finally came to the decision to divorce:

> I still love my husband; there is something good in him. But I can't help him if he cannot help himself. I tried so many times, but nothing worked. It's time for me to move on. (Munoda 27 August 2018)

In my follow up interview with her on 14 July 2020, she told me that she divorced her husband on 3 September 2018.

In October 2018, Munoda got a six-month contract job from the City of Cape Town. She moved to St Anne's Homes's second stage house and stayed there for six months. When she left the second stage, she went to stay at her grandmother's. Around that time, she got another job at a Pick n Pay store: 'I can say going to St Anne's Homes in 2018 was a blessing in disguise, because it changed my life in a big way.' Munoda said the experiences she had and the support she received at St Anne's Homes gave her the courage to move on after seven years of being in an abusive marriage.

Munoda said her life has changed. She was now financially stable and spiritually mature. Before going to St Anne's Homes, Munoda did not care much about going to church. When

she was at St Anne's Homes, the other clients encouraged her to seek God and go to church. She got baptized and felt like a new person. Munoda had also stopped smoking by the time we spoke in 2020. She added that she is still going to the same church, and that is where she met her new husband.

Munoda married again in April 2020, and she was expecting a baby. She said she was happy with her new husband, who did not abuse her. Munoda's husband agreed to take care of her children:

> Next month, I am taking my children who had been staying with foster parents since 2018. I now have a stable home to take care of them. I am currently not working but after I give birth, I am planning on opening my candle making business using the skills that I learnt at St Anne's Homes.

In her third time at St. Anne's Homes, Munoda's narrative reflected how her experiences at St Anne's Homes helped her to transition from an abusive relationship to a healthy relationship. This time, going to St Anne's transformed her spiritual life and her devotion to God. Through her third experience at St Anne's Homes, she developed the courage to divorce an abusive partner. She had become financially stable and was ready to take care of her children. Her experiences at St Anne's Homes helped her to transform from one state to another.

Tariro's Incorporation

In a telephone interview I had with Tariro in July 2020, she explained that after six months of staying at St Anne's first stage house, she and her son moved to the second stage house. Then, after nine months there, Tariro looked for her own accommodation and left St Anne's Homes:

> St Anne's taught me to be independent. It also helped me to know my value and to know my rights. The support I got at St Anne's gave me courage and hope for a better future. I moved on from an abusive partner and I am happy in my new relationship. By

> God's grace I am looking forward to spending the rest of my life with my new partner. I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to heal from what I went through in my previous relationship.

St Anne's Homes helped Tariro realize her dream of becoming a nurse: 'I always desired to be a nurse and the opportunity to do a home-based care course was a stepping-stone towards my career goal.' At the time of the interview, she was working as a caregiver on the strength of the qualification in home-based care nursing that she got while she was at St Anne's Homes. The education she received while at St Anne's Homes helped her to become financially independent and to be a responsible mother.

Tariro's story after her St Anne's Homes experience shows that the shelter helped her to heal and transition from an abusive relationship to a healthy relationship. She also moved from being financially dependent on her boyfriend to being independent, as reflected by her statements on her financial stability. Tariro changed from being a financially dependent person, an abused woman and irresponsible mother to a financially independent woman and responsible mother. She also moved on to a healthy intimate relationship.

Kundai's Incorporation

Kundai stayed at the shelter for four months and left in September 2018. Kundai moved to her aunt's house:

> Before my six months was up my aunt took me from the shelter and I started staying with her. I was happy that my family was there for me. My boy is growing, and he keeps me going. (Kundai, Telephone Interview, 11 July 2020)

Kundai said the father of her son did not take care of the child.

> He is still not responsible, but that does not bother me much now. What I learnt at St Anne's made me strong and independent. I do not depend on him anymore. I now have my own space

> with my child. It's just that these days I am stressed because I am not working. I am desperately looking for a job, whether a cleaning job, babysitting or anything. All I want is money to take care of my boy (Kundai, Telephone Interview, 11 July 2020).

In my telephone interview with Kundai, she explained that she had lost her job as a restaurant waitress in April due to the Covid-19 pandemic which resulted in a total lockdown of South African businesses at the end of March 2020.

St Anne's Homes helped Kundai to recover and heal from experiences of abuse. She managed to end an abusive relationship. Kundai said she had decided to take a break from intimate partner relationships and be single, focusing on raising her son. Although she was unemployed at the time of the interview, her willingness to get any job reflected that she had become more responsible and independent. The teachings at St Anne's Homes also taught her to be independent and responsible.

The post-shelter experiences of the three ex-clients of St Anne's Home narrated above illustrate that the teachings and support they received at St Anne's Homes gave them the courage to move from abusive relationships. One of these ex-clients was in a new marriage, another was in a new relationship, and the third had decided to remain single for a while. St Anne's Homes also taught them to be responsible, assertive, and independent. One of the women indicated how her experiences at the shelter made her realize her worth and her rights. It is clear that the therapy programs, teachings, and support that they received at St Anne's Homes helped them to transition from one state to another.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the process of the St Anne's Homes intervention with regard to violence against women, which I have interpreted as a rite of passage. I described how women left their abusive partners to join the shelter as the separation phase of a rite of passage. I

interpreted the activities and the experiences of the clients during their stay at St Anne's Homes as the transition phase of the rite of passage. Finally, I interpreted the new state of ex-clients after leaving the shelter programme as the incorporation phase.

Key attributes of a rite of passage were clearly distinguishable at St Anne's Homes. Similar to other rites of passage studied by Turner (1969) and Richards (1956), clients at St Anne's Homes were governed by a set of rules. They were all equal and they respected the authority of the staff members and facilitators of programs. A spirit of togetherness was cultivated among the clients. Clients were taught skills and courses that were intended to help them after they left the shelter. All these characteristics are key features of the liminal phase of a rite of passage. The narratives of some of the ex-clients who had completed St Anne's Homes's intervention programmes illustrated that their experiences at the shelter transformed them from a state of abuse to a state of independence, confidence, and freedom from abuse.

7 CHAPTER SEVEN: EDUCATING RELIGIOUS LEADERS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

7.1 Introduction

In the previous chapters, I presented the experiences of women living in the shelters for abused women as rites of passage. The three stages of a rite of passage were identified in the interventions of these two shelters. In this chapter I interpret the intervention of SAFFI in providing education on violence against women as a rite of passage. I argue that the three stages of a rite of passage can also be identified in the intervention implemented by SAFFI. I describe how information on violence against women provided by SAFFI is transmitted and acquired. I argue that the education that SAFFI provides is aimed at providing transformation in the thinking and knowledge that religious leaders and religious communities held before SAFFI's trainings and teachings. I also show how the thinking, perceptions and attitudes of some of the beneficiaries of SAFFI changed after going through the programmes facilitated by SAFFI.

In the following sections, I begin with the experiences of religious leaders and religious communities' before attending SAFFI's programmes and describe they decided to joining, elucidating my theory that it mimics the separation phase of a rite of passage. Next, I will show how education on violence against women was transmitted by SAFFI and acquired by participants through different activities, drawing parallels with, and interpreting this as, the second phase of a rite of passage. Lastly, I will present the experiences of participants after undergoing SAFFI's programmes. I interpret this as the new 'state' of participants, whereby they 'incorporate' values and practices against gender-based violence in their lives. Throughout, I will show how religious values were employed and transformed to match the desired model of intervention promoted by SAFFI.

7.2 Separation

As mentioned earlier, violence against women is a social reality in Cape Town. Not all religious communities and religious leaders in the city were involved in addressing this problem. According to SAFFI, women affected by violence did not always find hope in their religious leaders and religious communities (SAFFI Research Report, 2017). Religious leaders and religious communities say that they were not equipped to deal with violence against women. It is against this background that SAFFI chose selected religious leaders and offered them training on violence against women. While religious leaders were the main target group of SAFFI, other targeted groups included perpetrators of violence against women, congregants and interested parties who attended SAFFI workshops, conferences and their educational trips known as 'pilgrimages.' SAFFI welcomed participants who were willing to learn and join trainings on violence against women.

Participants were introduced to SAFFI interventions through a three-hour 'sensitizer workshop.' This was an entry point into SAFFI's trainings. According to SAFFI, the aim of these introductory workshops was to create general awareness on gender-based violence. I see it as a mark of separation for the rite of passage.

At the beginning of each sensitizer workshop, participants were taken through a registration process where they provided their names, contact details and religious affiliation. Before the commencement of the training, participants were given a set of rules. Facilitators made it clear that they expected all the participants to respect both the facilitators and other participants. The facilitators also emphasized at the beginning that participants must maintain confidentiality and be honest. I also observed that before facilitators started teaching or sharing information on violence against women with participants, they asked participants to speak about their beliefs and understanding of violence against women. I interpreted this entire process before the

trainings as the separation phase, or a boundary marker that set participants apart from their initial understanding, beliefs, and attitudes about violence against women.

The initial understanding and attitudes of most participants reflected their non-involvement in addressing violence against women, their patriarchal attitudes and little knowledge about violence against women. One pastor expressed his understanding of violence against women as only physical and sexual abuse: 'What I understand as abuse is beating and raping a woman' (Pastor Tatenda, 20 June 2017). Another pastor said that the only solution to deal with abuse was prayer: 'A violent husband is demonic; as pastors we have to pray for territorial spirit that possess some men. We must cast demons in the name of Jesus Christ' (Pastor Simba, 20 June 2017). Another admitted that his church does not talk or preach about violence against women:

> We do not preach about women abuse in my church. I grew up in the church and I never heard sermons on abuse from any pastor. My church is silent about it (Pastor Rati, 20 June 2017).

Congregants in the women's sensitizer workshops on violence against women also expressed their understanding and beliefs about violence against women. Some believed that women are to blame for the violence that they experienced in their relationships (Ravensmead Workshop, 14 April 2018). One of the participants indicated that she believed that she provokes her partner to abuse her by her response to him:

> I feel that I push my husband to beat me because I answer back when we are having an argument. He is very short-tempered, and this makes him angry and end up beating (Nyarai 14 April 2018).

Another participant believed that women were raped because of the way they dress: 'Ladies, the way we dress at times causes these men to rape us. We tempt men with wearing revealing clothes' (Sarudzai, 14 April 2018). Some participants showed that they did not know much

about addressing violence against women, because they had little knowledge on ways to deal with violence against women.

These beliefs, attitudes, non-involvement in addressing violence against women and lack of knowledge about the phenomenon constituted the state of the participants before SAFFI's trainings. The recruitment and acceptance of participants to join SAFFI's trainings were part of the separation phase. The registration process, the specific rules that the participants were given and the opportunities to share their initial beliefs and understanding of violence against women before the commencement beginning of each training represent a 'ritual' of initiation into the SAFFI training programmes. It revealed to the participants themselves as well as to SAFFI their attitudes, practices and what they believed before they were exposed to the SAFFI programmes.

7.3 Transition

This was a period of learning and obtaining knowledge. SAFFI had several training programmes which I interpret as rituals in the transition phase. Attributes of liminality were present in each of these programmes. All trainings were governed by specific house rules, set out at by facilitators at the beginning of each training. These rules were written on a big chart and they were stuck on the wall throughout the training process. In the SAFFI trainings that I attended, the facilitators expected beneficiaries to maintain confidentiality. They also emphasized that beneficiaries be honest and show respect to the facilitators and other members. The facilitator also expected dialogue. Any contributions or comments in the trainings were made through the facilitators.

Facilitators promoted unity and solidarity among the people who were receiving training. They introduced ice-breaking activities that promoted teamwork. I observed that participants developed solidarity, shown particularly when the experiences of abuse that appealed to

emotions were shared. In such moments, participants supported and comforted each other. This resembles the comradeship among people experiencing liminality together. Turner terms this *communitas* (Turner 1967).

SAFFI violence against women training programmes include religious leaders' trainings, religious communities' workshops, pilgrimages, conferences and interventions with men programmes. The collective programme intended to teach participants about violence against women and equip them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to challenge the problem. In this following, I describe in detail how each of these programmes were carried out and some of the reactions and responses of the participants.

Religious Leaders' Trainings

SAFFI had a programme that was designed to train and equip religious leaders with skills to combat and prevent violence against women. Although SAFFI said it is a multifaith organization that trains religious leaders from different religions, during the time of my fieldwork I observed that SAFFI only trained Christian pastors. SAFFI members told me that it did not have facilitators with the capacity to train religious leaders from other religions.

The SAFFI training model for religious leaders was divided into five phases: (1) a religious leader recruitment workshop; (2) five-day training; (3) 10-week support series; (4) support and (5) monthly religious leaders' forums on gender-based violence ('SAFFI Research Report', 2017). SAFFI said it repeats this series with different groups of religious leaders. During the time of my study, SAFFI claimed that it had trained more than 1 500 religious leaders from Atlantis, Edgemead, Khayelitsha, Oudtshoorn, Hanover Park, Bishop Lavis, Strand, Lavender Hill, Bredasdorp, Ceres, Phillipi and Bonteheuwel, using the same model. These are all 'Black' and 'Coloured' townships in Cape Town and the Western Cape. In the time I collected data, SAFFI did not train any new groups of religious leaders. The organization was delivering

ongoing training to two groups of religious leaders who were in phase five of the training. I therefore rely on archival data to discuss phases one to four of the training model of SAFFI.

A recruitment workshop was religious leaders' entry point of into SAFFI's trainings. This introductory workshop aimed to create a general awareness of gender-based violence for religious leaders and attract them to SAFFI interventions. The second phase, a five-day training focused on teaching the dynamics of domestic violence and the root causes of violence against women (2013-2014 SAFFI Annual Report, 2014). Religious leaders were also taught faith dimensions in addressing violence against women. They were introduced to the Domestic Violence Act of South Africa and provided with information on how to interpret and apply the Act. The overall aim of the five-day training was to help religious leaders understand the effect of domestic violence in their societies. In phase three, religious leaders began to implement in their respective religious communities what they learnt from SAFFI. This was through a 10-week series programme titled, 'Our places of worship: true sanctuaries of hope and healing.'

The programme provided guidelines on how domestic violence can be spoken about and addressed in the religious communities. Based on the SAFFI report, in each week of the 10-week programme, religious leaders were required to address a specific theme in their Sunday church services ('SAFFI Research Report' 2017). According to SAFFI, they derived these themes from the Bible.

In phase four and five, SAFFI said it continued with training, supervision and mentoring religious leaders in their respective communities. Phase five comprised monthly religious leaders' forums on gender-based violence. I attended some of these religious leaders' forums in Atlantis and Khayelitsha. The purpose of the monthly religious forums was to provide on-going training, mentoring and support to religious leaders. The forums were also a space for

religious leader to learn more and exchange ideas with fellow religious leaders on how to deal with violence against women.

The characteristics of a transition phase of a rite of passage were clear in these religious leaders' forums. The monthly religious forums were guided by rules. Religious leaders were expected to be punctual. They were expected to maintain confidentiality on all the sensitive information that was shared in the forum. Although the religious leaders were much older than the facilitator, they all respected her authority. The pastors switched off their mobile phones during trainings. If the religious leaders wanted to contribute to the discussion, they raised their hands. Those who arrived late apologized to the facilitators. In spite of these rules, there was comradeship and solidarity among religious leaders. Although the main purpose of the forums was to educate on and discuss violence against women, these forums were also offering psychosocial support groups. Religious leaders received social support from both SAFFI officials and fellow religious leaders.

The meetings were conducted at community libraries, community halls and church buildings. During the meeting, these spaces were regarded as sacred and safe spaces for the religious leaders to share their experiences of dealing with violence against women. In the following section, I provide more detailed information of how the Atlantis and the Khayelitsha religious leaders' forums were conducted.

Atlantis Religious Leaders Forum on Gender-Based Violence.

SAFFI conducted monthly forums with religious leaders in the Atlantis area, which is about 60km away from their offices. The Atlantis forum was a group of Pastors from different denominations. Most of the pastors in this session had completed phases one to four of the training.

These monthly religious forums lasted an average of three hours. All the sessions that I attended, like any ritual, followed a prescribed order. All the facilitators and religious leaders sat in a circle. In a conversation that I had with one of the facilitators, she said the reason for such a sitting arrangement was to promote dialogue among religious leaders. The sessions began with an opening prayer; the facilitators randomly picked any pastor to pray. This was followed by introductions and a debriefing of pastors' feelings. The facilitators introduced the main discussions of the day and reemphasized how the sessions were safe spaces for religious leaders to share confidential issues. All the forums ended with eating and social interactions. SAFFI provided the refreshments for these religious leaders. Pastors got to know and have conversations with each other in these social interactions. I observed that this ritual promoted comradeship and solidarity.

Although SAFFI indicated that the monthly religious leaders' forums were for religious leaders who completed the other phases of their religious leaders' training model, I observed there were new pastors who were invited by fellow pastors. On the 20 June 2017, I attended one of the Atlantis religious leaders' forums that was conducted a month after the rape and murder-of a three-year-old whose story gained national media attention. The main discussion of that day was centred on how religious leaders should deal with the intensity of violence against women in the area. One pastor shared a story of a mother and a child who were raped and burnt in Atlantis. He offered prayer and fasting as a solution to the scourge of violence. Another pastor believed that the solution should go beyond prayers: "Let's preach about it! Let's talk about it! Let's take action! Like what SAFFI taught us – our places of worship should be true sanctuaries of hope and healing" (Pastor Kuda, 20 June 2017).

Pastors continued to share different cases of violence that they were dealing with in their churches. In tears, one of the pastors related that his own son has been a perpetrator of violence

against women. He narrated how his son stabbed his ex-wife twice and brought a new girlfriend to his home without his consent. In response to this, another pastor commented:

> Your son has a demonic spirit, a territorial spirit. You need to bind him by the blood of Jesus for the demon to be thrown into hell. I am willing to walk with you. We as spiritual leaders we command demons in Jesus' name (Pastor Ticha, 20 June 2017).

After Pastor Ticha's comment, pastors agreed as a team to help him with days of prayers and fasting for this son. Another pastor joined the conversation: 'Your son was not born abusive, but he was socialized to be abusive and only God has the power to transform him' (Pastor Tonde, 20 June 2017). However, Pastor Tawanda presented a contrasting view: 'Prayer only does not change things. Action changes things. Even Jesus took the rod to correct others' (Pastor Tawanda, 20 June 2017). The pastors shared conflicting views and ideas on dealing with perpetrators of violence against women. Although the religious leaders were all Christians, their specific religious beliefs influenced their understanding and views on how to deal with violence against women. While Pastor Tawanda believed in practical theology of getting involved into dealing with violence against women, pastor Ticha believed that all problems are spiritual and they therefore require a spiritual intervention. For him, prayer is the ultimate solution to all problems.

The facilitator directed the disagreement with a proposed strategy that pastors should adopt in dealing with perpetrators of violence against women. She came up with a solution which merged the two conflicting views of the pastors. The facilitator encouraged the religious leaders to offer both spiritual support and to be actively involved in activism against gender-based violence through preaching, and integrating lessons on violence against women in other church programmes. The session facilitators' task was to guide the discussions of religious leaders and introduce new interventions into their practices.

In a different forum, the topic of discussion was on the causes of gender-based violence. The facilitator requested religious leaders to share their thoughts on the causes of violence against women. In responding to this question, most of the pastors discussed factors that cause violence against women based on experiences from their respective communities. Some of the pastors highlighted gangsterism as one of the causes of violence against women. Another pastor cited unemployment as a factor. According to this pastor, some of the men who are unable to take care of their families tend to take out their frustrations on their partners in the form of abuse. The religious leaders highlighted the effects of social problems and challenges men face in their societies (Atlantis Religious Leaders Forum, 28 February 2018).

The facilitator agreed with the religious leaders, but highlighted the unequal power relations between men and women and the misinterpretation of religious texts and traditions as the causes of violence against women. She stressed that patriarchy, which is the dominance of men over women, is the root cause of violence against women. The facilitator encouraged religious leaders to teach and preach that both men and women are equals to prevent violence against women, adding that religious leaders should critique misinterpreted religious texts that promote the abuse of women.

Another session of the religious leaders' forum dealt with gender-based violence counselling training. Religious leaders received technical support and mentoring from the facilitators on how to file gender-based violence counselling cases. The facilitators also explained the process of reporting and referring cases of abuse to other stakeholders such as the police services and social workers. They distributed forms that the pastors could use when providing counselling services to victims of abuse. The religious leaders were given step-by-step guidance on how to fill in these forms. As explained by the facilitator, religious leaders should capture personal details, family details, the kind of abuse faced, and their own plan of action and follow-up strategy. She encouraged the religious leaders to refer to other stakeholders when necessary.

The religious leaders were also taken through a referral note template to teach them how to write a referral letter. They were taught to add in their details as the referring organisation as well as the details of the organisation they will be referring the person to. They were also reminded to specify the kind of services they want the organisation to offer to the referred person (Atlantis Religious Leaders Forum, 12 April 2018).

My assessment is that educating the pastors on the causes and prevention of violence against women was the key purpose of SAFFI. Pastors were equipped with skills to provide violence against women related counselling. While some pastors initially believed in prayers alone as the only solution to violence against women, SAFFI stressed reporting of cases of abuse to the police as another solution. The sessions also became a space of psychosocial support for religious leaders. They produced a spirit of comradeship for the pastors. The solidarity the religious leaders showed in supporting a fellow pastor who confessed that his son was a perpetrator of violence against women, is in line with the unity or togetherness that is one of the key features of the liminal phase of a rite of passage.

Khayelitsha Religious Leaders Forum on Gender-Based Violence.

As with the Atlantis religious leaders' forum, the Khayelitsha forum was also a group of Christian pastors. In one of the Khayelitsha forums I attended, there were nine religious leaders from different Christian denominations. While some had participated in other SAFFI training programmes, for most of the pastors in this session, it was a new experience. The pastors sat in a circle, and the session opened with a prayer and introductions.

To start a discussion on the lesson of the day, the facilitator posed the following questions; How do you feel as a pastor, hearing about gender-based violence? How does it affect you as a leader? The facilitator explained to me that these questions were aimed at understanding the position and involvement of pastors in addressing violence against women. Responding to

these questions, pastor Jabu stated that violence against women is a burden to the church and it is his responsibility as a pastor to address the burdens of his church members (Pastor Jabu 27 February 2018). Pastor Dudzai said that he gets disturbed with seeing the emotional suffering of children who come from abusive homes (Pastor Dudzai, 27 February 2018). He noted that such children lack confidence and experience difficulty in interacting with others at church. Another religious leader agreed that continuously hearing cases of abuse affects him emotionally. The high rate of rape cases in the informal settlements of Khayelitsha is an emotional burden to him. The responses of pastors reflected a willingness to address violence against women. After all the pastors had made their contributions, the chief facilitator reminded them about their duty as religious leaders to address the problem of violence against women. She encouraged them to preach about violence against women and find positive readings in the Bible that challenge and combat violence against women.

In the same forum, one of the pastors introduced a discussion on some of the challenges that they face as pastors when dealing with domestic violence. Some perpetrators believe that the pastor might be his wife's boyfriend: 'When I go for peace building with the perpetrators, some go to an extent of fighting me' (Pastor Nyimo, 27 February 2018). Another pastor agreed and suggested that pastors should approach the perpetrators together with their wives or female elders in the church to avoid any suspicion. Another remarked that there is need to pray for God to guide pastors and give them wisdom in approaching perpetrators. Yet another suggested that if perpetrators do not come to their churches, pastors should be accompanied by a close friend or a relative of the perpetrator. The facilitator also contributed by urging the pastors to apply wisdom when approaching perpetrators, especially those who do not attend their churches. She encouraged the pastors to visit perpetrators with a third party for their own safety.

The religious leaders' forums were spaces for pastors to share their experiences and exchange ideas with fellow pastors. These spaces promoted comradeship among religious leaders. This

was clear from the solidarity and peer support that they demonstrated in the sessions. Based on the activities and experiences of religious leaders in both the Atlantis and Khayelitsha forums, these forums were exchanges between the facilitators and pastors. Pastors shared their understanding of the problem and the challenges of interventions. They responded with prayer, recognized the social roots of violence against women, and shared the difficulty of interventions. SAFFI added two distinct layers to their interventions. Facilitators encouraged pastors to record abuses and report them to counsellors and police in a systematic way. They also introduced religious themes and alternative texts for pastors to use in their sermons and interventions. This illustrates that SAFFI created or shaped a different model of engagement for pastors. While pastors thought of prayer in the first instances, SAFFI directed them to report the cases and offer counselling. In the section that follows I discuss the ways in which SAFFI provided education on violence against women to congregants in religious communities.

Training on Violence Against Women for Congregants

SAFFI also offered training on violence against women to congregants from different churches in a series of one-day workshops. In these sessions, the facilitators systematically followed set topics. They used an interactive classroom approach which allowed the participants to engage with each other during the learning process. While the sessions focused on providing education on violence against women, in some cases the sessions became emotional as different people shared their experiences of violence (Ravensmead Workshop, 14 April 2018). What follows is a detailed account of the way in which one of these workshops was executed.

On 14 April 2018, I attended a workshop in Ravensmead which was organized for female members of the Moravian church there. This workshop was conducted in a church building. Upon arrival, all of the women went through the registration process where they provided their names, contact details and age. The facilitators requested that they rearrange the setup of the benches. With the help of some of the women, SAFFI facilitators arranged the benches to form

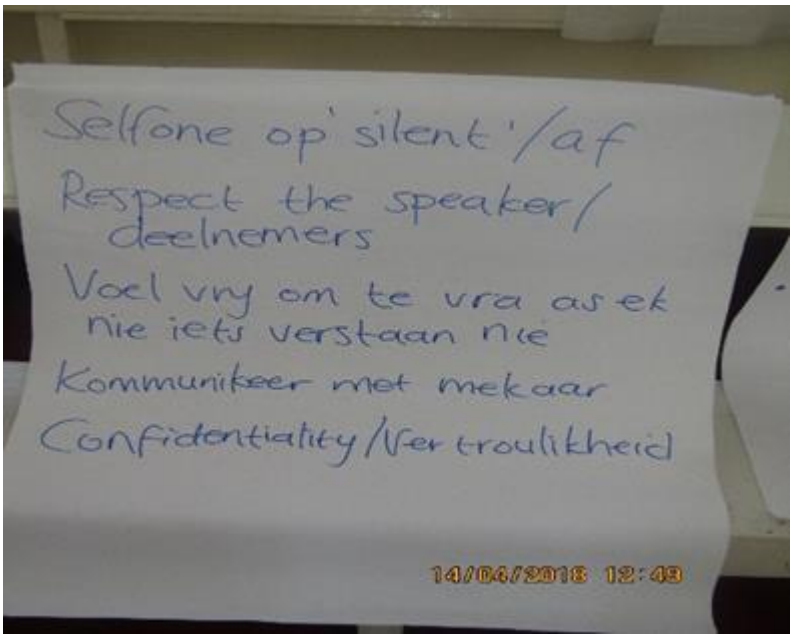
a circle. The circle sitting arrangement was a strategy that SAFFI used to instil a sense of belong and encourage participation.

After an opening prayer, the facilitators introduced themselves formally. One facilitator led the assembled group through the process of setting rules and expectations – the latter with regard to what both the facilitators and the women wanted to get out of the training. This was an interactive process; both the facilitators and the audience indicated their expectations. The rules and expectations were then written on big charts and displayed on the wall throughout the workshop.

The first rule that SAFFI insisted upon was maintaining confidentiality. The facilitators emphasized that these women were not supposed to share or discuss confidential information of other participants after the workshop. The second rule was respect. Women were expected to respect the facilitators and fellow participants. Any contributions and comments were to be made through the facilitators. One of the women suggested that all mobile phones be on silent; her suggestion was accepted by other participants and it was added to the chart.

Then the women voiced their expectations. One woman said that she expected facilitators to give the participants opportunities to ask questions if they did not understand some of the concepts. Another indicated that she expected that participants would be allowed to share the lessons of the day with others and create awareness on violence against women. Other participants expected to learn and understand what violence against women is. One woman's expectation was to understand the contribution that she can make in addressing violence against women. These rules and expectations were written in Afrikaans as this was an Afrikaans-speaking audience. They were captured in point form and short phrases. Below is an example of how the rules and expectations were drafted.

Rules set at the Moravian Church Workshop on Violence Against Women



1. Cellphones on silent/off

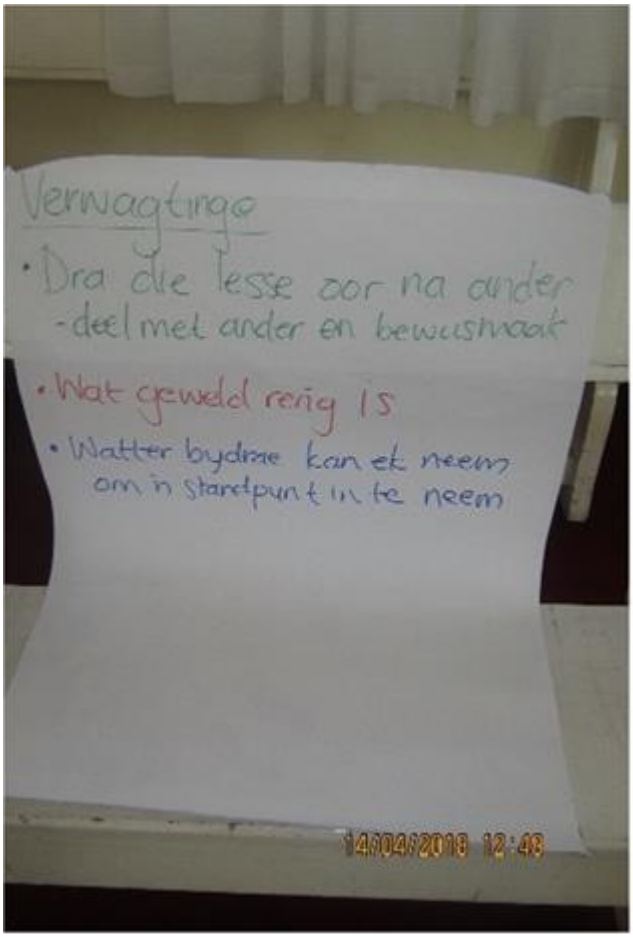
2. Respect the speaker/participants

3. Feel free to ask if l do not understand something.

4. Communicate with one another

5. Confidentiality

Expectations of Participants at the Moravian Church Workshop on Violence Against Women



Expectations

1. Carry the lessons over to others/ share with others and create awareness.

2. What violence really is.

3. The contribution I can make to take a stand.

After setting the rules and expectations, facilitator Munashe began the lesson by introducing an open discussion and reflections on the intensity of cases of violence against women in Cape Town. This was done in the form of an activity. All the participants were instructed to walk up and down the church without talking to anyone. After a few minutes the facilitator instructed the participants to stop and discuss with the person closest to them the intensity of violence against women: 'Stop and discuss with the person close to you; ask her how she feels about the violence that is going on in our communities'. After giving the women some time to discuss, Munashe instructed them to walk again, silently. Participants continued moving up and down in total silence, and after a few minutes the facilitator asked the women to stop and discuss:

‘Pause and talk to someone. This time talk to someone you have not spoken to. I want you to feel free to share your fears with that person.

As the women were doing this exercise, I was moving around, listening in to their discussions. I stopped when I heard one woman telling another of her fear of walking in the streets because of her fear of abuse: ‘These days I am really scared to walk in the streets even in broad daylight. As I walk, I constantly turn back to check who is behind me’ (Shorai, 14 April 2018). I moved on to the next pair, who were discussing how they worry when their children and grandchildren are not at home: ‘I am always worried if my grandchildren are not at home, I live in fear that they might get raped’ (Wadzanai, 14 April 2018). As women shared their fears and worries, they comforted and encouraged each other. Munashe told me that the purpose of conducting such an exercise was to create team spirit and build trust among participants.

At the end of the walking exercise, all the women sat in a circle and Munashe moved to the next step of the workshop. In form of a PowerPoint presentation, she introduced a topic entitled, ‘Unveiling the Complex Faith Dimensions of Gender-based Violence in Intimate Relationships.’ This topic covered definitions of violence against women, causes of violence and the cycle of abuse. She began by unpacking the definitions of violence against women. Some of the definitions she presented were influenced by feminist and human rights discourses. However, she also presented a definition of a violence against women from a faith perspective. She defined violence against women as; ‘an offence against the creator and against the image of God reflected in people’ (SAFFI Facilitator, 14 April 2018). She quoted Genesis 1:27, which says humans were created in the image and likeness of God. She emphasized that although some scriptures are misinterpreted and misused to perpetuate violence against women, any form of violence contradicts the word of God. Her explanation of this definition reflected a particular intervention of religion in SAFFI’s programme.

Munashe then moved on to teach participants about common signs and stages of abusive behaviour in relationships. Using a diagram to illustrate, she explained the various stages of abuse that she called the 'Cycle of Abuse.' According to the model, victims in intimate relationships are caught in what is called a Cycle of Abuse. Violence starts with increased tension between partners; this is called the Build-up phase. Because of this increased tension, the victim becomes scared and the perpetrator is usually in control; this is called the Stand-over phase. From here, the cycle moves to actual violence. This may be physical, emotional or sexual abuse. The facilitator said this is called the Explosion. From the Explosion, the cycle moves to the Remorse phase. In the Remorse phrase, the perpetrator feels guilty for abusing the victim and justifies his actions. From the Remorse phase the cycle moves to the Pursuit phase. In this phase the perpetrator promises the victim that he has changed. He buys gifts and tries to win back her trust. From the Pursuit phase the cycle moves on to the Honeymoon phase. This is a period where the perpetrator is loving and affectionate. It is a period where the perpetrator and the victim are happy in their intimate relationship and where everything appears normal. From the Honeymoon phase, tension builds up again and the cycle repeats itself. Below is picture of the cycle of abuse that the facilitator offered in her PowerPoint presentation.

Image of the Cycle of Abuse presented at SAFFI's Workshop on Violence Against Women

The presentation of the Cycle of Abuse promoted dialogue as participants began to relate to what was explained with their individual experiences. One of the women started crying, and saying that she had realized that she was caught in a Cycle of Abuse. Another woman, Yemurai, narrated how her partner used to beat her and how the relationship gets back to normal and in no time, moves back to abuse:

> This is exactly my reality. My husband gets very angry, and beat me. One day we had an argument over a love text message that came through his phone. He got very angry that I confronted him, and he hit me with an electric cord. I had bruises all over. The following day he started crying and asked for forgiveness while rubbing the bruises. He told me that he is very short-tempered, and I should help him by not making him angry. He bought me a nice watch that I have always wanted. I forgave him and everything was fine we were happy together. We started going to watch movies and to walking in the park together. He was coming home in time and I felt very loved. Some days he could surprise me with chocolates and flowers. Two weeks later he started

> coming home very late. We started having arguments about his sudden change. One night he came home late and he was smelling of a female perfume. When I asked him about this, he got angry that I was accusing him of cheating, and he slapped me. (Yemurai, 14 April 2018)

As Yemurai shared her story, the women in the workshop sympathized with her, some hugged her, and an elderly lady who was sitting next to her tapped her shoulder, consoling her. Munashe later explained that the cycle of abuse is not easy to break. She said the honeymoon phase, where there is love and affection in the relationship, makes it difficult for the abused partner to leave the abusive relationship. The session ended with the facilitator encouraging the participants to be able to recognise if they are caught in the cycle. She encouraged those that might be in this cycle of abuse to seek help to break the cycle.

Munashe introduced another lesson. I observed that SAFFI also used short plays to illustrate and discuss violence against women in workshops. These set a tone and created a productive context for learning. One story SAFFI's commonly used was presented in the form of a short drama entitled *The Miriam Story*, which was developed by SAFFI founder, Elizabeth Petersen. *The Miriam Story* was a fictitious story of a married woman who faced different forms of abuse from childhood.

In the short play, Munashe played Miriam who sat on the chair while a second facilitator read from a script the different forms of abuse that Miriam faced. According to this story, Miriam was a 35-year-old woman who was raised in the church. She had been married for 15 years and had four children between the ages of seven and 15. As each form of violence that Miriam experienced was narrated, the second facilitator covered the Miriam character with a heavy blanket.

When Miriam was a child, she saw her father beating her mother once or twice a week *(a heavy blanket was put on character Miriam)*. From the age of eight her uncle started to molest her. She was molested for five years but she was scared to tell anybody *(another heavy blanket was loaded)*. Miriam later married Abraham. She had a good job, but her husband would not allow her to work. Her husband believed that women are not supposed to work as men are the only breadwinners. Abraham was also jealous that other men will look at Miriam if she goes to work *(another heavy blanket was loaded*). He believed that it was best for Miriam to stay at home and be a good wife and a good mother. Abraham started abusing Miriam in the first year of their marriage. On one occasion, Abraham beat Miriam when she was pregnant, and she almost lost her baby *(another heavy blanket was loaded)*. Miriam wanted to tell their pastor, but Abraham apologized and promised her that it will not happen again. Five years later, they had two children. Miriam went to her mother to get help because the abuse continued. Her mother told her that she must be patient because that is what married life is like. He mother also told her that she must be grateful that her husband does not drink, and he doesn't use drugs. Miriam's mother told her that she must be happy that her husband is a breadwinner, and that God will help her to be a good wife and to help her husband *(another heavy blanket was loaded)*. Miriam then thought about going to the pastor, but the pastor knew Abraham as a well-respected man, and she thought the pastor will not believe her stories of abuse. Abraham was a leader in the church and people usually went to Abraham with their problems. She also did not want to affect her husband's reputation in church. There was also a belief in their church that women must be subservient *(another heavy blanket was loaded)*. Miriam left the house and went to her friend's house. Abraham was very upset, and he went to look for her. When he found her, he gave her an ultimatum to come back home, or he was going to be forced to use his pistol *(another blanket was loaded)*. As Miriam was covered with blankets, the audience reacted with yelling and expressing sympathy for Miriam.

The facilitator who read the script paused and walked around Miriam. While tapping the heavy load, she said: “Miriam, Miriam are you ok? Miriam why don’t you just get up! Miriam why don’t you just move! Miriam why don’t you just stand up!” The character Miriam did not respond to the calling. The facilitator then told the audience that with every statement that she was going to read, anyone from the audience could go and take off one blanket.

Miriam remembered that her Sunday school teacher taught her that she is a child of God and that God will look after her *(a blanket was removed)*. Miriam read in the newspaper that family abuse is against the law and that men who beat women can be arrested *(a blanket was removed)*. She remembered that her aunty who was in an abusive marriage divorced her husband and moved away *(a blanket was removed)*. She remembered the story she heard on the radio of a woman who was her age who used the help of others to get out of her abusive relationship; until then Miriam thought she was the only one going through such problems *(a blanket was removed)*. Miriam read a verse in the Bible that said, “Don't you know that you are a temple of God and that the spirit of God lives in you” God will punish the abuser because the body is a temple of God and it is holy *(a blanket was removed)*. Miriam saw a television programme about a shelter for abused women and how it helps women to recover. She considered it as a place she could go to for security *(a blanket was removed)*. Miriam read on the church’s noticeboard that there was going to be a talk about women abuse. She was scared to go but she thought that if she goes the pastor might be willing to help her *(a blanket was removed)*. One day Abraham hit their son so badly that he landed up in hospital and he blamed Miriam for that because he said that the children must pay for her sins. This was after Miriam refused to have sexual intercourse with him. Abraham said that since Miriam refused to have sex with him, he will go to their daughter. Miriam decided that she was not going to see her children hurt or abused and she believed that God would help her to protect them, and she decided to leave Abraham *(the last blanket was removed)*. After the last blanket was removed, the facilitator

who was reading the story ended the play by saying ‘Miriam, remember that for freedom, God has set you free, go in peace’.

At the end of the story, the facilitator asked the audience their thoughts on this story. One woman highlighted that such abuse happens in their community and she has learnt that women should know that there is help for them (Gamu, 14 April 2018). A second woman indicated that abused women must be encouraged to seek help. She said, *The Miriam Story* resonated with her mother’s experiences. Her mother never sought help and she used the Bible incorrectly: ‘My mum did not know that when the Bible say you must carry your cross it meant get help from others. She never shared her burdens” (Shungu, 14 April 2018). A third woman indicated that the story made her realize that children can also be abused in domestic violence. Another commented that Miriam’s mother was wrong to encourage her child to endure an abusive marriage. She believed that this worsened the situation. She encouraged all the women in the workshop not to be like Miriam’s mother when their children were abused.

The story also triggered the emotions of the audience and prompted a dialogue on women’s experiences of violence, and ways to address it. Some participants started sharing their personal experiences of abuse. Below are some of the reactions:

> The Miriam story reminds me of how my mother stayed in an abusive marriage for the sake of her children, yet it was traumatizing for me and my siblings to see her being abused (Tafadzwa, 14 April 2018).

Crying, another said;

> I have been in an abusive marriage for 17 years now with the hope that things will change. I lost self-confidence and I believe that I am not good enough and no man will ever love me again (Rudo, 14 April 2018).

As some women started crying during the discussion, a facilitator went to each of them and hugged them to comfort them. Other participants highlighted how the story of Miriam encouraged them to act and to help victims of abuse.

> I felt heavier and heavier when the blankets were being loaded on Miriam. When I got the chance to take off one blanket during the play, I felt relieved that I can help a fellow who is burdened by abuse. This drama taught me that I need to act (Takudzwa, 14 April 2018).

In my conversation with one of the facilitators about the essence of this story, she highlighted that the story recounts all the experiences of abuse that Miriam faced from childhood. She indicated that the blankets symbolize the burden that women endure in abusive relationships. She also noted that when they invited the participants to remove the blankets it was intended to make them realize that anyone can help a person in an abusive situation. The facilitator explained that the story of Miriam shows that some of the faith experiences have been a hinderance to a healthy relationship, while others were a positive resource. The facilitator indicated that the story becomes a ground-breaking experience for participants to understand the complex faith dimension of violence against women.

The Miriam Story illustrated the different experiences that SAFFI regarded as violence against women. The story reflects that SAFFI understood violence as sexual as shown when Miriam was molested in her childhood. It also demonstrated physical violence when Miriam was beaten when she was pregnant. Emotional violence was portrayed when Abraham threatened to shoot Miriam if she did not return home. That Miriam was denied the opportunity of going to work when she got married also reflected a kind of economic abuse, and moreover was a conduit to her financial dependence on Abraham.

In addition, Miriam's story shows that SAFFI understand violence against women as an offence punishable by law, and that perpetrators should be arrested. It also demonstrates SAFFI's endorsement of shelters for abused women as a resource that abused women can use to recover from experiences of abuse. Thus, *The Miriam Story* may be read as a new symbolic code that indicates SAFFI's understanding of violence against women and the steps that people in abusive relationships should take to take them out of abuse. Related to the previous lesson on the Cycle of Abuse, the story of Miriam is a good demonstration of the patterns of abuse that women get caught in in relationships, and how to break free. The sessions produced information and strategies of intervention through interactive engagement and discussions. SAFFI promoted their project to community members through these practices. This new information was part of the new structure of knowledge and intervention that SAFFI wanted to introduce into communities. It was a vital part of the transition phase of SAFFI's intervention as a rite of passage.

Attributes of liminality were clear in this workshop. The workshop was governed by rules which were emphasized at the start. There was solidarity and togetherness among participants, women constantly encouraged and supported their fellow participants when they became emotional. Facilitators made use of symbols such as The Miriam Story and the Cycle of Abuse diagram to convey their teachings on violence against women. The workshop provided new knowledge about violence against women to participants. These teachings intended to equip them with skills to address violence against women. All of the above are key characteristics of the transition phase of a rite of passage. Based on the way the workshop was run, as well as the experiences of the participants, I argue that the SAFFI workshops represent a liminal phase which had as its aim, the transformation in the perceptions and attitudes of some women about violence against women.

Pilgrimages

Among the activities SAFFI employed to engender discussion on and awareness of violence against women took the form of excursions to Robben Island, which SAFFI called 'pilgrimages.' Robben Island is a site of historical importance to South Africa. During the apartheid era, political leaders were imprisoned on this island (Buntman, 2003). According to SAFFI, 'Robben Island is symbolic of the tension of oppression and freedom which also exists in intimate relationships' (SAFFI Annual Report 2015-2016). SAFFI used the site as a symbolic and atmospheric backdrop to allow attendees to reflect on their experiences of violence against women and to foster dialogue and discussion on those experiences. For SAFFI, the pilgrimages are a means of addressing the traits and scars of gender-based violence.

I will describe the SAFFI's first pilgrimage which I found in its archive (2011 Women's Pilgrimage Report, Date accessed: 4 April 2018). The file had a printed email invitation to the pilgrimage, a detailed report on all the activities of the day, from the beginning to the end of the journey, and original evaluation forms that participants who attended the pilgrimage completed.

On 26 August 2011, the Director of SAFFI sent an email to selected women, inviting them to a 'pilgrimage' to Robben Island. In this mail she explained the major activities and the purpose of this pilgrimage:

> We will be walking, listening, sharing, reflecting, meditating, and praying together. The experience is meant to provide a safe space to share the sacredness of our experiences as women in the hope that each one of us will return inspired to step into the future with a new sense of determination, hope and courage (Elizabeth Petersen, 26 August 2011).

From the above, it is evident that the goal of SAFFI's pilgrimage was to transform participants into a new state of being. On 1 September 2011 a group of 25 women, ranging from their

twenties to mid-seventies, gathered for the first pilgrimage. By 7am all the participants had arrived at the Waterfront Ferry Terminal to depart for Robben Island. The day started with a Christian opening prayer. This was followed by a welcome practice created by SAFFI. Each person had to say her name, followed by a hope to bring a particular value to the circle. She had to conclude by saying: 'I welcome what the day will bring.' The rest of the participants responded by saying 'We welcome you.' Below is an example of how some of the participants introduced themselves;

> My name is Mampo. I bring the hope of *healing* into our circle. I welcome what the day will bring.
>
> *All*: We welcome you.
>
> My name is Chido. I bring the hope of *unity* into our circle. I welcome what the day will bring.
>
> *All*: We welcome you.

Upon arrival on Robben Island, all the participants gathered, and joined in a prayer and a Christian song. They then visited the key sites on Robben Island: the Main door of the prison, the Leper Cemetery, Robert Sobukwe House, the Lime Quarry and the chapel. They were accompanied by a guide who explained the history of each site. At each site, the facilitator requested the participants to reflect on the lessons that they had learnt from its history.

At the Robert Sobukwe House, for example, they stopped to think of the leader of the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) who was held in solitary confinement during apartheid (Lebakeng, 2018). Sobukwe was not allowed to speak with anyone. He could use only gestures to communicate with other prisoners (Lebakeng, 2018). Using Sobukwe's story, the facilitator opened a discussion on how women have been silenced in society to speak about violence

against women, and how they could break the silence. This commentary encouraged women to speak up about violence.

The report also stated that participants were introduced to what the facilitators called the 'Pilgrim walk.' This was an activity that allowed the women to walk in pairs to share their life experiences and support each other. The women shared stories about their struggles in abusive relationships, painful divorces, and depression. A sixty-seven years old woman who had divorced after 47 years of marriage shared her experiences of abuse and how the Robben Island journey gave her hope: 'I had been imprisoned by the fear of the unknown but being with these women refreshed my hope'. Two others reflected on the pains of imprisonment at Robben Island and related them to the pains of male dominance and violence against women in their societies.

Based on the evaluation forms, the 'pilgrims' appreciated the experiences of the pilgrimage. Some women experienced a sense of safety in the journey that made it possible for them to share their experiences of violence against women with fellow women. For some, sharing their experiences lessened their burdens, and hearing other people's experiences gave them hope. A pilgrim, Mufaro, concluded: 'This journey gave me hope. I feel inspired'.

Other participants expressed how walking at different sites was inspirational and a learning curve. Referring to what they had learnt from the journey, Netsai said, 'I've learned that there will always be new things to discover. We constantly learn from the experiences of other people'. Nyaradzo said the following: 'The pilgrimage taught me about the situation in which the victim and the perpetrator finds themselves'. The experiences of these participants illustrate that the journey was transitional in the rite of passage. It provided hope and healing to some participants, and new knowledge about violence against women to others.

The participants of the 'Pilgrimage' gained knowledge about dealing with victims and perpetrators of violence against women. The journey allowed participants to break the silence and to feel and see the need to speak about violence against women. Others understood the importance of supporting those affected by violence against women, and some participants learnt through the experiences that were shared by other people. It appears that the pilgrimage changed or shifted the perceptions and thinking of some participants on violence against women – as intended by SAFFI.

Intervention Programmes for Men

SAFFI also organized programmes for men. One of these was called the Men Affirming Dignity Programme. For SAFFI, the aim of this programme was to demystify the popular view that all men are dominant and violent. SAFFI believed that there are positive traits in men that are essential in gender relations and in addressing violence against women. Another programme aimed at men was the Perpetrator Intervention Programme, this intervention provided counselling and support to perpetrators of violence against women. The purpose of the programme was to change the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of violent men.

SAFFI launched The Men Affirming Dignity programme in April 2018. According to the Director of the organisation, history has created images of coloured men from the Cape Flats as violent and toxic that needs to change. The Men Affirming Dignity aimed to create a new mindset with regard to such perceptions of coloured men.

The programme brought men together to share their experiences, knowledge, and insights about healthy relationships. It was also a platform to challenge harmful traits in men and affirm positive traits. This was done through dialogue and art. SAFFI selected men in the Cape flats who were believed to have lived exemplary lives as good husbands and fathers. The

organisation documented their stories and painted portraits of these men which they named the "Life Affirming Masculinities."

As part of commemorating International Men's Day in November 2018, SAFFI exhibited the painted portraits of three elderly men from the Cape Flats who were identified to have lived exemplary lives and raised their families and children in non-violence. According to what the patron of the Men Affirming Dignity (MAD) project said on the poster that was created for this event, these men "are not HEROES they are ORDINARY MEN who live their HUMANITY in the face of systematic dehumanization, oppression and dispossession" (MAD Patron, 17 November 2018). These three elderly men are believed by SAFFI to have paved the way for the next generation of men. One of the three men was the father of Elizabeth Petersen, the founder of SAFFI. She explained the gentle, good manner in which her 82-year-old father raised her and her siblings.

Elizabeth says her father had always had a healthy relationship with her mother. She has never seen her father beating her mother. On Facebook on Father's Day, Elizabeth posted:

> We appreciate the men (and fathers) like my dad, who quietly live their lives in this life-affirming way...we see you...we experience you...we value you (Elizabeth Petersen, Facebook Post, 22 June 2020).

On her father's birthday, she posted the following:

> This is to give thanks for the grace of being able to witness and experience the gift on an extraordinary person I have the privilege of calling Pappa. He embodies love, simplicity, a life-affirming faith in God and people, clarity of vision and flowing with the natural course of life (Elizabeth Petersen, Facebook Post, 21 October 2020).

The story of Elizabeth's father shows that he treated women with respect and dignity. SAFFI indicated that it had plans to exhibit the portraits and narratives of these exemplary men from

the Cape Flats in schools, museums and libraries as a way of providing information on positive images of masculinity and men, and to reject the perception that all coloured men are violent. SAFFI used positive images of men to provide education and create a new narrative of coloured men as non-violent.

On the Facebook comment section of the Men Affirming Dignity post, one of the participants who attended the exhibition of the project commented;

> I'm only grateful to be part of this experience. Not growing up with a father made me realize that there are men out there who can be of positive influence in many lives of children with absent fathers. Thanks, Elizabeth, for involving me in this project. I'm learning a lot…' (Anonymous, Facebook comments,18 November 2018).

From the above, it seems that this participant had a negative image of men based on his experiences of growing up with an absent father. The stories that he had heard about the exemplary men during the Men Affirming Dignity workshop provided him with a new narrative of men as positive role models. Interestingly, his comment also revealed an intention to act on his new knowledge.

The SAFFI Perpetrator Intervention Programme was motivated by the organization's philosophy that while perpetrators must be held liable for their abusive behaviour, they must be offered culturally informed restorative justice interventions. SAFFI provides counselling and ongoing support to perpetrators of violence against women. At the organization's 10th Anniversary conference, the Director shared an audio-visual documentary that was commissioned by SAFFI and showed how the organisation provided support to an ex-perpetrator of violence against women.

In this documentary, Bunja narrated his life story and spoke of how he had abused women. Bunja said he was groomed in a gang where beating a woman was regarded as teaching her a

lesson. He became a drug addict at the age of 11. Bunja said there was no one who controlled him. His parents were always occupied with their jobs and they never showed him love. 'The gangs had time for me, and I began to love them more than my parents' (Bunja's Documentary, SAFFI 2018).

Bunja said he was socialized by the gangs to abuse women. He became a perpetrator of violence against women at the age of 21. On one occasion, he said, he got very angry and tried to shoot his girlfriend. On another occasion, he beat his girlfriend until he deformed her nose. Bunja cried as he told of his regret at causing her to live with a disability: 'I feel sorry now because she is now disabled' (Bunja's Documentary, SAFFI 2018). He later explained how accepting Jesus Christ into his life and going through counselling transformed him (Bunja's Documentary, SAFFI 2018).

With SAFFI's help, Bunja launched a project in 2017 called 'Grooming Boys to Men', which aimed at transforming men to respect women. The project focused on nurturing non-violent masculinities that do not entail abusing women. In a conversation I had with Bunja in March 2018, he shared his past experiences as an abuser. Bunja said the counselling and teachings that he received from SAFFI motivates him on his new purpose of engaging men to address violence against women (Bunja, 02 March 2018).

The SAFFI programmes elucidated above, as well as the examples given, reflect the transformative power of knowledge and education in changing lives or changing perceptions. SAFFI's strategy of providing narratives of exemplary men who raise their families in dignity helped some participants to learn about and appreciate the positive attributes in some men. The story of an ex-perpetrator of violence against women also illustrated how perpetrators are capable of transitioning from a state of being violent to women to being an activist of violence

against women. SAFFI believed in engaging men as a key strategy to address violence against women.

Conference on Violence Against Women

In 2018, as part of its 10th Anniversary celebrations, SAFFI hosted a conference. Unlike its other programmes, which were Christian-inspired, this conference included religious leaders' and members from different faith communities. Although some of the participants at the conference had never been to a SAFFI event before, most of the other attendees included the pastors from the religious forums, and the women who had participated in the women's workshops on violence against women.

There were guest speakers from Islam, Christianity, the Bahà'ì Faith, African Traditional spirituality, Judaism and Hinduism. There were also speakers from the South African Police Services (SAPS), the National Prosecuting Authority, The Department of Correctional Services and a medical doctor from the Thuthuzela Care Centre, a one-stop centre for victims of rape. Non-governmental organisations such as the South African National Institute for Crime Prevention and the Reintegration of Offenders (NICRO) and Mosaic Training, Service and Healing Centre for women also sent representatives.

The discussions by the keynote speakers and guests were intended to educate and exchange knowledge about violence against women. SAFFI emphasized the importance of the government, NGOs, FBOs and religious communities working together in addressing violence against women. SAFFI's initiative of bringing these different stakeholders together created a *communitas* of stakeholders who publicly opposed violence against women.

In the first panel discussion of the conference, government representatives from South African Police Services, the National Prosecuting Authority, the Department of Correctional Services and the Thuthuzela Care Centre spoke of the interventions of the government in dealing with

violence against women and the perpetrators of that violence. A Captain from the South African Police Services told the audience that threats are considered abuse, and he encouraged the reporting of such cases to the police. He added that each person has the right to seek a protection order which prevents the recurrence of domestic abuse. It legally prevents the perpetrator from getting close to the victim by prohibiting him from entering the residence or workplace of the victim (SAPS Captain, 29 November 2018).

An advocate from the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) highlighted that people should know their rights and responsibilities. He also pointed out that the NPA would ensure that there is no secondary victimization. He said their department ensures that victims are treated fairly, and the department helps the court to make a just decision and mete out a fair sentence (NPA Advocate, 29 November 2018).

A representative from the Department of Correctional Services, who was in his uniform, explained the nature of the work of their department in relation to violence against women. He informed the meeting of two hundred and forty-three Correctional Centres in South Africa, forty-three of which are in the Western Cape province. The Department deals mainly with perpetrators, and noted that they take twenty days to assess the offender. He also said perpetrators in the Correctional Centres go through an eight to twelve-week therapeutic program with qualified social workers. A perpetrator sentenced two years and above, goes through a correctional plan to help him to change. He further highlighted that the department works with religious leaders, FBOs and different religious groups in taking the perpetrators through a correctional or rehabilitation plan. He believed that all sectors should work together for an effective intervention to address violence against women.

A medical doctor from Thuthuzela Care Centre said they offer one-stop locations for survivors of rape at hospitals or local clinics across the country. She highlighted that staff at their centres

help the victims to get immediate medical attention and counselling, and added that they also help opening a police case and taking the case to court. She informed the audience that the appropriate term to use when referring to a person who has been abused is 'survivor': 'We work with survivors, not victims, victims are at the graveyards' (Thuthuzela Care Centre Doctor, 29 November 2018). The Thuthuzela Care Centre doctor further highlighted that South Africa has a good Constitution and a good Domestic Violence Act, but cases of violence continue to increase. She said some women who come to their centres do not want to report the cases to the police because of the delays and injustices in the system. She ended her presentation by suggesting the need for more stakeholders to work together in the struggle against violence against women (Thuthuzela Care Centre Doctor, 29 November 2018).

The audience was given an opportunity to respond to the presentations. Some attendees appreciated that the presentations provided insights on the importance of these different sectors in dealing with violence against women. Some of the questions that people raised were mainly about seeking information, but they also raised critical issues: How long does it takes to get a protection order? Why are cases of violence against women delayed for as long as seven years? Why is the government giving light sentences to perpetrators of violence against women?

An NGO panel was invited to present their interventions with perpetrators of violence against women. Most of the panellists raised concerns about the role of men in society. A representative from NICRO pointed out that the organisation realized that working with women alone was not sufficient in dealing with domestic violence. She indicated that the organisation established a perpetrator programme called the NICRO Programme for Perpetrators of Intimate Partner Violence (PPIPV). The programme promotes thinking and behavioural change and helps to keep the perpetrators accountable (NICRO Representative 29 November 2018). A representative from Mosaic Training, Service and Healing Centre for Women intimated that the women who visit their centre do not want to divorce their partners but want them to change.

Based on this, the organisation developed a counselling programme for male perpetrators of violence. The programme intends to groom boys and men to be non-violent. Mosaic also has support groups for men which focus on raising awareness on gender equality. However, she said, the major problem they face in running this programme is funding. The audience did not ask questions of the NGO panel.

The third panel at the conference were religious leaders from African Traditional Religion, Christianity, Islam, Judaism and the Bahà'ì Faith, who presented their insights on violence against women from the perspective of their respective religions. These religious leaders were wearing their respective religious regalia, and some were holding their religious texts during their presentations. A pastor from the Methodist church began by sharing a scripture in the Bible from the book of Luke 18, verses 1-8. She explained the parable of a persistent widow who kept going to the most feared and unjust judge to plea for justice until she got her justice. Jesus told his disciple the parable to teach them to always pray and never give up. The pastor used the scripture to speak about violence against women. She highlighted that the scripture does not allow people to remain silent when there is injustice. She said it is imperative for people to break the silence and speak against the injustice of violence against women.

A Muslim religious leader offered insights about Islam and violence against women. Before his presentation, he began by uttering Islamic chants in Arabic. In his presentation, he said Islam does not accepts violence against women. He emphasized that the Quran is deliberately misinterpreted. Even though a verse states that men are stronger than women, it does not mean that men should abuse women, but that they should act as their protectors. He elaborated the need for religious leaders to preach such verses to those who do not understand them.

A representative from the Bahà'ì Faith also gave her insights on the Bahà'ì Faith and violence against women. According to this representative, the Bahà'ì Faith is embedded in justice. She

emphasized that the principle of equality is highly valued in Bahà'ìsm, explaining that in her faith, a man and a woman are like the two wings of a bird: 'If a man violates his wife, he would have damaged a wing, therefore the bird cannot fly' (Bahà'ì Faith representative, 29 November 2018).

The Jewish rabbi declared that Judaism does not tolerate abuse of women. He explained that the code of law in Judaism emphasizes that a man should treat his wife with honour and respect. He said one can only stay a king as long as he keeps treating his partner as a queen (Rabbi, 29 November 2018).

An *injoli* or African Traditional Religion leader informed the audience that women are respected and honoured in African Traditional Religion. He emphasized that if a man abuses his wife, he would have angered the ancestors and there is need for him to appease the spirits (Injoli, 29 November 2018).

Although the approaches and insights offered by religious leaders differed and were unique to each religion, all of the religious leaders denounced violence against women. The panel supported SAFFI's conviction that religious leaders have a unique contribution to make in addressing violence against women by addressing people within their respective religious communities. The presentations of the religious leaders provided the audience with the knowledge that all religions renounce violence against women and act to support women.

The discussions at the conference gave the audience an insight into the different stakeholders' approach to the challenge of violence against women. It also reflected how vital it is that different stakeholders work together to offer their specific contribution in addressing violence against women. The conference reflected the relationship SAFFI has with other stakeholders. The presence of governmental organisations clearly illustrate FBO-state relations and collaboration in addressing challenges in public life.

SAFFI's multi-pronged education and training approach to its interventions with regard to violence against women may be interpreted as a transition phase of a rite of passage. Through its educational and training programmes on violence against women, it aimed at transforming existing knowledge and interventions on the scourge of violence against women. SAFFI's programme mapped the causes of violence in society, the need for positive interpretations of religious symbols and texts and, importantly, partnerships between religious leaders and institutions on the one hand, and government, police and social services on the other. In its many programmes, SAFFI produced strategies of engagement which it conveyed to pastors in particular, and to religious communities in general. While its focus was on Christianity, it also implied that the same method may be applied in other religious communities as well. But this needs to be seen in future research. The solidarity and comradeship among the participants in various programs of SAFFI exemplified the idea of *communitas,* which is one of the key characteristics of the transition phase in a rite of passage.

7.4 Incorporation

The state of the participants after going through the interventions staged by SAFFI with regard to violence against women can be equated with a rite of incorporation, which is the final stage of a rite of passage. This includes the state of religious leaders, female congregants from the community who attended the workshops, ex-perpetrators of violence against women and Robben Island 'pilgrims'. For some of the religious leaders, SAFFI's programmes were a boundary marker between two worlds, that is from the world of silence and non-involvement in addressing violence against women, to a world of involvement and engagement through advocacy, preaching about violence and providing counselling to victims of abuse. For some perpetrators of violence, the SAFFI intervention revealed the possibility of a change in behaviour. In Van Gennep's framework, this was the new state or new identity of participants after SAFFI's interventions (Van Gennep, 1960).

For religious leaders who had experienced the SAFFI programmes, incorporation was characterized by a change in attitudes and involvement in addressing violence against women through advocacy and preaching. Some had also begun to offer counselling services to victims and perpetrators of violence against women. Religious leaders from both Atlantis and Khayelitsha commented that what they had learnt from the programmes changed their perceptions and attitudes related to violence against women. Some of these religious leaders were now deeply involved in addressing violence against women.

Pastor Tawanda was one of the religious leaders I occasionally saw in SAFFI's monthly religious leaders forums. In a conversation with him at SAFFI's 10th Anniversary Conference in November 2018, he told me that he was grateful for what he had learnt from SAFFI. He said that the training helped him see the need to address violence against women in his church. Pastor Tawanda now includes issues of gender-based violence in his preaching. He organizes counselling programs for both victims and perpetrators of violence against women in his church. He added that the technical support he received from SAFFI in April 2018 strengthened his capacity to provide counselling to victims and perpetrators of violence against women. In his words:

> SAFFI helped me to gain more knowledge to assist and counsel people. I now know how to file all my counselling sessions. I have referred some of my church members to social workers. I continue coming to SAFFI's events like these to gain more knowledge on addressing violence against women (Pastor Tawanda, 29 November 2018).

Pastor Kuda is another SAFFI inductee who is now involved in addressing violence against women. Before he had attended SAFFI's trainings, Pastor Kuda believed prayer to be the only answer for dealing with violence against women. He intimated that SAFFI's trainings helped him realize the need for action in dealing with violence against women. Pastor Kuda says he is now implementing the teachings on violence against women in his church and in his

community. He encourages church members to join campaigns such as the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children to raise awareness:

> I was able to learn a lot from SAFFI which I implemented in my church and community. SAFFI made me realize the need to take action in addressing violence against women. As a Man of God, I need to act. I now know that prayer only does not change things, action changes things; even Jesus took the rod to correct others (Pastor Kuda, 20 June 2017).

In April 2018 I had a conversation with Pastor Janga, a religious leader who attended the SAFFI Atlantis religious leader's forum. Pastor Janga got to know about SAFFI through one of the facilitators who lived in the Atlantis area. He believes that this facilitator was sent by God to tell him about SAFFI. Pastor Janga said SAFFI's trainings gave him the courage to openly preach and speak about issues of violence against women in church. He explained that through SAFFI's teachings he realized that he misinterpreted some of the religious texts in a way that oppressed women. He added that SAFFI gave him an opportunity to learn and exchange ideas with fellow religious leaders:

> SAFFI helped me to break the silence in my church. We knew that women are abused but we never spoke about it openly. SAFFI's trainings gave me the courage and boldness to openly talk about it in my church. I preach about it. I offer counselling to both the victim and the perpetrator of violence (Pastor Janga, 14 April 2018).

The post-SAFFI experiences of religious leaders who participated in the Atlantis religious forums reflect how SAFFI helped them transition from non-involvement to engagement in addressing violence against women. SAFFI seems to have been successful in incorporating its target participants into activists against gender-based violence in South Africa.

Religious leaders also exhibited a change in perception. While some of the pastors from Khayelitsha had previously claimed that men were superior to women, I now observed that

they had changed their perspective. Pastor Sheu, who previously believed that men were dominant and superior to women, now shared with his fellows the importance of women in society: 'Women are blessed in God's eyes, and they must not be taken for granted' (Pastor Sheu, 27 February 2018). He added that women were among the first disciples of Jesus.

After he had been through the training, Pastor Dudzai realized that it is the responsibility of the pastors to speak about violence against women in the church. He now preaches about violence against women in his church which he did not do before SAFFI's training. He added that he also teaches his church leaders about violence against women.

> Pastors have the responsibility to know the burden of their church members. Our purpose on earth as pastors is to fix the earthly problems. As pastors we cannot be much concerned about receiving tithes when there are other problems such as violence against women (Khayelitsha Pastor Dudzai, 27 February 2018).

In addition, Pastor Dudzai also established a programme in his church to teach youths about gender-based violence. He said SAFFI's trainings influenced him to hold talks and discussions on healthy relationships with the youths in his church. The purpose of this youth program is to help children to grow up knowing that violence against women is bad. He believes that if the youth are taught about violence against women, and if they groom young boys to be non-violent, they will be able to raise a generation free from gender-based violence (Pastor Dudzai, 27 February 2018).

These are some examples of how some of the 'transformed' religious leaders who had participated in the SAFFI programmes in turn transformed their churches by addressing violence against women. In one of the Khayelitsha forums, other pastors liked Pastor Dudzai's initiative and said that they too would implement the same programmes in their own churches (Khayelitsha Religious Leaders Forum, 27 February 2018).

Pastor Mukundi encountered the SAFFI programme in 2014. Since then, he says, he has been providing ongoing marriage counselling to young couples whose marital problems had led to abuse. He understands that domestic violence affects families, which in turn affects the church in a spiritual way:

> If domestic violence affects the family, it also affects the church. In the church one must be free in mind, physically and spiritually. If one is abused the Holy Spirit will not intervene (Khayelitsha Pastor Mukundi, 27 February 2018).

Giving a spiritual meaning to intervention, Pastor Mukundi said pastors should take on the burden to address violence against women for the spirit of God to continue to flow in the church. While Pastor Mukundi clothed his practices with spirituality, he introduced new practices to prevent and reduce violence against women. Pastor Mukundi said he helped a young couple who was on the verge of divorce because of persistent domestic violence. He added that the domestic violence experiences of some of the young couples in his church also made him realize the importance of premarital counselling.

Bishop Jabu participated in several workshops, conferences and annual general meetings of SAFFI. He credits SAFFI practices with having influenced him to address the abuse of girls. The elderly Bishop Jabu says he has been in the ministry for many years. Through the years he had heard several stories of young girls being sexually abused in the informal settlements of Khayelitsha, but he did not do anything other than praying. He says that in his community, several teenage girls were raped by their male relatives, who took advantage of the children when their parents were at work. Bishop Jabu's church took an initiative to take care of young girls after school. His church provides food and takes care of these children until their parents return from work. Bishop Jabu compared this intervention with the popular #FeesMustFall campaign:

> As pastors we intervened in the '#FeesMustFall'[18] student protests at universities. After our intervention, the situation changed; there is no more violence. We have the obligation to do the same with violence against women (Bishop Jabu, 27 February 2018).

In SAFFI's 2017 Annual General Meeting that I attended, another bishop who has been part of SAFFI religious leader's programmes since 2013 shared his plans to incorporate topics on violence against women in his church's Theological Seminary to equip student pastors with skills to deal with violence against women (Bishop, SAFFI 2017 AGM).

Apart from catching up with participants via interviews, I also followed some participants on social media. In August 2019, South Africa experienced one of the highest rates of brutal rapes and murders of women and children. A religious leader who had received training from SAFFI responded to the brutal killings by raising awareness on Facebook:

> STOP violence, RAPING and KILLING of WOMEN. Surely when men in our nation come together with one voice to fight abuse towards women there will be a solution to preserve the lives of women and not provide more opportunities for women to die…. (Pastor Jabali, Facebook Post: 03 September 2019).

The above post clearly reflects how this pastor was now involved in advocacy and raising awareness against gender-based violence.

Apart from religious leaders, other beneficiaries of SAFFI practices' also demonstrated transformation. In the evaluation forms of the 'Pilgrimage,' some participants expressed how the journey and experiential learning at Robben Island made them realize the need to speak up

[18]'Fees Must Fall' was a protest by University students in South Africa which started in 2015. The goal was to stop increase in fees https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/FeesMustFall Date accessed: 10 June 2020.

about violence against women. This clearly illustrates a shift in some of the beneficiaries' attitudes after experiencing the SAFFI Pilgrimage.

The life journey of Bunja, an ex-perpetrator of violence against women whose history was narrated earlier, showed how SAFFI's programmes changed him too. Bunja transitioned from being a perpetrator of violence against women, to one who joined the advocacy programme. After receiving counselling and attending trainings, Bunja started an activist programme with the aim of 'grooming' other men to be non-violent. Thus, SAFFI's programme transformed Bunja from being a perpetrator of violence against women to becoming an activist who challenges violence against women.

Lastly, I also observed that the attitudes and perceptions of some of the women who attended the religious communities' workshops changed after the training. Some women who previously believed that they were to blame for their experiences of abuse, expressed a change in perceptions after learning about the causes of violence against women, the cycle of abuse and strategies to recognise and break the patterns of abuse. Some women finally understood that being abused was not their fault. Others realized that they were caught in a cycle of abuse and that they needed help. Women who were not actively involved in addressing violence against women before said that the training influenced them to see the need to act and assist fellow women facing violence. Thus, SAFFI's teachings were a passage that empowered and influenced some of the participants to change from non-involvement to positive engagement in dealing with violence against women.

The training that the participants had undergone with SAFFI transformed their knowledge, thinking, attitudes and practices regarding violence against women. SAFFI's education or training intervention may be regarded as rite of passage that effected a transformation. As argued by Van Gennep (1960), in any rite of passage, transformation is included. Edith Turner

likewise says that ‘anything that people learn and that they did not know before entails the passage from small level of knowledge to another’ (Turner, 2012). The teachings that women from religious communities and those that attended the pilgrimages as I have shown above changed their attitudes about violence against women. Ex-perpetrators of violence also transformed from being perpetrators of violence against women to be activists in challenging the problem of violence against women as shown by the story of Bunja. Overall, the trainings and teachings that the religious leaders went through transformed some of them from a state of non-involvement to a state of engagement in addressing violence against women. Some pastors who were previously silent and did not preach about violence against women began to preach about it in their churches, others established counselling programs, and some became actively involved in advocacy. Nevertheless, although some religious leaders began to talk openly and preach about violence against women, others continued to cling to prayer as the only solution to the problem of violence against women.

7.5 Conclusion

South African Faith & Family Institute interventions to address violence against women focused on providing education. The programs that were offered aimed at providing knowledge on violence against women. SAFFI conducted trainings for religious leaders and various religious communities. The organization conducted educational pilgrimages with the aim of discussing the nature of violence against women. It also produced narratives of exemplary men to deconstruct the widely shared notion that all Coloured men are inherently violent. Finally, the FBO also ran intervention programmes with perpetrators.

I argue that the overall aim of these programmes was to enhance the transformation of negative attitudes and perceptions about violence against women and to equip participants with abilities to speak up, create counselling programmes and become actively involved in addressing

violence against women I therefore interpreted the intervention of SAFFI in addressing violence against women as a rite of passage. I argued that the three phases of a rite of passage; separation, transition and incorporation were clearly present in the programmes and activities of SAFFI. Participants were recruited into SAFFI trainings. Recruitment into the programmes was a boundary marker which set them apart from their prior understandings, beliefs and perceptions about violence against women.

During the transition phase, participants were taught the causes of violence against women as well as strategies and solutions to address the problem. Religious leaders were taught to speak up and preach about violence against women. They also learnt how to offer counselling to victims and perpetrators of violence against women. Their meetings were also support groups where they encouraged and learnt from each other. Some participants learnt through experiences of others. Pilgrimage participants discovered how to speak up about violence against women through experiential learning, while female congregants who attended women's workshops learnt about the cycle of abuse that women in abusive relationship get trapped in. They were also taught how to break the cycle of abuse by seeking counselling, and how to help those in abusive relationships. An ex-perpetrator of abuse learnt about healthy, non-violent relationships. All these teachings represented SAFFI's framework on how the issue of violence against women could be addressed. And this framework was shared through discussions in protected circles, through constructive play, pilgrimages, and conferences.

I argue that SAFFI's trainings transformed some of the participants from one state to another. Some participants who were previously not involved in addressing violence against women began to preach and teach about violence against women in their churches. Some began to offer counselling sessions while others became actively involved in campaigns. Female participants who had previously believed that they were to blame for the abuse they experienced changed their perceptions and realized the need to seek help. An ex-perpetrator of violence against

women changed his attitude and behaviour and became involved in activism challenging violence against women. I conclude that the teachings and trainings of SAFFI helped some participants to transition from a state of non-involvement in violence against women issues to a state of positive engagement in challenging violence against women.

8 CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION AND RECOMENDATIONS

This thesis has examined the interventions of three faith-based organisations in Cape Town that address violence against women. Violence against women is a social reality in South Africa. Despite several legal reforms that have been in place for some time, the intensity of violence remains largely unchanged. It is against this background that scholars have argued that laws are not sufficient to address the problem. Several non-governmental organisations, including faith-based organisations, have reacted to the problem by providing shelters for abused women, as well as through public advocacy, education, and training. Although FBOs have not received much attention in the literature, they have long been visible in the South African public sphere in addressing the problem of violence against women.

I began by locating FBOs in an analytical framework of religion in the public sphere. Contrary to the secularisation thesis that assumed that religion has no role in the modern public sphere, there is ample evidence that show the continued role and place of religion. One such example is the role of religion as manifested in faith-based organisations. FBOs have gained prominence particularly in their role in the provision of social services. These organisations have become popular in Africa in filling the gap caused by the neglect or incapacity of most African governments to provide adequate social services to their citizens. FBOs are a critical source of social welfare in Africa. This clearly shows that in Africa, in particular, religion plays a special role in the public sphere of secular states.

FBOs have long been responsive to social problems that affect the public sphere. Among these social problems is the problem of violence against women. For the purpose of this study, I have identified multiple faith-based organisations in Cape Town, South Africa that have responded to the challenge of violence against women. Some have established shelters for abused women, others provide counselling to both victims and perpetrators of violence. Such FBOs are also

involved in advocacy, including training and education on violence against women to religious leaders and communities. Despite these widespread interventions, research on FBOs and violence against women is still in its infancy. Very few studies have focused on how FBOs have responded to violence against women (McCleary-Sills et al. 2013, Rasool and Suleman 2016, Le Roux 2016, Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Lewis and Cole 2017, Njagi 2017, Magezi and Manzanga 2019, Khallaf-Elledge 2021). It is this gap in the literature that my research addressed.

Among the FBOs that are responding to violence against women in Cape Town, I chose three for my research: the South African Faith & Family Institute, Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children, and St Anne's Homes. Ihata Shelter and St Anne's Homes provide shelter to victims of violence against women, while SAFFI offers education and trainings on violence against women to religious leaders and religious communities. The three FBOs present a diverse perspective on FBO interventions in addressing violence against women in Cape Town. These organisations offer different interventions and also capture religious diversity. One addresses violence through advocacy and education on violence against women from a multifaith perspective, another provides shelter to abused women guided by Christian values, and the other organisation also provides shelter guided by Muslim principles.

While most FBO studies tend to concentrate on identifying the different kinds of interventions of FBOs, systematic attention to, and analysis of, the form of interventions is scant. I used ethnographic research methods to observe and understand how these organisations carry out different interventions in their projects. After observing these interventions for some time, I decided on Van Gennep's theory of rites of passage as an analytical framework to analyse the transformative nature of the interventions of these organisations (Van Gennep, 1960, Turner 1969, 1967). I analysed how these organisations follow the model of a rite of passage in carrying out their interventions. The three stages of a rite of passage, separation, transition and

incorporation, were enacted and embodied in the interventions of Ihata Shelter for Abused Women and Children, St Anne's Homes and South African Faith & Family Institute.

I showed how, when women left abusive environments and joined the shelters, marked a distinct rite of separation. Their stay at the shelters, during which they were taken through therapy, education and skills programmes, I interpreted as the transition stage of a rite of passage. The experiences of the women during their stay at both Ihata Shelter and St Anne's Homes clearly showed attributes of a rite of passage. As in any rite of passage, women in these shelters were governed by rules, they respected and submitted to the authority of staff. The activities that these women were introduced to were symbolic of a state of healing, to which they were inducted. The solidarity and comradeship among these women created a *communitas*, a key attribute that Victor Turner identified in his studies on rites of passage (Turner, 1967). At these shelters, women were also taught skills that they could use after leaving the shelter, which was another important attribute of the transition phase of a rite of passage. New knowledge, in therapy and skills, was part of alternative state designed by the FBOs.

Although similarities were clear in the experiences and activities offered at Ihata Shelter and St Anne's Homes, there were some notable differences. Ihata Shelter had organized many religious services, while St Anne's Homes did not have such services. Ihata Shelter incorporated religion-like rituals such as the funeral activity for women to heal from experiences of abuse. In contrast, St Anne's Homes did not openly use religious rituals. However, unlike Ihata Shelter, there was explicit reference to God as a source of hope by both the social workers and clients in most of the activities at St Anne's Homes. Women at St Anne's Homes received teaching on sexual and reproductive health, and on the causes and prevention of violence against women. These kinds of services were not offered at Ihata Shelter.

Having experienced liminality, women returned to their communities in the third phase of the rite of passage. Some FBOs had instituted formal practices to help women back into society. But these were not as elaborate as the rites and practices in the first two phases. After identifying these, I followed up on the women who left the FBOs. The experiences of women after their shelter programme showed that some had moved on from abusive relationships to healthy relationships, some felt more confident and responsible, while others got jobs and became financially independent. I interpreted this as an incorporation into a new state of hope, confidence, financial independence and freedom from abuse. I concluded that liminal experiences and teachings at the shelters were a passageway for victims of abuse to transition from a state of abuse to a state of healing. Nevertheless, as shown by my findings, some women still experienced violence after the shelter programmes. Although these women felt changed and new, their incorporation was not as successful as others.'

I also interpreted the trainings and teachings on violence against women that the South African Faith & Family Institute provided as a rite of passage. Key attributes of a rite of passage were also clear in the way the programmes of SAFFI were conducted. SAFFI also enacted a separation phase through interactive discussion circles. Following that was a detailed programme of interventions with pastors and their congregations in some of the poorest communities of Cape Town and sometimes beyond. Through these programmes, SAFFI facilitators introduced participants to the problem of violence against women, the need for intervention, and the need for positive interpretations and symbols from the Bible. This transition phase also introduced participants to the facilities and structures offered by other NGOs and the State. As shown by the findings of this study, some religious leaders who were reluctant to address violence against women were influenced by the trainings and teachings that they received from SAFFI to actively engage in challenging violence against women. These religious leaders began to preach about violence against women, some were involved in

advocacy and others introduced counselling in their churches. The trainings of SAFFI here, too, exhibited a passage that helped some religious leaders to transition from a state of non-involvement in issues of violence against women to a state of positive engagement in challenging violence against women.

Although the interventions of the three organisations that I interpret as rites of passage are not the same as the rites of passage in cultures studied by early scholars such as Van Gennep (1960) and Victor Turner (1967), this theory was useful in understanding how people transition from one state to another. The theory proved helpful in understanding processes of change. The purpose of these interventions on violence against women to transform or change participants from one state to another justified my interpretation of these interventions as rites of passage. These interventions were boundary markers between two states. Like any rite of passage, the interventions of Ihata Shelter and St Anne's Homes transformed some the participants in the shelters from a state of abuse to a state of recovery, healing and freedom from abuse, while SAFFI trainings and teachings influenced some religious leaders to move from a state of non-involvement in violence against women issues to a state of positive engagement through preaching, teaching and advocacy on violence against women issues.

Given that research on FBOs and violence against women is still in its infancy, I recommend further studies to explore this area. While I have looked at how three FBOs in Cape Town carry out their interventions, further studies can explore how other FBOs intervene in different geographical locations. My study has specifically shown that the three FBOs in Cape Town follow the model of a rite of passage in their violence against women interventions; studies from other countries or cities may find different strategies. Further studies can also do a comparative analysis of faith-based interventions and non-religious interventions in addressing the problem of violence against women.

In my study, I noted that some of the participants went back to the society and were victimized again. However, this can be blamed on how women reintegrate into the same structure, which is violent. While women would have healed and transformed, they return to the structure which has not been changed. It is against this background that I propose the need for interventions that transform the entire structure of the society, and not only victims of abuse.

My research has challenged the secularisation thesis that regards religion as a force with no role to play in the public sphere. I conclude that religion is still an important part of South Africa's public sphere. As representatives of religion, FBOs are not only present in the public sphere but they are playing a significant role in responding to social problems that affect the public sphere. The study has displayed the presence and active involvement of religion in society through addressing and responding to problems that affect the public sphere. As representative of religion in the public sphere, FBOs are actively involved in addressing violence against women, which is one of the top crises in South Africa. Although some scholars regard religion as a cause of violence against women (Rakoczy, 2004; Rwafa 2016), based on the findings of this study, religion is an important part of South Africa public life and it has the potential to address violence against women through the work of faith-based shelters that provide refuge to abused women. The teachings and trainings on violence against women also point to the potential of FBOs in addressing against violence against women.

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