

**CURBING WOMEN GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN KENYA: A
CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
CHURCH REJOINER IN VIHIGA COUNTY**

CATHERINE K. GANIRA

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DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work prepared with no other than the indicated sources, support and has not been presented elsewhere for any award.

Signature

_____ Date _____

Catherine Kavosa Ganira

REL/H/3/2015

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certify that they have read and hereby recommend for acceptance of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology PhD Thesis entitled “Curbing gender-based violence in Kenya: A Critical Assessment of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God churches rejoinder in Vihiga County, Kenya.

Signature

_____ Date _____

Dr. Savala Angeline Hicks, PhD

Senior Lecturer

Department of Social Sciences

Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

Signature

_____ Date _____

Dr. Loreen Maseno

Department of Religion, Theology and Philosophy.

Maseno University.

DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to my loving husband, Wycliffe Kedego Ganira. He was a role model in this academic journey, and my sons Jonathan Ganira and David Malenya provided immeasurable support.

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ABSTRACT

Gender-based violence is a phenomenon that affects individuals in every corner of the world and more so women. Various institutions, individuals, organizations, and governments are working hard to ensure equity, equality, and respect for women are attained through curbing gender-based violence. The main aim of the study was to explore gender-based violence as a societal phenomenon in reflection on the Pentecostal Assemblies of God church response to the phenomenon in Vihiga County. The study was guided by four main objectives, namely: To explore Gender Based Violence as a societal phenomenon; to establish the role of faith-based organizations in curbing women Gender-Based Violence; to establish the response of Pentecostal Assemblies of God church on curbing women Gender-Based Violence in Vihiga County and to determine the challenges that Pentecostal Assemblies of God experience in dealing with women Gender-based Violence in Vihiga County. Two theories guided the current study; feminist theory and structural functionalism theory. The study adopted a descriptive survey design, which is deemed imperative in describing a phenomenon accurately. The study sample was 488 respondents. Data collection was done using interview schedules and focus group discussions. The findings of the study established that gender-based violence is a societal phenomenon that encompasses a range of harmful behaviors and actions that are rooted in unequal power dynamics and societal norms. Gender-based violence continues to escalate in society and manifests in various forms, such as physical, sexual, and psychological violence, affecting individuals across gender identities. The causes of gender-based violence can be defined as complex, including deep-seated cultural beliefs, discriminatory attitudes, and systemic inequalities. The effects of such violence are far-reaching, impacting the physical, emotional, and social well-being of survivors, perpetuating cycles of trauma and reinforcing gender inequality. Furthermore, the study established that faith-based organizations have played a significant role in curbing gender-based violence by creating awareness and campaigns, providing support services, advocating for theological reforms, coordinating and collaborating with other agencies, and engaging boys and men on issues of gender-based violence. In addition, the study established that the Pentecostal Assemblies of God church had not done much in curbing gender-based violence as most of the issues on gender-based violence were not well understood even by the church leaders and members. PAG church faces a number of challenges that hinder the fight against gender-based violence inter alia: lack of knowledge of what gender-based violence is and is not, lack of enough resources, patriarchal notation, and cultural dictates. Therefore, the study concluded that PAG Church has failed to live up to the mark as exemplified by other Faith-based Organizations that have written success stories in curbing gender-based violence but have, to an extent, contributed to perpetuating it through sticking to a blend of biblical and traditional patriarchal issues. The study, therefore, recommended that the church should focus on dealing with the challenges at hand to enhance its effectiveness in curbing gender-based violence in society to save women from the phenomenon.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AIU	African International University
BWJP	Battered Women Justice Project
CARE	Cooperative for Assistant and Relief Everywhere
CDC	Centre Disease Control
CT	Cognitive Therapy
CTC	Centre for Theory of Change
CBT	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
CDAQ	Cyber Dating Abuse Questionnaire
DCT	Divine Command Theory
DFID	Department for International Development
EUAFR	European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights
FEMENET	African Women's Development and Communication
GAP	Ghetto Arts Promotion
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GREAT	Great Role Equality and Transformation
GDP	Cross Domestic Project
GRVW	Global Religion Violence against Women
IC	International Community
ICRW	International Centre for Research on Women
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
IRMS	International Research on Medical Science
JDWS	Justice and Dignity for Women Sahel
KM2	Kilo Meters per Square
MAHR	Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights
MMUST	Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

MDGs	Millennium Development of Goals
NCBI	National Centre for Biotechnology Information
NCPD	National Centre Population and Development
NCRC	National Crime Research Centre
NGO	Non-Government Organizations
NDHS	Namibian Demographic Health Survey
PAG	Pentecostal Assemblies of God
PIK	Peace Initiative Kenya
PACU	Pan Africa Christian University
REC	Recruitment and Employment confederation
REBT	Rational Emotional Behavior Therapy
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SGBV	Sexual and Gender -Based Violence
TUK	Technical University of Kenya
TOC	Theory of Change
UNECA	United National Economic Commission for Africa
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNW	United Nation Women
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
UNIFPA	United Nations Funds for Women
UNIFPA	United Nations Funds for Population Activities
USAID	United State Agency for International Development
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations

UNEGEEW United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of
Women

VAW Violence against Women

WEB Women Experience Battering

WRVH Work Report Violence Health

OPERATIONALIZATION OF TERMS

District Overseer: Means the church leader who oversees a group of pastors who form a sub-section of the church known as the district. Each district is composed of around 20-35 local churches.

District Women Directors: These are female leaders in the P.A.G. church in charge of women's ministries at the district level.

Nyumba Kumi: This is a Swahili phrase that refers to a form of community policing in which people living in a given community look out for each other to ensure peace and harmony are achieved in coexistence.

Micro-systems Factor: refers to distinct roles and behavior involvements that lead to differences between men and women and later favor one group. It is a type of inequality deeply felt between men and women in social, economic, and political status, education, and relationships.

Exosystem Factors: Refers to risk factors which include female isolation and poor peer association.

Curbing Gender-Based Violence: means eliminating all kinds of gender-based violence in society.

Gender-Based Violence: refers to harmful acts directed at individuals based on their gender or gender identity, usually rooted in power imbalances (Used synonymously with Violence against Women in this study).

Rejoinder – Refers to the response in terms of concerns, strategies, and representation for curbing Gender-Based Violence.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background information that will inform the study, the statement of the problem on which the entire study is pegged, the research objectives, the research questions, the justification of the study, and the scope and limitations. Finally, the chapter presents a summary of the findings.

1.1 Background of the study

The world, since its beginning, has undergone various phases of transformation in perceiving, defining, and addressing various issues. In fact, the civilization of humanity for a long time has seen a change in the general perspective of life (Hunt, 1995). In this respect, various issues of concern for humanity have been brought to light and discussions held, resulting in enhanced methods of addressing the issues. Among the issues that have gained great prominence and remain an issue of concern to date and in the future is the issue of Gender Based Violence (GBV). The issue has, for the past four decades, graduated to be a global issue attracting the attention of various players regardless of the field of specialization, color, race, and even religion (Calvini-Lefebvre *et al.*, 2018).

In the new 2015 Sustainable Development Goals, gender-based violence is recognized as a pervasive social ill, which requires interventions that are continuous and systematic. In its generalized perspective, gender-based violence is taken to be a women-based issue, but the scope is wide when explored deeply. By definition, gender-based violence refers to harmful acts directed at an individual gender, which is rooted in the abuse of power, gender inequality, and harmful norms (Castañeda *et al.*,

2020). National Crime Research Centre (2015) further brings out GBV as any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats. Gender-based violence has become an umbrella term for any harm that is perpetrated against a person's will that results from power inequalities that are based on gender roles. Along the same line, GBV can be perceived to be socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a particular society considers appropriate for men and women.

Gender Violence first caught the eye of the international domain seriously in 1992 when the United Nations (UN) made a declaration on violence against women in its general assembly (World Bank, 2022). The declaration contained various issues of concern on the subject matter, inter alia, discrimination against women and abuses against women (Etienne, 1995). In this case, violence against women was conceptualized to mean “Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life (WHO, 2014).” Furthermore, the UN committee that aimed to face out discrimination against women under the Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women agreed to the fact that “discrimination against women included gender-based violence; this is violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately (Tappis *et al.*, 2016).”

Gender-based violence on a global scale has been perceived as a very serious violation of human rights, resulting in serious social and professional disorientation (Violence, 1999). Based on this, international bodies and various governments have

worked tirelessly to come up with various containment measures by enacting serious legislation and policies that define the course of action in case an individual is found either as a perpetrator or a victim (World Bank, 2022). As a result, individuals who are culpable of the crimes associated with gender-based violence have seen a serious course of action taken against them, including imprisonment and compensation to the victim (Heise *et al.*, 2002).

Different from other issues that normally affect developing nations, GBV has equally been deemed an issue of concern in developed countries like America and European nations (Palermo *et al.*, 2014). Statistics indicate that in the United States, 17% of women experience rape or attempted rape. Additionally, 1 out of 5 women go through abuse from their partners in various forms. Similarly, in England, reports of women being harassed at the workplace, sexually assaulted, and domestically mistreated continue to rise. However, one of the takeaway points in developed nations is the law governing GBV, which, in its capacity, has helped to control the cases that may be otherwise very high (Sanders, 2015).

Despite the fact that gender GBV is a global issue of concern, it is worth noting that in some cultures, issues related to GBV are recognized but not taken seriously due to cultural dictates. In such settings, the victims suffer with the knowledge of various authorities, but the cultural dictation in context may play a pivotal role in subverting justice. This is just an example of the challenges that are involved in handling gender-based violence, given that several challenges are in place depending on various factors of interplay (Fatusi & Oyeledun, 2002).

African region, a region where the maturity and functionality of the rule of law is still growing, has experienced challenges in GBV emanating from the causes experienced

on the global scale and uniquely culture. The culture of most of the African nations even though subsiding, still puts women in a compromised state of affairs. Among the culturally related factors putting women in a compromising state include male mobility, forced marriages, patriarchal structures, and female genital mutilation. These, among other interplay of complex factors, define why cases of GBV in Africa continue to increase at an alarming rate (Muluneh *et al.*, 2020).

Going by statistics, in Zimbabwe, 1 out of 3 women in the age bracket of 15-49 is said to have gone through a form of physical violence and 1 out of 4 women experienced sexual violence. In yet another finding, on average, 114 rape cases are reported daily in South Africa to police (Wekwete, 2014). Still, in Ghana, more than 109,000 cases of violence against women were reported in 2010, and at least 33.6% of women in Ghana experienced domestic violence. Such statistics have caught the eye of the African Union (AU), which is working tirelessly alongside other players to see the situation curbed (Alo, 2018).

Kenya, just like other nations of the world, is no exception in terms of GBV. Statics on GBV indicate that 39%-47% of women in Kenya experience GBV-related cases. This area has attracted concerted efforts in research to unearth and curb various forms of GBV as the scope is wide (Bhattacharjee *et al.*, 2020). Traditional culture in Kenya has, to a great extent, contributed to the perpetuation of GBV. For instance, in Maasai culture, traditional gender-based violence is practiced at a very high rate. One of the types of traditional gender-based violence leading the line is Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Similarly, cases of sexual gender-based violence are rampant, as exemplified by rape cases. In the year 2018, the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR) indicated that over 200 people had suffered sexual assault in

nine (9) counties according to the reports they received, implying that the number could be even higher if the survey is carried out (van Bavel *et al.*, 2020). Research has focused on the causes of gender-based violence in Kenya, and most of the findings mirror the general causes from a global perspective. Various causes of gender-based violence in Kenya point to a number of factors, including financial insecurity, personality and psychiatric problems, alcohol and drug abuse, societal disorders, cultural factors, historical factors, and relationship-related issues (Njibwakale, 2019). Research further indicates that GBV does require concerted efforts when addressing it. This implies that several players must stand in their position in efforts for effectiveness and achievement of desired outcomes (Britton, 2006). International bodies, human rights movements, governments, and other organizations of interest, like faith-based organizations, have all shown interest in addressing gender-based violence. As sacred entities that are mandated to help society in matters of faith and social life, a faith-based organization, to an extent, has proved to be an important factor in addressing GBV globally (Medie, 2013).

Research conducted on GBV in Vihiga County indicates that the County records almost every form of GBV. Scholars who have delved deeper into the GBV phenomenon in Vihiga County have questioned the role that institutions mandated to curb such occurrences as GBV have played as they argue that the terms are just on paper but not on the ground (Ngutu, 2019; Atolo, 2020 & Awino & Ngutu, 2023). Specifically, cases of domestic violence have been reported daily with intimate partner violence leading the line. Various factors have been linked to the occurrence of GBV in the County, including lack of employment, illiteracy, cultural and traditional orientation, and patriarchal issues (Njagi, 2017). One of the initiatives that

have been taken by the leaders in Vihiga County is to open a rescue center under the initiative of the County woman Representative. However, research further reveals that just like other parts of the nation, justice systems that ought to deal with GBV have failed in their mandate, a situation that has further aided in an escalation of GBV rather than helping curb it (Ngutu, 2019 & Atolo, 2020).

In efforts to help faith-based organizations fully help in addressing the developing issues in society like GBV, some countries in the world have enacted a policy of funding faith-based organizations for the said purposes (Le Roux *et al.*, 2016). For instance, countries like the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Sweden have this provision, given that they have realized that faith-based organizations are vital in addressing issues such as GBV and other developing issues of societal interest. Additionally, the call from recognized international bodies like the United States Aid for International Development (USAID) and the UN on clerical leaders to speak out about GBV and seek both financial and legal reinforcements where necessary is a clear indication of the role that the FBOs can play (Banks *et al.*, 2013).

Nevertheless, faith-based organizations still face challenges in addressing such issues as the basis of doctrinal differences cause a divide on some critical issues (Njagi, 2017). To back up this argument, there are some religious organizations that do not realize the role of women in religious matters, especially in clerical and top leadership roles (Cooper-White, 2012). Most religious leaders still do not uphold women's autonomy and still hold firmly to the patriarchal approach to the structures of faith. However, given that GBV is a complex phenomenon, there are several areas in which FBOs have played a role in addressing the issues associated and can still do more on the same.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Research indicates that gender-based violence is on the rise in the world and in Kenya as well. With respect to the efforts being put in place, the role of various organizations has been put to the test in helping address the problem at hand (Heise *et al.*, 2002; KDHS, 2014 & Muluneh *et al.*, 2020). Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) have played a vital role in addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) through their multifaceted approaches. These organizations leverage their religious and moral influence to raise awareness, challenge cultural norms perpetuating violence, and provide support and counseling services to survivors. FBOs often create safe spaces for dialogue, implement educational programs, and collaborate with local communities and governments to advocate for policy changes. Their holistic approach, rooted in faith-based principles of compassion and justice, has been instrumental in fostering a supportive environment, offering solace, and empowering individuals affected by GBV to seek help and take steps toward healing and prevention.

As Ngutu (2019) and Otololo (2020) established, cases of GBV in Vihiga County continue to escalate. Pentecostal Assemblies of God church, as a prominent and influential FBO with its headquarters in Vihiga County, holds the potential to play a significant role in addressing and mitigating GBV within its community as demonstrated by other FBOs. However, the effectiveness of PAG's response to this problem remains a subject of scrutiny and concern as more cases are reported in Vihiga County, despite the prominence and the influence it commands. Therefore, the question remains, "How has the PAG church in Vihiga County responded to gender-based violence?" prompting the need for the current study.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to explore women gender-based violence as a societal phenomenon in reflection on the Pentecostal Assemblies of God church response to the phenomenon in Vihiga County.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To explore Women Gender Based Violence as a societal phenomenon
- ii. To establish the role of faith-based organizations in curbing Women Gender-Based Violence.
- iii. To establish the response of Pentecostal Assemblies of God church on curbing Women Gender-Based Violence in Vihiga County
- iv. To determine the challenges that Pentecostal Assemblies of God experience in dealing with Women Gender-based Violence in Vihiga County

1.3.3 Research Questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions;

- i. What are the forms, causes and effects of Women Gender Based Violence?
- ii. What is the role of Faith-Based Organizations in curbing Women Gender-Based Violence?
- iii. What is the response of Pentecostal Assemblies of God Churches of Kenya on Women Gender-Based Violence in Vihiga County?
- iv. What challenges are faced by the Pentecostal Assemblies of God Church in curbing Women Gender-Based Violence in Vihiga County?

1.4 Justification of the Study

The current study philosophically presents insights that promote human inherent dignity and individual equality across all genders as the rights of every human being ought to stand. Unearthing the perpetuation, discrimination, and subjugation of women through GBV, especially with the background on PAG church, one of the oldest and well-established religious denominations in the area of the study, provides a ground where philosophical reasoning can be developed. Therefore, in regards to this, interrogating the response of the PAG church on commitment to the protection of human rights, commitment to justice, and compassion to humanity is imperative from a philosophical standpoint.

Academically, the study contributes immensely to the academic discourse in religion, gender studies, and social justice. The study offers an academic ground where the role and efforts in addressing GBV can be critically analyzed, and further research work can be conducted in addition to the current study. Additionally, given that GBV is a multidisciplinary subject, the current study not only adds knowledge to the field of religion but also other fields, inter alia, sociology, anthropology, and theology, where scholars can further interrogate the phenomenon.

Finally, concerning policy justification, the study can help various policymakers develop working strategies and interventions aiming to promote equality in gender-related matters. Gender-based violence is a critical issue that requires concerted efforts to deal with. The recommendations from the current study are imperative in informing the need for a collaborative approach by religious leaders, community stakeholders, researchers, and other policymakers to facilitate dialogue and advocacy measures in efforts to realize the broader picture of curbing GBV.

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study focused on Vihiga County, which has five sub-counties: Vihiga sub-county, Sabatia sub-county, Hamisi sub-county, Luanda sub-county, and Emuhaya sub-county. The study targeted PAG church clergy, provincial administrators, chiefs, and assistant chief's women, girls, and men from the five sub-counties. These are the people who are in charge of making sure that people live in better conditions regardless of their gender. The study intends to determine curbing gender-based violence in Kenya: Critical assessment of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God churches rejoinder in Vihiga County.

Additionally, the study was gender specific and exclusively focused on violence against women to address specific issues of GBV, given that they are the most affected individuals in matters of GBV within the study area and, by extension, in the church. The study also established the forms of gender-based violence in Vihiga County, interrogated the causes of gender-based violence in Vihiga County, evaluated the challenges encountered by the Pentecostal Assemblies of God churches in curbing gender-based violence in Vihiga County, Kenya, and assessed the measures the Pentecostal Assemblies of God Churches have taken in curbing gender-based violence in Vihiga County. The data was collected from the respondents who were knowledgeable and well-versed in the investigation.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

Given that GBV is a sensitive topic, the current study experienced a number of limitations, which the researcher had to devise some ways to deal with them. To begin with, most of the respondents did not have proper comprehension of GBV but only understood it from the intimate partner violence point of view. However, the

researcher expanded their understanding by explaining to them what GBV was all about in detail. Another limitation that the researcher encountered was the unwillingness of the respondents to discuss various cases of GBV that they have undergone, the fear that they may be exposed and affect their relationships with people around them. The researcher, by assuring them that no name would appear in the final document for direct referencing in addition to other ethical guidelines, helped the respondents understand that their identity was not compromised.

Furthermore, the researcher experienced financial constraints, which caused the work to take a long time to be completed as every process required enough resources to get over. However, the researcher managed to get help from family and friends, eventually managing to get to this stage. The researcher was further faced with the challenges of time, as Vihiga County is very large, and the sampled churches are spread across the entire county. To deal with this, the researcher deployed the use of research assistants to help in the process of data collection process.

1.7 Chapter Summary

The chapter presented a discussion on various areas, including background information, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, justification of the study, scope of the study, and limitations of the study. The background of the study delved deeper into the aspect of GBV on a global, regional, national, and Vihiga County at last in addition to FBOs mandate. The next chapter presents the literature review in line with the study as well as the theoretical and conceptual model that the study endeavored.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter reviews various aspects of gender-based violence by various scholars from books, journals, research reports, and unpublished and published materials. The significant ideas and variables of concern in this study will be discussed, and the appropriate literature will be reviewed.

2.2 General Literature Review

Gender-based violence has gained popularity and attracted interest from researchers who have focused on different issues pertaining to the phenomenon. Gender-based violence occurs devoid of someone's religion, socioeconomic status, level of education, ethnicity, race, and background. Most of the time, gender-based violence has been used concurrently with the term violence against women, which the nature, type, and extent differing in regards to pre-determining factors like geographical, cultural and societal dictates (Britton, 2006).

The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women defines "violence against women" as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life." The Declaration requires States to "exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women, whether those acts are perpetrated by the State or by private persons." The exact dimensions of violence against women are frequently disputed, yet even conservative estimates indicate that millions of American women experience

violent victimization. The fear of violence, in particular the fear of rape, affects many more, if not most, women. A few researchers have even suggested that learning to cope with the threat of violent victimization is a normative developmental task for females (Freedman, 2011).

Broader definitions include structural and cultural violence, which limits women and girls in achieving their full potential, both personally and for the whole society. For example, laws or traditions that exclude women from owning land are structural violence. The results of structural and cultural violence can be lethal: for example, girls in South Asia run a much higher risk than boys of dying before they reach the age of five years, among other reasons because their parents tend to give them less nutritious food, health care and attention (Bernnett & Manderson, 2013).

2.3 Liberation Theology and Gender-Based Violence

Liberation theology, a religious movement arising in late 20th century in the Roman Catholicism and centered in Latin America dealt with the oppressed. Liberation theology, from the perspective of the church, emphasizes the church's mission to those on the periphery of society. This method derived inspiration from the story of Exodus, where God is seen as a liberator, healer, and as the one who stands on behalf of the oppressed and the marginalized. Brueggemann (1975) observed that liberation theologies are meant to restore and not scatter, to reclaim and not silently endure oppression like the masses suffering from gender-based violence. Liberation theology is a global, regional and national issue. From a regional perspective, Ugwu (2002) argued that it has the force of eradicating gender-based violence and sexual abuse in Nigerian society. The epidemic around gender-based violence has been condemned

strongly by both women liberation theologians and feminist theologians in recent times.

It sought to apply religious faith by aiding the poor and oppressed; Gustavo, Gutierrez, (1991) observed that, through involvement in political and civic affairs. Nwadiakor and Nweke (2014) believed that Christian faith is not something extrinsic to the afflictions of the oppressed, but it is rather a motivating force which demands that the oppressed must be liberated in order to make room for the realization of the historical translation of the salvific deed of Jesus and the salvific will of God.

2.4 Church Teachings and Gender-Based Violence

Churches are mostly modeled on hierarchy and patriarchy. Patriarchy allows for male supremacy that supports male dominance in every unit of society and engenders a hierarchy, power structure, and rule. This male dominance has taken root among the cultures within Vihiga County. Gender audit studies were done in the following countries – Malawi, South Africa, Zambia, Lesotho and Zimbabwe in 2012. It was discovered that gender-based violence is a reality and a problem of the church. This calls for a critique of existing structures and an exposition of the patriarchal cycle.

Looking at the church leaders and the congregations, Kibo and Mangoedi, (2017) argued that gender-based violence is a reality and a problem of the 21st century in South Africa for theological discourse and the Church. The 21st century calls for life-affirming theology and teachings. The gender audit studies observed that men should move away from making general statements against gender-based violence. It was further noted that they should organize joint (GBV) activities, challenge the norms that create fertile ground for GBV, directly address abusers and create safe spaces for victims.

Lutheran World Federation's Department for Mission and Development, when dealing with women in church and society, observed that violence against women is neither a new nor easy subject to tackle. The “Ecumenical Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women,” 1988-1998, firmly emphasized the elimination of all violence in various forms (sexual, religious, psychological, physical, spiritual military) and the culture of violence, especially as they affect the life and dignity of women. These affirmations indicate the spirit, the belief, and the doctrine of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The LWF Council of 1999 encouraged all member churches to face the painful issue of violence against women. The Lutheran church, therefore, is at the forefront of the fight against gender-based violence in the global, regional, and national spheres. Religion, and especially the church, should act as agents for change in society and citizens. The Beijing Declaration has insights on this: “Religion, thought, conscience and belief may and can contribute to fulfilling women’s moral, ethical and spiritual needs.

2.5 Empirical Literature Review

2.5.1 Gender Based Violence Prevalence

Addressing sexually related gender-based violence, Sreedhar and Bloom (2008) stated that gender-based violence as a partner of assaultive and coercive behavior that may include inflicted physical injury, psychological abuse, sexual assault, progressive social, physical or financial isolation, stalking, deprivation, extreme jealousy and possessiveness, intimidation and threats perpetrated by someone who is, was, or wishes to be involved in an intimate dating relationship with an adult or adolescent, and is aimed at establishing control by one partner over the other. The weaker gender will be rendered vulnerable to dominance and exploitation by the more powerful gender unless gender balance is advocated for.

Andy (2015) observes that men's violence victimizes women in different ways, including intimate partner violence with more serious injuries, rape and assaults, stalking, sexual harassment, public harassment, human trafficking, forced labor and female infanticide. Men strongly take advantage of women partly because of cultural and religious beliefs where women have been classified as weak vessels or male dominance over women has been impressed.

Sida (2015) conducted a study on preventing and responding to gender-based violence: Expression and Strategies in Sweden. The focus of the study was more so on intimate partner and domestic violence. The study established that women go through a lot of gender-based violence issues but have very little support from society at large. The study suggested among the strategies to prevent GBV, protect and bring justice to the victims was to include measures for preventing violence, strengthening legal and policy frameworks and, improving response services to survivors, supporting different programs and projects aligned with cooperation partners' priorities on ending GBV. The study also established that in improving response services for the victims, services must be based on survivors' needs and safety, and multi-sectional services (for example, medical and psychosocial support can help both survivors and perpetrators of GVB to avoid further Violence. However, despite the fact the study developed much into domestic violence, it did not explore wider aspects of gender-based violence, leaving a scope gap that the current study sought to fill.

Bhattacharjee *et al.* (2020) conducted a study titled "Prevalence and Patterns of Gender-based Violence across Adolescent Girls and Young Women in Mombasa, Kenya. The study particularly sought to establish the prevalence in addition to describing the heterogeneity experience of GBV across adolescent girls subgroups

and young women working as sex workers. The study deployed a cross-sectional bio-behavioral survey research design with a sample of 1299 respondents. The findings of the study indicate that prevalence stood at 18% for a lifetime and 10.7% for recent cases of physical violence. In terms of sexual violence, the prevalence statistics stood at 20.5 % for lifetime and 9.8% for recent experiences. The prevalence was associated with aspects such as alcohol use, pregnant claims and limited source of income. However, the study does not interrogate the religious influence on GBV, leaving a gap that the current study exploited.

A study by Mingude *et al.* (2021) in Debre Berhan, Ethiopia, on the prevalence and associated factors of gender-based violence among Baso High School female students in 2020 brings into perspective a number of issues. In terms of methodology, the study deployed a cross-sectional study design and sampled 350 female students through a stratified random sampling technique. Results of the study indicated that during the COVID-19 period, cases of GBV sky rocketed due to curfew and lockdown measures that were instituted by the government. For instance, the study established that during the lockdown period, GBV stood at 36.2%. Sexual and physical violence stood at 21.3% and 17.5% respectively. The study further notes that most of the students were vulnerable to some cases of GBV because of their various socio-economic discrepancies. In conclusion, the study posited that overall, GBV, especially sexual, physical and emotional was very high in terms of prevalence. Given the location of the study, the findings cannot be generalized to be applicable to the study area in context, leaving a location gap that the current study pursued.

Landman and Mudimeli (2022) conducted a study on the spiritual experiences of women's victory Gender violence: A case study of Thohoyandou in South Africa. The

study discussed how women of faith found meaning and support through their religious beliefs when experiencing violence in intimate spaces. The study also drew insights from spiritual perceptions held by women that make them feel safer and assist them in finding ways to cope with violence in intimate relationships. The study findings indicate that women prayed for divine intervention in their families. Apart from prayers, women do not have other spiritual measures to combat GBV, and therefore, more research should be done to help women handle GBV to help them overcome their perpetrators. They further suggested deconstruction of harmful religious discourses (such as God has made man to rule our woman) towards healing religious discourses (such as all people are equal in God's eyes) as a way of intervention. However, the study did not tackle other issues about critical assessment of GBV in relation to the church, hence, the current study.

Beechno (2021) conducted a study on conservative Christianity and intimate partner violence in Brazil. The study dealt with a number of concerns about GBV, which included examining how secular professionals and service users negotiate conservative Christian faith, gender roles, and domestic violence. The study deployed the ethnographic research method, which included the participant's observation in depth, interviews, and document analysis in the form of leaflets, memos, flyers, and books for the purposes of data collection. The findings of the study indicate that religious service users and secular professionals noticed that it is not religion as such that allows for the situation of violence but rather the patriarchal way in which conservative Christianity is taught in some churches that allows abuse of women of faith. This study has a number of great insights that are quite useful to the current study, but more research is needed to be carried out in the area of employing the

quantitative and qualitative methods, which this current research has used, which the former research did not handle, hence bridging the methodological gap.

2.5.2 Forms, Causes and Effects of Gender-Based Violence

IASC (2005) published a handbook on the protection of internally displaced persons: Gender Based Violence. The publication captured some of the forms of Gender-Based Violence, such as sexual violence, physical violence, emotional violence, and psychological violence. The publication established that the causes of Gender Violence were physical factors, e.g. (lack of physical security), social, cultural, and political factors, e.g., discriminatory norms and practices that marginalize women and girls and fail to respect their rights and judicial barriers. The publication recommended that the state has the primary responsibility of preventing and responding to gender-based violence. Thus, taking all necessary legislative, administrative, judicial, and measures to prevent, investigate, and punish acts of Gender Violence everywhere.

Muzavazi *et al.* (2002) conducted a study on comparative analysis of the causes of Gender Violence against women between low- and high-income households in Manicaland province of Zimbabwe. The study deployed a mixed research design. The study established that poverty and low income are the root causes of GBV in Zimbabwe. The study also confirmed that efforts have been made economically to empower women in a bid to fight powers and ultimately GBV, but research findings from Zimbabwe noted that GBV against women continues to rise in all societies, regardless of income levels.

International Women Rally (2012) surveyed the health and social consequences of violence against women and girls. The survey was anchored on the fact that women

go through a lot of problems, both socially and health-wise as a result of various incidences they undergo related to GBV. The survey revealed a number of issues that are aligned with the subject in context. The study established that most of the women who undergo violence end up with health issues like HIV/AIDs, chest complications, and STIs, among others. Furthermore, the study revealed that most of the victims suffer socially due to victimization and trauma that leads to isolation and marginalization. During the survey, it was established health centers play a critical role in helping the victims than any other institution. The study however does not bring in perspective the depth and magnitude of GBV in matters of religion, leaving a gap for the current study to explore.

Collins (2013) conducted a study on GBV, which concentrated on the traditional critical debates and gender-based violence. The study established that the current interest in GBV arose mainly with the growth of Western feminism in the 1970s, which drew attention to widespread violence against women. The study revealed that high levels of sexual violence against women were exposed although this was theorized as an integral aspect of patriarchy, an aspect of traditional culture. The study further established that sexual violence was one of the means by which men as a social group maintained their dominance over women. While the contemporary accounts are less conspiratorial, they don't acknowledge the fundamental insight that gender-based violence is linked to social structures of gender inequality. The study also revealed under the critical debates that the original idea of violence against women has expanded not only include violent physical assaults but also social, emotional and economic abuse. Lastly, the study concluded that there is a need for increasing recognition that gender-based violence affects not only married women but

a wider range of females, including aged ones and children. This last need is a gap that necessitates the current research.

In a chapter on sexual gender-based violence in the book, “Engendering Men: A Collaborative Review of Evidence on Men and Boys in Social Change and Gender Equality,” Shahrokh & Edstrom (2015) discuss several issues. First, they posit that the perpetrators of sexual-based violence are mainly boys and men, who look at women as merely sexual objects, a perspective they term “misleading.” Secondly, they posit that sexual gender-based violence is prevalent because boys and men have been treated as a homogenous group, with their behaviors and acts being justified by individual and societal ways of thinking, which forces binaries between men and women. Finally, they argue that various strategies to curb SGBV have not yielded much-anticipated results because they lack support from relevant authorities who should help curb the phenomenon. They thus recommend that programs geared towards engaging boys and men on matters SGBV should be strengthened and given priority if the solution has to be accomplished. The discussions put forth in this book are enlightening but in a general context. This leaves a gap in the methodology and location, hence the current study.

Ugowe (2022), in another study on gender-based violence: Its prevalence, forms, causes, and consequences, established a number of issues. The study revealed that some African nations like Nigeria condone domestic quarrels not to be a crime if they are committed by a husband for the purpose of correcting his wife. The study established that the lack of data from victims is one of the greatest obstacles to assessing the full impact of gender-based violence in African societies. The study recommendations were: the government of these nations must implement massive

public sanitization and reorientation programs to educate their citizens on the negative effects of GBV, and the victims must be encouraged to speak out and provide them with the necessary support to leave abusive relationships. The study further recommended that the government must recognize the fundamental human rights of women, abolish customary laws, traditional viewpoints, and religious practices that discriminate against women and promote violence against them and all forms of GBV. The study, having considered the above aspects, there is a need to consider gender-based violence in other areas like the church, leaving a gap that the current study ought to fill.

Getachew *et al.* (2022) conducted a study on gender-based violence and associated factors among women with disabilities in Jimma Town, Ethiopia. The study employed a cross-sectional study and collected data from 308 women with disabilities. The study established that the prevalence of GBV in the past 12 months was 46.1%, which was lower than the finding from the study conducted in low and middle-income countries like India, which was found to be 61.5% and 73% where women had experienced violence in the past 12 months. The study further revealed that women in the age group 20-34 were three times more likely to experience GBV in the past 12 months compared with women aged 35 years and above. The study, however, was limited in scope and location, focusing only on women with disability in Ethiopia, leaving gaps to be explored by the instant study.

Tsoaledi (2019) conducted a study on the effects of gender-based violence towards young females: The case of Vhufuli village in Thohoyando Limpopo province of South Africa. The study explored the experiences of young women regarding gender-based violence and factors that contribute to this problem. The study deployed

quantitative research using nonprobability sampling as well as snowball and purposive sampling to sample the study's respondents. The findings of the study reveal that young women experience sexual abuse, physical abuse, and emotional abuse, economic and psychological abuse at the hands of their partner's parents. The study recommended creating awareness and educating the community about the damages of attitudinizing by patriarchy and also understanding how domination masculinities can be harmful to the communities.

Kaluyu (2007) conducted a study on causes, consequences, and management strategies of domestic violence: a case study of the central division of Kitui district, Kenya. The study employed a mixed research design. Results revealed that economic challenges and alcohol consumption were among the major causes of domestic violence in most homes. The study also recorded that mental stress, reduced family economics, and poor family health are some of the consequences of gender-based violence. The study findings also revealed that there was a statistically insignificant difference in the rate of violence between married men and women. Further, the study recommended that there is a need for education on harmonious family living, provision of guidance and counseling services to the affected, and formation of policies that can lead to legal procedures in settling family disputes. The study tackled various areas of importance about gender-based violence, which concurs with the current study, but other significant areas of this study were not considered, like the role of religion in helping curb GBV in society, leaving a gap to be filled with the current study.

Wanjiru (2021) conducted a study on the causes and effects of gender-based violence: A critical literature review. The study was conducted as a library research where

various sources of literature were reviewed. Findings indicate that gender-based violence was caused by a number of issues like lack of physical security, poverty, discrimination, and social and cultural laws, norms, and practices being some of the causes of GBV. Enlightening on effects, the study established that gender-based violence wreaked havoc on the victims socially, physically, emotionally, psychologically, and economically. However, this study concentrated on the causes and effects, leaving other areas of importance concerning gender-based violence. The study did not develop much into another aspect of curbing gender-based violence, leaving a gap that the current study sought to fill. The study employed the qualitative study methodology which answered the most important questions of this research. Despite the good work of this research, much is desired to complete this study and, hence, the current study.

Beyene *et al.* (2021) explored the consequences of gender-based violence on female high school students in Eastern Ethiopia. The study established that more than half (55%) of the participants had experienced any type of GBV during their lifetime. Students who had experienced sexual violence during their lifetime reported consequences of physical health, including swelling around the genital (33%) and unusual vaginal discharge (30.7%). Consequences included poor school performance (36.1%), absenteeism (34.6%), and dropout (28.9%). Mental health consequences included self-blame (35.7%) and anxiety (23.3%). Furthermore, the study revealed that students who had experienced any type of GBV during their life lifetime reported consequences like poor school performance (18.7%) and withdrawal from school (9.0%). The main perpetrators of any type of GBV were reported to be family members, students, or boyfriends. The study nevertheless did not tackle the specifics

of the curbing of Gender Based Violence leaving a gap that the current study sought to fill.

Uyenne (2021) conducted a study on forms, causes, and consequences of gender-based violence among adolescent girls in schools in the Ilorin metropolis in Nigeria. The study deployed a descriptive research survey methodology which guided three questions she intended to answer. The study revealed that forms of gender-based violence were: physical violence, sexual violence, harmful traditional practices, and socio-economical violence. The study revealed that the causes of gender-based violence were: poverty, drugs, personality disorder, failure of parents to fulfill parental obligations to the child, poor academic performance, and witnessing violence between parents. Finally, the study revealed that the consequences of gender-based violence were poor mental health, suicide, drug abuse, dropouts from school, disability, post-traumatic stress disorders, contracting sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancy, death, and depression. This study tackled critical issues of gender-based violence, but still, more important issues were not handled equitably; therefore, the current study is necessary.

A study by Hadi (2017) sought to contextualize Patriarchy and Gender-Based Violence in Pakistan. The study argues that in Pakistan, patriarchal values are deeply enshrined in the society, which determines the subordinated position of the female gender. The paper posits that patriarchal control is enabled by institutionalized restrictive behavioral codes, gender discrimination, and an ideology that tends to associate family honor with female virtue. Furthermore, the study reveals that societal order in Pakistan is that which promotes abnormal and amoral cultural traditions, creating an enabling environment for women's subjugation. These traditions include;

rape and sexual assault, being subjected to burning punishment, acid attacks, forced marriages, domestic violence, torture, and sexual harassment, just to mention a few. Additionally, the study posits that, due to patriarchal issues, Pakistan is ranked 3rd as the most dangerous country in the world for women. This study brings into perspective one of the main reasons that enables the perpetuation of GBV. However, the study does not shed light on how various institutions in Pakistan are working towards curbing GBV leaving a scope gap that the instant study sought to fill in addition to the location gap.

Karandekar *et al.* (2014) conducted a study on Patriarchy and Gender-Based Violence: Experiences of Female Sex Workers in India. The study deployed a qualitative research approach where sex workers were interviewed. Additionally, the study was guided by radical sexual pluralist feminist theory. Results of the study revealed high incidences of GBV to sex workers through coercion from men, pimps, and their clients, who would eventually be defended by the societal patriarchal structures at all costs. Selling of young girls in some areas of India and denying them their rights in all circumstances led to an increase in sex workers. The study further reveals that weak policies due to men-favored society prompted drawbacks in handling various issues related to GBV.

Daoud (2018) conducted a study on Debating the Role of Patriarchy in the Incidence of Gender-based Violence in Jordan where he systematically reviewed related literature. Findings reveal that patriarchy is a major contributor to cases of gender-based violence in Jordan. This was supported by the fact that 33 percent of the works reviewed affirmed that patriarchal issues dominated most reported cases, pointing towards GBV. Cases of honor killings, rape, sexual harassment, and domestic

violence were all connected to patriarchal norms in the society. Furthermore, the study revealed that discussing GBV in Jordan is not easy. It is seen as going against societal norms and structures that give men power over women, creating a hurdle in curbing gender-based violence. However, given that the study is purely a literature review leaves a methodological gap, which prompted the need for the current study. Additionally, contextual factors in Jordan may not necessarily be the same as the factors in Vihiga County, where the current study was done, hence the location gap that the study sought to fill.

Otolo (2020) conducted a study on Domestic Violence against Women: Forms of Domestic Violence against Women in Luanda sub-County Vihiga, County, Kenya. The study deployed a descriptive survey research design and collected data by the use of questionnaires. The findings of the study indicate that all (100%) of the women who took part in the study, at one point, experienced physical, sexual, economic, and emotional abuse in their households. Furthermore, the study established that domestic violence was the most common type of gender-based violence, which made women become more exposed and vulnerable to various risks that are entirely life-threatening. Findings from this study form a proper basis on which further research within the area of study can be done. More specifically, the study did not endeavor to expand its scope and look at other forms of gender-based violence in addition to the aspect of curbing GBV, leaving a gap that the instant study endeavored to fill.

Awino and Ngutu (2023) sought to establish the effect of economic violence on women's socio-economic development in the Luanda Sub-County of Vihiga County, Kenya. The study deployed ex-post-facto research design which yielded both qualitative and quantitative data from a sample of 384 women in households. The

study revealed that most of the victims underwent economic gender-based violence as they were not well educated in addition to lack of employment opportunities. Furthermore, the study established that the economic vulnerabilities of women exposed them to risks of suffering emotional, physical, and sexual violence, leaving them helpless as they had no choices to make but to live with everything they went through. Besides that, the study established that legislative interventions were in place on paper but not effective practically, save the fact that the counseling services that social workers offered were also inadequate. The study, therefore, recommended that men should be involved in endeavors that are geared toward combating gender-based violence. The study, however, did not tackle other forms of GBV within Vihiga County, leaving a scope gap that the current study sought to fill.

2.5.3 Strategies to Curb GBV

The Ministry of Gender, Labor, and Social Development (2016) studied multimedia strategies against Gender Violence in Uganda. The study focused on concepts like the socioeconomic cost associated with domestic violence, which is a direct cost referring to our pocket to access rehabilitation services as well as legal redress. The study established that the government of Uganda is committed to ending GBV through the provision of a conducive legal and policy framework that includes the constitution of the Republic of Uganda, the domestic violence acts (2010) prohibition of female genital mutilation (2010), prevention of trafficking persons acts (2009). The Penal Code Act, cap 120, the Children's Act, cap 59, the Employment Acts (2006) and sexual harassment regulation (2012), Uganda policy and the national policy on elimination of Gender Violence in Uganda 2016. The study called for an integrated behavior change campaign to prompt communities as well as those in positions of

authority to change their attitudes and practices related to GBV; an intensive multimedia campaign is critical in galvanizing the achievement of government efforts and will go a long way in contributing to a reduction in the prevalence of GBV and ensuring that GBV survivors access services and are protected from further harm. The study went on to establish that the multimedia strategy will address both individual and societal needs in a phased-out approach using a variety of media channels and communicating all messages to specific audiences.

National Policy for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence (2014) conducted a study that aimed at drawing out policies to guide the prevention of Gender-Based Violence. The study realized that there is a high GBV prevalence in Kenya, with variation cutting across typologies and geographical locations. The study further revealed that women and girls are affected by GBV in various ways that are severe and more often than men and boys. The study revealed that the policies determined to increase access to quality and comprehensive response and support service across sectors, whereby the high prevalence of GBV in Kenya calls for mechanisms to ensure the provision of quality and comprehensive services for GBV survivors across the social, health, and criminal justice systems. The study further established that there is a need to improve coordination for effective programming for GBV prevention and response. Effective GBV prevention and response requires strong and efficient systems and structures to operationalize laws, policies, and plans. The policy also thought of improving enforcement of laws and policies towards prevention of GBV, whereby the Kenyan constitution under articles 7 (5) and (6) provides the general rules of international law shall form part of the law of Kenya and that any treaty or convention ratified by Kenya shall form other laws. In spite of the

fact that the study was able to give the above policies, it did not comprehensively cover the issues of GBV; it leaves a gap that ought to be filled by the Current study.

Duff (2017) conducted a study on joint learning initiatives on faith and local communities: Religion, sexual and gender-based violence setting the stage brings a number of issues into context. First, the study revealed that faith leaders are very much involved in both religious and tribal issues and inter-family disputes, and they are rarely challenged. This implies that having them on board may strengthen the fight against GBV and child protection interventions. The study established that the Muslim majority contexts involve faith leaders as community champions who help build trust, influence communities and support change. Furthermore, Duff postulates that the role of faith leaders is very important in supporting survivors where formal services are limited. For example, there are no public safe homes for GBV survivors, which puts them at risk, so community and faith leaders handle GBV and CP. This study could have given more information, which could have filled the gap, but due to some limitations, the current study is appropriate.

Another study by Blessing *et al.* (2015) on the church and management of gender-based violence in Mutoko District, Zimbabwe, revealed a few aspects of gender-based violence. The study adopted the qualitative research design and sampled 100 respondents, including leaders and elders, and had members purposefully selected from two main church groups, namely the Denominations and Pentecostals. The study revealed that the church was doing more awareness and advocacy of gender-based violence within itself than their community, contrary to what most of the studies on GBV and the church reveal. The study established that there were more rehabilitation activities for victims of gender-based violence in the church than in the community.

The study further revealed that more perpetrators of gender-based violence in the community were referred for legal advice and to the police than to the perpetrators in the church. The study recommended that the church should carry out more gender-based violence awareness and advocacy campaigns in the community and reform perpetrators of gender-based violence that are in the church for legal advice and to the police. The above study was timely and convincing, except that the real core of gender-based violence was not handled since the perpetrators in the church needed to be handled by the church leadership. Therefore, much is desired from the church when it comes to curbing gender-based violence. The current study is justified to inform this dilemma.

Katai *et al.* (2019) researched assessing church-led psycho-social counseling programmed on physical violence against women in urban areas: a case study of the Matero constituency in Lusaka. The study used qualitative study and purposive sampling to collect data which was through a semi-structured questionnaire. The study revealed that gender-based violence is threatening to add another impediment to Zambia's development efforts, especially in meeting the sustainable development goals (SDGs). The study further revealed that gender base violence exists in all communities. In addition, the study revealed that the clergy in Zambia are aware that physical violence against women in urban areas is a major problem, even in churches. The study findings confirmed that gender-based violence is common among Christians and church faithful are not safe from domestic violence. Finally, the study established that churches do not have a framework or guidelines that supervise the clergy on how to address gender-based violence. The above information is worthy of reckoning for the current study, but the study did not consider a critical assessment of

the Pentecostal Assemblies of God Churches. This created a gap that the current study is to fill in Vihiga County, Kenya.

Mombo and Joziase (2022) conducted a study on deconstructing gender vumilia (perseverance) theology in times of the gender-based violence pandemic. The study used the narrative method of study to bring about the ideas and experiences of women in the reformed church of East Africa and the African (RCEA) Israel Nineveh church (AINC). The study revealed that unless and until the vumilia theology is deconstructed and balanced with a liberated theology, the church's response to gender-based violence will be superficial and insufficient. Additionally, the study established that women in those two churches hardly articulate that Jesus protects or liberates from violence or testify that Jesus protects against violence. The study further revealed that, instead, Jesus gives them strength and endurance when dealing with abusive husbands and or when facing other instances of domestic or sexual violence.

They have conversations about how long they should stay in a violent relationship. A few of them implicitly critique the "vumilia" notion and argue that women are not fully liberated because the Bible says that women should not divorce their husbands even if she is discriminated against and violated. They, however, argue that critique and reinterpretation of the scripture are demanded to balance and create space for proper interpretation of the Bible. The study further revealed that when women were interrogated about the right gender relations as proclaimed by Jesus, most church women mentioned the law of love and emphasized that Jesus is the embodiment of love relations mutually and humility which should be applied to both women and men. The study findings are very imperative to the current study; however, there is

still a need for research on the role of religion in curbing other forms of GBV, hence the instant study.

Saul (2011) conducted a study on the response of the church to domestic violence: A Silent or Active Voice to Broken Families. The study covered the substantial duties of the clergy of constructing healthy families as commanded by the bible. The study noted that restoring families and immediately seeking safety for victims of Domestic violence are essential aspects of the call of the church. Furthermore, the study tackled the bible's concern for the husband's love of their wives and, finally, the response of the church in situations of domestic abuse. However, the study concentrated on the issues of domestic violence, while the current study left a scope gap on other aspects of gender-based violence, which the current study sought to fill.

2.5.4 Role of FBOs in Curbing Gender-Based Violence

A publication done by USAID (2009) on the role of religious communities in addressing gender-based violence and HIV shed light on a number of issues. One of the factors that came out clearly was that sexual violence contributes to a greater extent. The publication revealed that there was a need to recognize the importance of collaborating together to prevent and reduce gender-based violence and HIV among women and girls. The initiative partners also formulated the project to improve the capacity of religious leaders and faith-based organizations (FBOs) to respond to GBV and its links to HIV. The publication included the issues of FBOs and, in particular, religious leaders being often the catalyst for positive social change. Further, the publication revealed that the objectives of the project team were to strengthen the capacity of religious communities and networks to respond to GBV as it relates to HIV. The study recommended that there is a need to equip religious communities with

materials to deepen their awareness and understanding of GBV, which will eventually help in the fight against the phenomenon.

Mutata Deborah *et al.* (2021) conducted a study on practices of Pentecostal Assemblies of God Church Theology that Address Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Zambia: A case study of Bread of Life Main Pentecostal Church in Lusaka District. the study deployed the qualitative exploratory methods of study, sampling 2 pastors, 2 church elders, 4 church deacons, 2 representatives from the Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ), and 10 lay members. The study revealed that purposive and convenient sampling techniques for participants were used to sample participants from the population under study. The study findings were the church's intervention in addressing Gender-Based Violence (GBV) came through Couple meetings, premarital and post-marital counseling participation in campaigns against GBV, and being an active voice against GBV. The study established that the study used a theoretical framework, which the social ecological model informed. The study further revealed that the theoretical framework, according to Heisse (1998), the social-ecological model, the source of domestic violence is demonstrated into four major co-existing factors, namely: the individual perpetrators, relationship, community, and society. The study's recommendations were: The church should introduce awareness and rehabilitation programs especially designed to help both perpetrators and the victims of GBV. The church should employ a strategic plan to curb the vice by forming more support groups with the help of the government in order to address GBV, and finally, the study is undertaken to determine the success and challenges of the church's anti-GBV activities. Despite the fact that this study was done in a Pentecostal Church, the Scope and the distance create a gap for the current study to inform.

Gatakaa (2009) conducted a study on the role of the church in responding to domestic violence among its followers in Nairobi. The study used feminist theories in situating domestic violence and its implications in a patriarchal society. The study is based on the argument that dominant patriarchal ideologies clouding society to an extent have been adopted by religion, leaving women with no place to run to. The study posits that religion, just like society at large, demands that women ought to be good mothers and patient wives even in the phase of gender-based violence practices. Pointing towards the church, the study brings out the fact that clergy in Nairobi are aware that domestic violence is a major problem even in churches, but little is being done in favor of the victims. Findings further show that the only effort that the clergy puts in is constantly counseling women and men experiencing violence. However, a lack of knowledge and guidance from the church on how to deal with domestic violence has crippled further efforts by clergy, who sometimes find themselves in GBV cases. This research dealt with practical issues of gender-based violence, except that it did not cover them extensively; this calls for the current study.

Muuro (2019) conducted a study on an examination of the role of church leaders inverting gender-based violence in Imenti South sub-County, Meru County, Kenya. The study deployed a descriptive survey design. The study targeted key church leaders from different denominations and 153 victims of gender-based violence. The study revealed that church leaders play an important role in the disclosure of abuse because of the trust of individuals, families, and the community as a whole. The study further revealed that many women do not choose to reveal abuse to other agencies in the community or even policemen because they do not have a history of trust with them as they do with church leaders. The study recommendations were: the church

leaders were to organize conferences, seminars, and training where the faithful get the opportunity to open up and get the help needed; the church leaders have a role to teach members to co-exist in harmony with respect, love during the time of workshops and couple training and seminars. The church leaders have the chance to lead others in carrying out awareness and advocacy on gender-based violence in areas where some cultural practices are taking advantage of gender-based violence. The study findings are very instrumental to the current study, but the location of the study cannot guarantee a conclusion of the same in the case of Vihiga County, justifying the need for the current study.

Manzanga (2020) studied public pastoral assessment of the church's response to gender-based violence within the United Baptist Church of Zimbabwe. The study uses a triangulation method in collecting data for a phenomenon to answer research questions. The study revealed in its findings that men suffer GBV too, but women are disproportionately affected as compared to their male counterparts. Another finding of this study was that GBV occurs in the following key sites around the globe. The first site is the family; second, the community, which shares collective social, cultural, or ethnic binding; third, the state, which has the power and capacity to legitimize inequalities that exist in the family and community by sustaining unequal structural relationships. The study further revealed that GBV is not a term that is found in the Bible; rather, certain incidents, attitudes, and socio-cultural concepts affect the notion of GBV from biblical passages. Despite the fact that the study sheds credible facts with respect to the assessment of the church's response to gender-based violence within the church, it did not develop much into the curbing and mitigation of gender-

based violence, which is the backbone of tackling GBV, leaving a gap which the current study ought to fill.

2.5.5 Role of Non-Governmental Organizations in Curbing Gender-Based Violence

A study by Kamore (2021) sought to assess the role of NGOs in preventing and managing GBV in Africa, specifically Kenya. The study deployed feminist theory, organization theory and liberal institutional theory. The study deployed a qualitative research design and purposive sampling technique to sample respondents who participated in the study. The findings of the study indicate that NGOs have made significant contributions to fighting gender-based violence in the county. Additionally, the study established that women go through a lot of gender-based related cases than men, with most of the NGOs focusing on helping women victims given that society perceives them to be weak. Finally, the study established that socio-economic challenges have contributed immensely to cases of GBV, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic period, which led to most NGOs engaging in support services to victims. The study recommended that NGOs should increase partnerships with other organizations of interest to help curb the occurrence of GBV in Kenya.

Khanam and Meem (2018) conducted a study on the role of NGOs in combating violence against women: a comparative study on NGOs intervention and non-intervention areas of Barguna District, Bangladesh. The research employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches and purposively sampled 120 respondents. The study established that NGOs have been at the forefront of curbing GBV, and most of them have put in more effort than the governments of the day. In particular, the study found out that NGOs in Bangladesh had established programs that were

aimed at seeing the lives of people change through the eradication of poverty, specifically for survivors of GBV. They have engaged vulnerable women in development programs, training, and technical assistance to sustain them. Additionally, NGOs in Bangladesh have worked hard to advocate for women's rights and help victims of GBV pursue legal justice.

Iroquois (2020) conducted a study on the role of NGOs in managing domestic violence in Sub-Saharan Africa: The case of Nigeria. The study was pegged on the fact that there are increased reports and concerns in cases of GBV, with NGOs being the main whistleblower and actors in the fight against the phenomenon. The study endeavored qualitative design, deploying interview guides and secondary data to explore the main theme of the study in context. The study was guided by psychology, sociology and feminist theories. Results revealed that most NGOs in Nigeria played a major role in creating awareness of gender-based violence and taking action against the phenomenon. Furthermore, the study revealed that the NGOs do not get enough support from the government to boost their efforts in eradicating gender-based violence in society, as the case should be. Results further indicated that the perpetrators of domestic violence find a loophole within the legal justice system where the cases presented by the NGOs and the victims themselves take a long time, a fact that affects the outcome of the decision that is made. The study called upon the NGOs to take more of an action-oriented approach in dealing with cases of domestic violence in society in addition to the awareness approach that they have invested fully in.

Malik (2018) conducted a study on the role of NGOs in confronting domestic violence in Jalandhar City, India. The study deployed a quantitative research design,

and questionnaires were used to collect data from various representatives of NGOs. The findings of the study revealed that women are the most vulnerable to domestic violence due to a number of reasons, inter alia, dependence on their husbands for economic support, being weak physically, and cultural dominations. Additionally, the study established that NGOs have engaged in programs that involve campaigns on awareness, training of victims in various areas that can empower them, and educating women on their rights in marriage in respect to societal dictates and women's oppression to cultural and traditional circumstances. The study recommended that to fight domestic violence in homes, parents should try their level best and give quality education to their children, especially girls, helping them lay a foundation for a stable and sustainable future.

A study by Olsson (2012) focused on the roles and challenges of Non-Governmental Organizations in combating violence against women in Nigeria, a case study of women's rights advancement and protection alternative (WRAPA). The study employed a qualitative research method and collected data using semi semi-structured interview guide with the victims of gender-based violence and employees of the WRAPA organization. The study was pegged on empowerment theory and social action theory, which expanded the explanation of gender, power, and empowerment concepts. The findings of the study revealed that WRAPA, as an NGO, has played a very significant role in fighting violence against women in Nigeria, which emanates from traditional religious beliefs and practices. Just as the study by Malik (2012) established, Olson also reveals that most of the victims are afraid of reporting their grievances to relevant authorities because they depend on their husbands for economic support. Findings from the study further reveal that WRAPA has created a

platform where victims report their cases and get assistance without interference from their husbands or society. However, WRAPA faced a number of challenges: cultural opposition, weak legal backing, and a lack of enough to handle various issues involving gender-based violence.

Essel and Essel (2019) conducted a study on violence against women in Ghana: The interventions by Non-Governmental Organizations. The study deployed a qualitative research approach to assess the effectiveness of various strategies put in place by NGOs in addressing violence against women in Ghana. The findings of the study indicate that NGOs in Ghana dealing with violence against women adopted five strategies: awareness creation, advocacy and lobbying, community mobilization, activism and networking, capacity building and training, and provision of service. Findings further revealed that the organizations faced challenges like lack of cooperation from the victims as a result of fear when dealing with the cases, lack of enough funding from the government and cultural challenges. The study recommended that the government should be at the forefront, especially the legal justice system, to bring to justice various cases reported in relation to violence against women in Ghana.

2.5.6 Gender-Based Violence during the COVID-19 era

A study by Okudolu *et al.* (2023) titled Global Rise in Gender-based Violence against Women and Girls during COVID-19 Lockdown: An Insight from Africa, reveals a number of issues. Specifically, the study focused on the GBV against women and girls during the lockdown period. The study established that, in the African setting, patriarchal issues contributed a lot to reported cases of GBV during the lockdown period. This is because the lockdown left men spending most of their time in their

homes, implying that they spend much time with their wives and young girls around them. Such interactions accelerated GBV cases. Apart from the patriarchal aspect, the study established other causes of GBV during the lockdown period, inter alia, economic, psychological, and social factors. Additionally, the study heavily condemns the many cases reported during the lockdown period in a society where human rights are said to reign, terming it paradoxical. The study sheds light on the state of GBV during the lockdown period but does not relate to any institution that is mandated in society to deal with GBV cases like an FBO, hence the current study.

Mittal and Singh (2020) conducted a study in India on Gender-Based Violence during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Mini-Review. The study reviewed the literature on the rise of GBV during the Covid-19 pandemic period. The study builds on the fact that quarantine during the period was vital as it reduced the spreading of the virus, but despite its importance, it wreaked great havoc socially and psychologically due to its contribution to the rise of GBV. The findings of the study revealed that pandemics, just as the previous ones before COVID-19 proved, contribute greatly to the rise of GBV cases. The study established that quarantine contributed to the surge in alcohol consumption and economic insecurity. Furthermore, the study established that, despite GBV being a global pandemic, it was not considered as one of the lethal phenomena during the COVID-19 pandemic as the economic factor was. The resources and services that were provided to the victims of the COVID-19 pandemic during the period were inadequate and had no follow-up instances for the victims. The study in context focused on India as its study area, which has different demographics from the study area for the current study, leaving a gap that the current study explored.

Jatmiko *et al.* (2020) studied COVID-19, Harassment, and Social Media: A Study of Gender-Based Violence Facilitated by Technology during the Pandemic. The study adopted a qualitative research design with a case study approach to bring understanding to online SGBV. The study argues that there was a considerable increase in online SGBV during the pandemic period, as most individuals spent most of their time doing nothing but instead just hanging out online. Through this new experience, individual behavior modification led to a new way of sexual harassment through downloading or writing and sharing sexually harassing content through social media platforms. The study further reveals that women and young girls who have access to social media found themselves culprits of this course as they were sent sexually harassing pictures, videos, messages, and audio without their consent. Additionally, the study discussed the aspect of women, especially those who are socially and financially vulnerable, finding themselves in a situation that depicted sexual violence as a result of being lured through online platforms. However, the study research design limited access to very insightful data and information about the victims, leaving a methodological gap which the current study endeavored.

Rodriguez-Jimenez *et al.* (2023) conducted a study on Gender-based violence during the COVID-19 outbreak in Spain, revealing some issues of importance. The study findings indicate that GBV was the main problem that affected several women during the COVID-19 period. The study posits that women in Spain went through various types of GBV as a result of staying at home or being restricted in matters of movement. For instance, the study cites a case where husbands and wives classed domestically during this period as a result of misunderstandings cultivated by the psychological, economic, and health-related challenges that the pandemic inflicted on

them. Furthermore, the study reveals that before normalcy was reinstated, women had suffered domestic gender violence at the hands of men to a greater extent, leaving others divorced, physically hurt, and with medical conditions. As a result, the government of Spain and other stakeholders strengthened legislation and social sensitization measures to alleviate the GBV problem. Given that the study deals with GBV in Spain and tackles it with respect to the COVID-19 period, it leaves a scope gap in terms of location and period, hence the current study.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

Theories are vital in social science-based research as they give the required framework that helps in understanding and explaining social phenomena that can be deemed complex. They guide the researcher in interpreting and putting forth formidable concepts underlying the study in context (Taylor, 2014). Additionally, theories are crucial in that they help the researcher to organize and systematically present knowledge, reveal patterns, and put forth predictions, which in turn enhance the rigor and reliability of the study (ibid). Two theories guided the current study; feminist theory and structural functionalism theory

2.6.1 Feminist Theory

The theoretical framework was informed by the feminist theory advanced by Rosemarie Tong (2001) affirmed that in most societies' women have been systematically oppressed and that men have been historically dominant over women, which are referred to as patriarchy. The theory further advanced that the social world should be viewed in a way that illuminates the forces that can support inequality, oppression and injustice and in doing so promotes the pursuits of equality and justice.

Feminist theory encompasses a range of ideas, reflecting the diversity of women worldwide. Feminism counters traditional philosophy with new ways of addressing issues affecting humanity, calling for the replacement of the presiding patriarchal order with a system that emphasizes equal rights, justice, and fairness. Feminist theory is not one but many theories of perspectives, and each feminist theory attempts to describe women's oppression and explain its causes and consequences. The feminist movement has several branches, all bearing the same focus on women's equality.

According to Liberal feminism, Tong (2009) stated that if society is to achieve sexual equality or gender justice, then society must provide women with the same political rights and economic opportunity as well as the same education that men enjoy. Concurring with Tong on the above, society has to consider what percentage has been located to women when it comes to the political rights of women. For example, women have fewer parliamentary seats in many Countries, including the Kenyan parliament. This is due to failure to provide same political rights to women. Education is another area where women have not been able to enjoy equal rights with men, supporting Tong; men should accept that women are equally competitive academically and even in parasternal sectors.

Radical libertarian feminists hold that the patriarchal system that oppresses women must be completely eliminated and that women should be free to exercise total sexual and reproductive freedom. Rosemarie (2009) stated that "if all women not just the relatively privileged or exceptional ones are ever to be liberated. The capitalist system must be replaced by socialist in whom the means of production belongs to one and

all.” Equality is the only solution to this; all are to be considered equally so as to embrace the idea of equal rights of humanity.

Men’s objectification within industry, through the exploration of the production of their labour takes the form of alienation. But the effect of alienation on the lives and consciousness of women takes an even more oppressive form. Men seek relief from their alienation through their relations with women, for women these intimate relations are the very ones that are essential structures of her oppression. Women’s duties are so numerous for example women who are involved in world business and industry do not have a break, it is work after work. The cultural and patriarchal duties that have been assigned to women are the very ones that men use to oppress and discriminate women. Marxist–socialist feminists claim it is impossible for anyone, especially women, to achieve true freedom in a class-based society. Reacting on the above sentiment of Marxist Socialist feminism about the impossibility of women “not able to achieve true freedom”, I reject this notion. This is only patriarchal and cultural wrong belief which encourage perpetration of women worldwide. Women are capable of achieving freedom, if men can begin to impress equality instead of inequality of gender.

Multicultural feminists explain how the idea of ‘sameness’ could counter intuitively be used as an instrument of oppression rather than liberation. Postmodern feminists challenge Western dualistic thinking. Global feminists stress the universal interests of women worldwide. Eco-feminists focus on the connection between humans to the nonhuman world. Feminist theory has impacted virtually all structures, systems, and disciplines, challenging traditional ontological and epistemological assumptions about

human nature as well as ‘maleness’ and ‘femaleness.’ Modern feminism, which began 200 years ago, has evolved in three waves. The first wave dealt with suffrage, the second centered on equal access, and the current wave focused on global equality.

The noted strength of feminist theory is that women have faced countless brutal forms of institutionalized discrimination since time immemorial and in all sorts of cultural settings. This is an undeniable and morally reprehensible truth. Accordingly, feminism as a movement seeking to create equality for women in the social, political, economic, and occupational spheres (to name a few domains) is laudable. According to Tong (2001), noted that there is no moral reason that a woman should not be allowed to vote, should not have equal access to education and health care, should not make the same amount of money as a man performing the same job, etc. Feminism has been singularly responsible for readdressing these deeply sexist social injustices. This is what I would call benevolent feminism, and under this rubric, I would proudly call myself a feminist, as I abhor all forms of injustice and intolerance. However, the weakness of these theories is that some forms of feminism have been harmful in that they have built an ideological foundation that is anti-male. Apparently, misogyny is reprehensible and evil, but masonry is virtuous and laudable.

Within feminist studies, gender analysts have identified the concepts of ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ as central to a hierarchal system in which masculinities are privileged over feminine. In this regard, therefore, feminist Theory is suitable in this study in view that gender-based violence is theorized as learned patriarchal and psychological behavior. Therefore, it can be used in helping people to identify and change their dysfunctional beliefs, thoughts, and patterns of behavior that contribute to gender problems. Its underlying principle is that thoughts affect emotions. It will teach people

to evaluate and modify the way they think and make decisions; this may help reduce self-destructive behavior. This model can also create harmony in social, political, and legal constraints.

Evans (1995) affirmed that feminism means that we seek for women the same opportunities and privileges the society gives to men and that we assert the distinctive value of womanhood against patriarchal denigration; while those positions need not be mutually exclusive, there is a strong tendency to make them so. Either we want to be like men, or we don't. The feminist theory is quite helpful in its approach and application. Hali (2014) stated that the feminist theory approach values diversity and inclusion as essential assets for achieving transformative change and bringing sustainable development to communities that have continually experienced gender-based violence perpetration. Feminist theory takes care of the intersectional dimensions of and how discrimination can be lessened and how equality can be achieved in those communities.

Feminist theory has some weaknesses, just like any other theory. The main weakness of the feminist theory is that they are from women centered viewpoint, while the theories are also mentioned social problems not strictly related to women, it still comes from that viewpoint. This creates a weakness of perspective, men and women do see the world differently. If you see a theory that is solely from the perspective of men or women then you are removing something intangible from that theory. Theories should be put into account a woman's perspective, but the theories should also have the male perspective so that both viewpoints are clearly visible.

Beverly (2007) stated that the weakness of the feminist theory however, as study participants noted, feminist has not been solely responsible for this pronounced reliance on the criminal justice system. Many larger social forces have affected the trend including a “get –tough –on –crime “political mind set, the victim compensation movement, finding mandate, and the current conservative political climate. Thus, attributing the increased involvement and more punitive responses of the criminal justice system solely to feminist overestimates their power and influence and misunderstands their philosophy.

Caplan (2018) stated that one of the limitations of applying feminist theory to a text are the same limitations that arise from applying any theory to a text when we are viewing it through one lens perspective. This contradicts one’s ability to see any other perspective as we critique a text, much as if we applied only Marxist theory or used Freudian or Jungian theory in our reading. This is not to say that any of these are not legitimate perspectives, but to say that any other of these critique text using one perspective, one should have awareness that there are other legitimate perspectives to use.

Kauffman (1988) argued that some of the advantages the feminist theory would be easier for women to oppose corrupt government practices and win social reforms, women began to argue that with the opinion of women throughout the Country, the government would advance. Men and women have a difference in the opinion in so having both involved in the government; they would avoid future corruption and had a decision making.

Kauffman adds that some problems of feminist theory as follows; Another problem in using feminist theory in particular is that some feminist’s schools of thought operate

on premise that male and female are purely social constructs. To the degree this is correct, feminist theory has some utility as one considers text but as we gain more knowledge of nature versus nurture, we are learning that it is not really nature versus nurture at all, much more suggests that biology is more important than we think it is.

Therefore, pegging on the arguments above, it is worth noting that, feminist theory which is really a form of political theory, has some re-thinking to do. Another problem with the feminist theory is that it typically the subject depicted in the text is rooted in social and cultural sphere, instead of looking at individual (in regards to how they fit into society and how others look at them, the text normally examines the society that characters live within.

2.6.2 Structural Functionalism Theory

Structural functionalism is a sociology theory that puts its emphasis on the aspect of integration and interdependence of various structures or institutions of the society. The theory was first proposed by Emile Durkheim 1858-1917 and advanced by various scholars, including Talcott Parsons between 1902-1979 and Robert Merton between 1910-2003, all three being sociologists. The theory is pegged upon the fact that social order, survivability, and stability can be realized through strengthened relationships among societal institutions like family, education, government, region, and organizations, which perform various functions that focus on a common goal. The theory portrays society as a system whose structures are interconnected and provide rules, principles, guidelines, and values that the society tends to reflect upon as a mirror for its operation. In this respect, therefore, each structure within the society has its specific roles that work together to contribute to the greater good of the society,

otherwise referred to as functions, or contribute negatively to the society, which is referred to as dysfunction.

The church, as a religious institution, leans on the tenets of faith to disseminate its mandate in society among the other institutions of the common good. As a social structure in society, the mandate of the church is to provide spiritual guidance and morally acceptable teachings, enhance social ties, promote acceptable values and beliefs, enhance cohesion, and offer other community services and support by addressing various needs, including physical, emotional, and psychological needs. These functions depend on other institutions for collaboration to be fully realized, justifying the structural functionalism concept. As a matter of fact, the church has been at the forefront of various matters ranging from faith, health, education, charity, and even political mediation, implying that it does not only depend on other institutions to disseminate its duties but other institutions depend on too to get the results that are for general societal good. Structural functionalists argue that some issues in the society function well or dysfunction because of the efforts or laxity respectively of institutions in place. It is, therefore, imperative to note that some phenomena in society that are looked upon as threats can be escalated because of structural failures or can be curbed by structural efforts.

Gender-based violence is a societal phenomenon that calls upon various structures within the society to come together and work towards the common good of curbing the phenomenon. Functionalists argue that the church has what it takes to disseminate its duties of shaping social norms, attitudes, behaviors, and vices that are gender related to bringing sanity to society. However, the church, on the one hand, has been lauded for having worked its steps toward dealing with the issue of gender-based

violence. On the other hand, some issues within the church still lead to the conclusion that the church has contributed to the aspect of gender-based violence implying both functional and dysfunction as depicted by structural functional theory.

Differences in religions on the basis of traditions, doctrines, practices, origin culture, and religious and historical developments have been deemed to play a vital role in defining the functional boundaries and dysfunctional boundaries of the church. For instance, some denominations have leaned more on traditional biblical backgrounds and taken conservative approaches to issues of gender while other denominations portray different liberal approaches on matters of gender roles and sexuality. Despite the fact that the church subscribes to the Deity of God and, more so, Jesus Christ for Christians in particular, the differences raise questions as they define and execute various roles and duties differing from each other. Therefore, it is upon these differences that loopholes dictate strengths and weaknesses which can help to curb or enhance gender-based violence in society.

Structural functionalism theory is imperative in examining the role of the relationship between the church and gender-based violence in society by looking at its relationship in terms of inclusivity, engagement, and approach of the church to gender roles and related cases. The current study sought to bring into perspective the role of a religious-based organizations with a narrow focus on the Pentecostal Assemblies Church on curbing gender-based violence and the challenges involved, justifying the need and use of the theory in context.

2.7 Conceptual Model

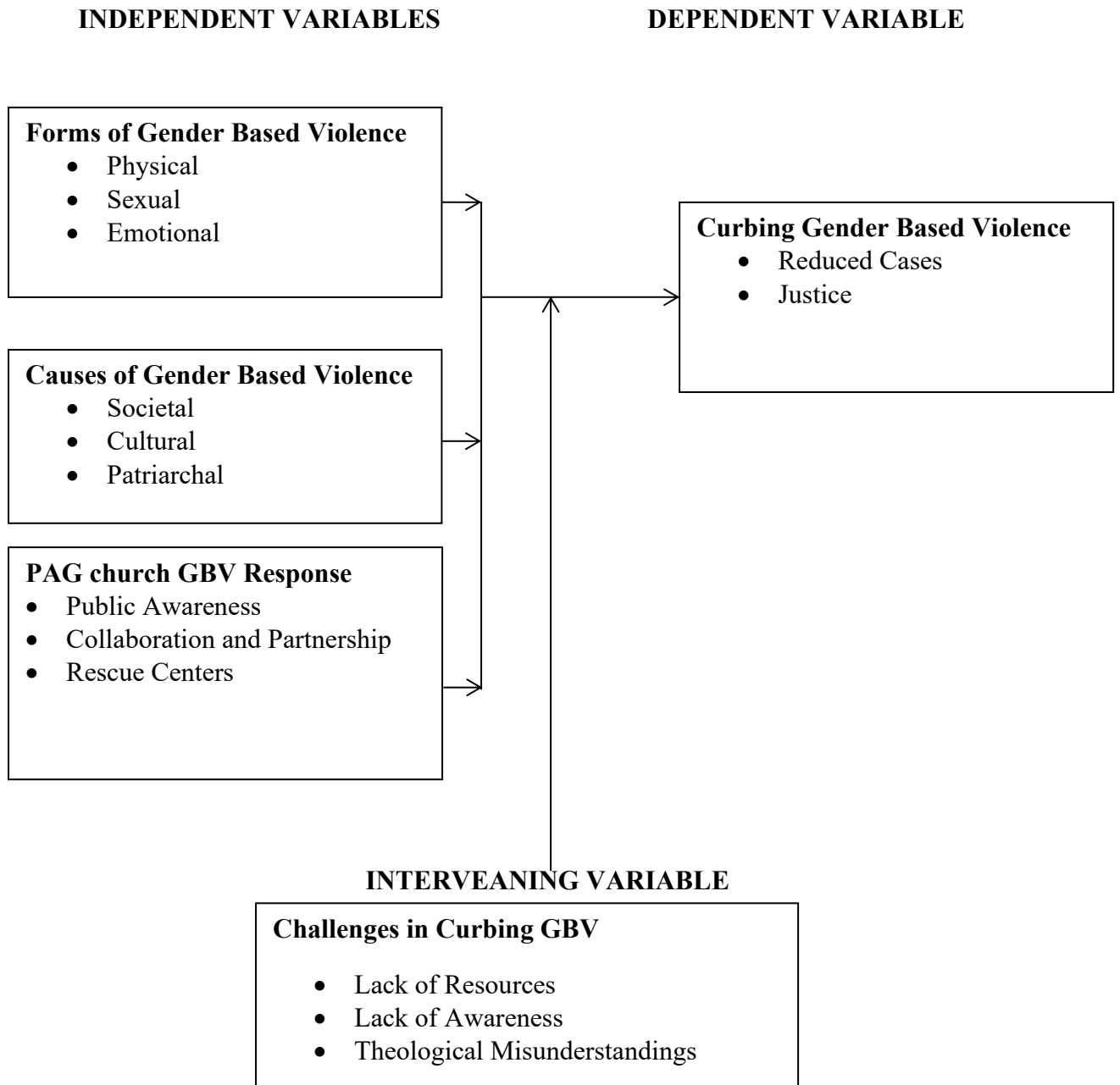


Figure 2.0 Conceptual Model

Source: Author (2021)

2.8 Chapter Summary

The chapter delved into reviewing literature on various key concepts presented in the study. The literature review revealed that various forms of gender-based violence occur at global, regional, local and even within the study area. These forms of GBV,

according to the reviewed literature, include sexual harassment, economic violence, emotional and psychological violence, physical violence, verbal violence, and discrimination and harassment. Additionally, the literature reviewed focused on the causes of GBV. Among the leading causes revealed by the current study are patriarchy and gender inequality, social and cultural traditions normalized in society, legal and institutional failures, biased religious practices, substance abuse, and power and control. Furthermore, literature related to the effects of gender-based violence was reviewed in this chapter. These effects, as revealed by the literature, include health effects like injuries and STIs, psychological and emotional destabilization, stigmatization, isolation, breaking of marriages and relationships, resource wastage, and employment disruption. Still, in the literature review, the role of FBOs in curbing GBV was discussed, and it established that they had the potential to curb the phenomenon. Finally, the theoretical framework was presented, and the feminist and structural-functional theories were discussed, casting their relevance to the current study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter presents the methodology the current study employed in conducting this research. It discusses the research design, study location, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection instruments and techniques, pilot study instrument validity and reliability, data collection procedures, data analysis and presentation, and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey design, which is imperative in accurately describing a phenomenon. The design is suitable for such a study given that it deals with interpreting a phenomenon (as in this case, GBV) without influencing it. Furthermore, the fact that the study deals with GBV and the church makes this research design more appropriate as the two variables are both termed social, leaving descriptive survey design the best alternative to interpret the variables. Finally, this design is suitable for this study because it enables the researcher to study people's characteristics and behavior in a more neutral and natural setting, enabling balanced analysis and explanation of the collected data (Mason 1997, Wragg 1978). In the current study, the design was handy in guiding the preparation of research instruments, data collection and analysis of data as per the study's objectives.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted in Vihiga County, which is located in Western Kenya and lies between 34-30 and 35-0 East between latitudes 0 and 015 North. The equator cuts across the Southern part of the County. It covers an area of approximately 531.0

square km. Vihiga County has its headquarters at Mbale town, a cosmopolitan area. This County borders Nandi County on the East, Kisumu County on the South, Kakamega County on the North, and Siaya County to the West. The county has five sub-Constituencies: Luanda, Emuhaya, Vihiga, Hamisi and Sabatia. Statistics of Gender-based violence in Vihiga County, according to Ngutu *et al.* (2018), indicate that emotional abuse comprised 113 victims out of 338 (12.0%), Psychological violence constituted 128 victims out of 338 (13.6%), verbal abuse stood at 266 out of 338 (28.3), Sexual violence comprised 136 out of 338 (14.5%), physical abuse consisted 216 out of 338 (23.0%) while spiritual abuse counted for 81 out of 338 (8.6%). These statistics imply the prevalence of GBV in Vihiga County, calling for concerted efforts from various institutions, including the church, to deal with the phenomena.



Figure 3.1: Map of Vihiga County

3.3 Study Population

According to Sekaran (2003), a study population is a group of people or things of interest that the researcher considers for the study. The study population comprised of assembly women church members, assembly pastors, District Women Directors, chiefs, and NGO representatives.

3.4 Target Population

The study's target population comprised assembly women church members, assembly pastors, district overseers, women director representatives, and chiefs. The PAG church has thousands of adherents in Vihiga County, with 34 districts across the 5 sub-counties. This implies a total of 34 district overseers and 34 district women directors. Furthermore, the study targeted chiefs as they are the link between the community and the government as they are the local administration. As a result, they have a clear understanding of what goes on at the grassroots daily, including issues relating to gender-based violence. In addition, the study targeted NGO representatives whose organizations had an interest in women's welfare and history in dealing with gender-based violence. Pastors were also among the target population as they deal on a daily basis with various spiritual and social issues emanating from their congregants, implying that they encounter cases of GBV in the line of operation. Finally, most of the assembly women church members may be victims of gender-based violence, making it ideal to involve them in the study to establish, along with other respondents, the depth of the phenomenon.

3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

The study's sample size comprised various clusters of respondents, including assembly women members, assembly pastors, district leadership, NGO representatives, and Chiefs. The researcher specifically opted for married women and women who were married but eventually separated or divorced from their husbands. Fundamentally, the researcher chose to take this approach given that the most common and understood form of GBV is domestic violence and, more so, intimate partner violence, to be specific. According to PAG records of the year 2019, there are about 7600 married women who are active in church activities in Vihiga County. Therefore, the study deployed Yamane's formulae to determine the sample size of the assembly women church members, as shown below.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

n=sample size

N= Population Size (7600)

e = Margin Error (0.05)

Therefore, substituting the values

$$n = \frac{7600}{1 + 7600(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{7600}{1 + 7600(0.05 * 0.05)}$$

$$n = \frac{7600}{1 + 7600(0.05 * 0.05)}$$

n=380

The sample was distributed to 10 churches, which were sampled through purposive sampling technique based on criteria of churches with a population of over 150 women assembly members with two churches from each sub-county. The researcher

considered the approach of getting churches with over 150 women members to help get enough samples for the study that would be reliable given that some churches have very few members to help get a considerable sample. With a sample of 380 and 10 churches, the researcher opted to distribute the sample equally across the 10 churches, leading to 38

respondents per church being purposively sampled, as Table 3.1 below indicates.

Table 3.1: Sample Distribution for Assembly Women Church Members

Sub-County	Churches	Sampled Women	% Sample Representation
Emuhaya	Emukhuyu Assembly	38	10%
	Ikumu Assembly	38	10%
Luanda	Hobunaka Assembly	38	10%
	Luanda Assembly	38	10%
Hamisi	Shiru Assembly	38	10%
	Goibei Assembly	38	10%
Vihiga	Keveye Assembly	38	10%
	Eluya Assembly	38	10%
Sabatia	Itengi Assembly	38	10%
	Lunyanya Assembly	38	10%
Total		380	100%

Source: Field Data 2021

Additionally, the study deployed census sampling to sample all 34 District overseers and 24 Women directors. The researcher considered census sampling because the District Overseers and District Women Directors were very few in getting a sample from the total, hence opting for the census sampling technique. The study further deployed census sampling to get a sample of all 20 (senior and assistant) pastors from

the 10 churches that participated in the study. In addition, the study randomly sampled 2 representatives from NGOs aligned with women's welfare, where five were purposively sampled to bring the total representatives to 10 respondents. Finally, the study randomly sampled 2 chiefs from each sub-county, bringing the total number of chiefs to 10 respondents. In total, the study sample stood at 488 respondents across all the categories, as shown in the table below.

Table 3.2: Sample Size Representation

Target Respondents	Target Population	Sample Size	Sampling Procedure
Assembly Women Church Members	7600	380	Purposive
District Overseers	34	34	Census
District Women Directors	34	34	Census
Assembly Pastors	20	20	Census
Chiefs	37	10	Random
NGOs Reps	10	10	Census
Total	7735	488	

Source: Author 2021

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The current study explored various areas of concern on GBV thereby yielding subthemes that required data collection from relevant respondents. In this respect, therefore, the study deployed both primary and secondary data collection instruments. Primary data was so imperative for this study because it gave the researcher the leeway to access first hand data from the respondents. Secondary data was necessary for the study since it helped the researcher to supplement the primary data and add necessary information that would not have been caught through primary means. The methods are discussed further below.

3.6.1 Primary Data Collection Instruments

3.6.1.1 Interview Schedule

Interview is a qualitative technique in research that involves carrying out individual interviews with respondents to establish personal perspectives on a topical matter (Boyce & Neale, 2006). The fact that interviews make the researcher interact intensively with the respondent to get the responses is vital to getting the right data. Additionally, interviews helped the researcher to repeat questions and explain the areas the respondents did not understand. The study interview schedules were used to collect data from chiefs, NGO representatives, district women directors, and district overseers in all five Sub Counties of Vihiga County as per the sample indicated in Table 3.2.

3.6.1.2 Focused Group Discussions (FGDs)

Focus Group Discussions is a technique of collecting data that involves combining 6 or more people with similar characteristics in a group to discuss a contextual matter with the guidance of a moderator. The study, in addition to another instrument for data collection, deployed the use of Focus Group Discussions to collect data from Assembly Women Church Members. The study deployed this technique to help in realizing the depth of the subject in context, GBV, which required the respondents to outline their perceptions, beliefs, ideas and opinions. By doing so, the researcher was able to have an in-depth understanding of the aforementioned issues to uncover the issues that the study sought to. Additionally, the technique saved the time that the researcher used to collect data as more respondents were found at a time rather than looking for one respondent at a time. Lastly, FGDs were handy in matters of expense

as they are cheap yet reliable techniques for data collection. In terms of respondents, the tool was used to collect data from 380 local women assembly members where 40 FGDs were held as shown in the table below.

Table 3.3: Focus Group Discussions Breakdown

SUB-COUNTY	VENUE	FGD GROUPS	PARTICIPANTS	DATES
EMUHAYA	Emukhuyu Assembly PAG Church	4	10 (3 Groups) and 8 (1 Group)	7/2/2021
	Ikumu Assembly	4	10 (3 Groups) and 8 (1 Group)	
LUANDA	Hobunaka Assembly	4	10 (3 Groups) and 8 (1 Group)	14/2/2021
	Luanda Assembly	4	10 (3 Groups) and 8 (1 Group)	
HAMISI	Shiru Assembly	4	10 (3 Groups) and 5 (1 Group)	21/2/2021
	Goibei Assembly	4	10 (3 Groups) and 8 (1 Group)	
VIHIGA	Keveye Assembly	4	10 (3 Groups) and 7 (1 Group)	28/2/2021
	Eluya Assembly	4	10 (3 Groups) and 6 (1 Group)	
SABATIA	Itengi Assembly	4	10 (3 Groups) and 8 (1 Group)	7/3/2021
	Lunyenya Assembly	4	10 (3 Groups) and 6 (1 Group)	

Source: Field Work (2021)

3.6.2 Secondary Data Collection Instruments

3.6.2.1 Books

Books have long served as secondary data collection tools or instruments. During this study, books on the topical matter were explored, and the researcher captured relevant information. Books were imperative during this study given that they contain data that has been tested and proved in accuracy and reliability issues, as editing is done before publishing. Additionally, books helped the researcher collect information and data that would have otherwise been costly and time-consuming, saving time and cost.

3.6.2.2 Journals

The researcher endeavored to use journals to collect supplementary data in the process of this study. Journals became very important during data collection in that they provided up-to-date data that helped the researcher have very current data in addition to relevancy. Another outstanding aspect of journals that the researcher found to be so important and resonated well with the current study was the specificity of the journals; hence, narrowing down to GBV in the case was very easy. Lastly, just like books, journals help the researcher save time and money for data collection.

3.6.2.3 Websites

In the data collection process, the researcher came across some reliable websites that provided up-to-date and more relevant data relating to the subject in context. Most of the websites the researcher came across were government and authoritative organizations' websites containing information on GBV. Similarly, just as in the case of journals and books, websites saved the research a great deal in matters of cost and time, enabling the researcher to finish the study on time.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The first step towards data collection involved seeking permission from the Department of Social Science Education at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, which gave an approval letter to clear the researcher on the university

side. The researcher also sought authorization from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation. The researcher also sought a clearance letter from the Vihiga County Commissioner to allow data collection. The researcher then booked appointments with the selected members for introduction and familiarization purposes and made plans for data collection dates when interviews and FGDs were held.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

The researcher employed qualitative data analysis techniques. Qualitative data captured from the review of literature from secondary sources, interview schedules and FGDs were analyzed thematically in that, common themes (including prevalence, forms, causes, types, role of FBOs, response of PAG church and challenges) were used in sorting them out, interpreting and then documenting in the report. Among the key themes are the forms, causes, and effects of GBV, the role of FBOs in curbing GBV, the response of the PAG church to the GBV phenomenon, and the challenges encountered. Data was analyzed in tables, charts, and graphs for interpretation and report-writing purposes.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

The researcher obtained informed consent from the respondents who participated in this study. Another ethical issue considered was that no names were to be given by the respondents. To keep people's integrity in research, the researcher ensured that individual information should not lead to violence and hatred in families or administratively. Furthermore, the freedom to answer the questions from FGDs and an interview guide for the respondents was provided. The respondents were assured integrity protection during the research study and even after. The researcher was

given approval authority and a permit from the National Commission of Science, technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) of Kenya, Vihiga county commissioner, which covered the 5 sub-county commissioners, Vihiga county police commander, chiefs, assistant chiefs, police officers and the permission from Pentecostal Assemblies of God churches in Vihiga county was granted in reference to the research ethical policy.

3.10 Chapter Summary

The chapter dealt with research methodology whereby various elements were looked at. The study was conducted in Vihiga, Kenya, located in Western County, where previous studies show an increasing prevalence of GBV. The study adopted a descriptive survey design to describe a phenomenon accurately. The study's target population comprised assembly women church members, assembly pastors, district overseers, women director representatives, and chiefs. The PAG church has thousands of adherents in Vihiga County, with 34 districts across the five sub-counties. The study population comprised assembly women church members, assembly pastors, District Women Directors, chiefs, and NGO representatives. The study sampled a total of 488 respondents. Data was collected using both primary data collection tools (FGDs and Interviews) and secondary data collection tools. Data was based on qualitative data analysis techniques.

CHAPTER FOUR

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AS A SOCIETAL PHENOMENON

4.1 Introduction

The chapter contains the interpretation and presentation of the research results of the first objective: Exploring gender-based violence as a societal phenomenon. The chapter begins first by presenting the background information regarding the respondents and, thereafter, findings for the first objective.

4.2 Response Rate

The study sample size was 488 respondents, which comprised District Overseers, Assembly pastors, District women directors, NGOs representatives, Local chiefs, and assembly women church members. The research managed to reach all 34 district women directors, 34 district overseers, 10 chiefs 10 NGOs representatives and 372 assembly women church members, making the response rate 98%. A study by Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) revealed that a response rate above 70% is excellent and valid for data analysis and interpretation.

4.3 Assembly Women Church Members Demographic Information

4.3.1 Age of the Respondent

Table 4.1: Age of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18 - 35	150	40.3
Above 35	222	59.7
Total	372	100

Source: Field Data, 2021

The findings revealed that 150 (40.3 %) church members respondents of the research participants were below 35 and 222 participants (59.7 %) were above 35 years, implying a high female response rate. This implies that both elderly women and young women took part in the study, helping the researcher balance the findings without age limiting the age of respondents.

4.3.2 Respondents Sub-County

Table 4.2: Respondents by Sub-County

Sub-county	Frequency	Percent
Emuhaya	76	20.4
Hamisi	73	19.6
Luanda	76	20.4
Sabatia	74	19.9
Vihiga	73	19.6
Total	372	100.0

Source: Field Data, 2021

The study participants came from 5 sub-counties found in Vihiga County. The study aimed at obtaining an equal number of participants in all the sub-counties; this was slightly achieved. Luanda and Emuhaya had the highest number of respondents 76 (20.4 % each). Sabatia followed with 74 respondents (19.9%). The sub-county with the least number of respondents were Vihiga and Hamisi 73 (19.6 %) each. The table above reveals that despite equal representation not being achieved, all the sub-counties were well represented.

4.3.3 Marital Status

Table 4.3: Marital status

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Single	0	0%
Married	259	69.6%
Separated	83	22.3%
Widowed	25	6.7%
Divorced	5	1.3%
Total	372	100%

Source: Field Data, 2021

Table 4.3 above revealed that most of the study participants were married, 69.6% (n=259). Furthermore, those widowed were 6.7 % (n=25), whereas those who were separated or divorced were 22.3 % (n=83). Given the fact that most of the gender-based violence takes place among married couples, it was imperative that such representation be realized. Finally, it was deemed important by the researcher to include the divorced or separated as they may have undergone the process due to gender-based violence, thereby being so clinical in the current study.

4.3.4 Location

The figure below represents the location of the study respondents.

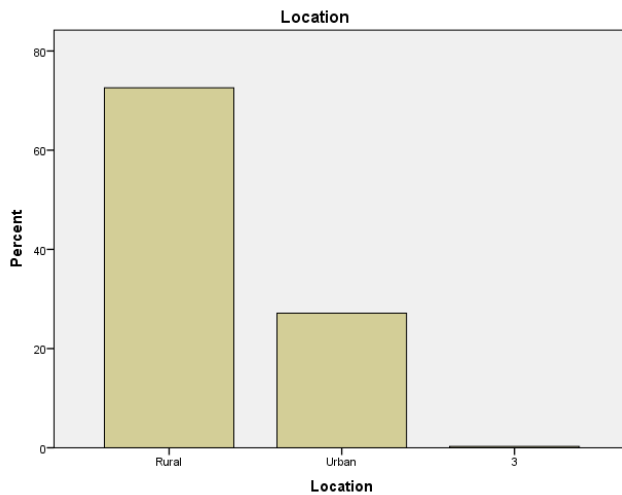


Figure 4.1: Location of Study Respondents

Most respondents were found in rural settings (72.6 %, n=270), whereas the others were found in urban areas (27.4 %, n=102). This can be explained by the fact that Vihiga County is mainly a rural setup. Despite this, the participants in urban areas were well represented. The researcher deemed it imperative to have respondents from the two setups to help understand whether there are any noticeable differences in cases related to GBV.

4.3.4 Education Level

Table 4.4 below shows the results of the education level of the respondents.

Table 4.4: Respondents' Education level

Education level	Frequency	Percent
No education and primary leavers	14	3.8%
Secondary	121	32.5%
Certificate	119	32%
Diploma	73	19.6%
Degree	45	12.1%
Total	372	100%

Source: Field Data, 2021

The findings revealed that 14 (3.8 %) participants had no level of education; 121 (32.5 %) of them had secondary education as their highest education level; 32 % (n=119) of the respondents had a certificate as their highest level of education. The number of respondents with a Diploma and degree was 19.6 5% (n=73) and 12.1% (n=45), respectively. The descriptive analysis revealed that most of the respondents had a certificate and secondary education.

4.3.5 Employment Status

Figure 4.2 displays the employment status of the study respondents

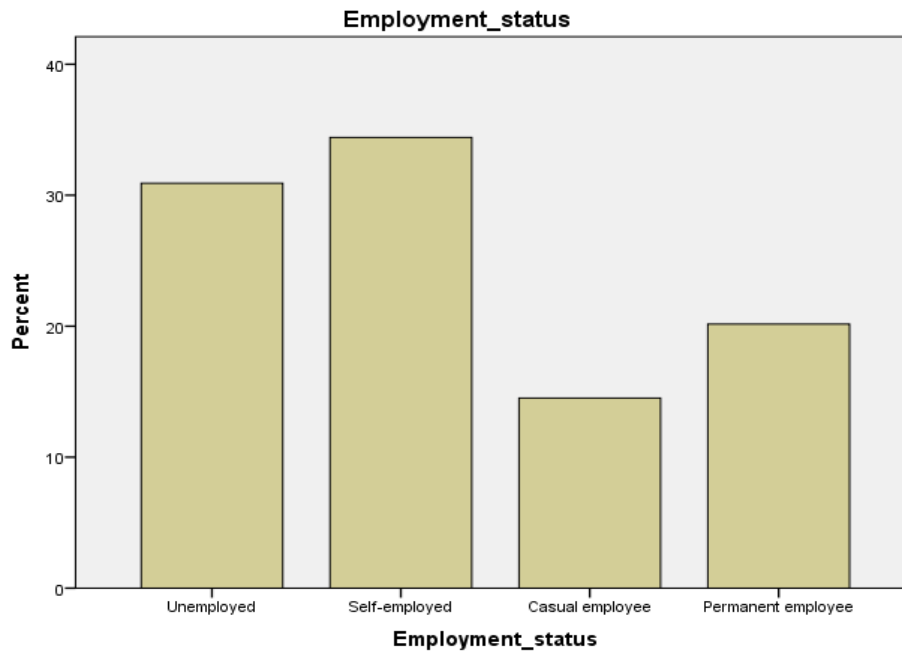


Figure 4.2: Respondents' Employment Status

From the study findings, 115 (30.9 %) of the respondents were unemployed; 128 (34.4 %) of them were self-employed; 54 (14.5 %) had casual jobs and 75 (20.2 %) of them were permanently employed. The research results revealed that most participants were unemployed and self-employed, respectively; this may be attributed to the fact that most respondents came from rural settings, where the two cases are ideal.

4.4 Gender-Based Violence as a Societal Phenomenon

The first objective of the current study was to explore Gender-Based Violence (GBV) as a societal phenomenon. This section addresses various aspects of GBV, including understanding of GBV, forms of GBV, effects of GBV, and challenges involved in handling GBV. To achieve this, the study deployed a library study approach, and the findings are presented in the following subsections.

4.4.1 Towards the Understanding Gender and Sex

Among the terms that are used interchangeably are gender and same, where most people tend to think that they mean one and the same thing. However, this is not the case, given that various issues separate the two from each other in their purview. Bringing the understanding of these two terms is imperative as it helps the study to align its threshold on the prevailing aspects of broader gender aspects and not from the narrow sex orientation. From the scholarly perspective, the issues noted with respect to gender and sex are discussed below.

The term sex is used to biologically describe some characteristics of an individual that point towards their anatomy and role and types of chromosomes and hormones. In simple terms, the term sex points towards the physical characteristics of an individual, which results in categorization as either male or female. However, there is a third projection of sex where an individual identifies themselves as intersex, implying that they have both male and female genitalia. Additionally, it is worth noting that sex is assigned to an individual at birth, given that the distinctive physical and physiological features are noticeable.

On the other hand, the term gender exists on a broader spectrum as it is defined based on various concepts that are not necessarily sex-based. Looking at gender as a social construct, WHO (2015) posits, “Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men, such as norms, roles, and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed.” As a societal construct, gender only relates to sex on the aspect of identification as either a man or woman but goes ahead to put into consideration the issue of roles, norms, and relationships, a root that the stem of gender-based violence

emanates from. Given that societies differ on the said factor, some forms of gender-based violence are totally relative to the society in context or the regional norms, as exemplified by female genital mutilation in some African communities.

4.4.2 Global Historical Background of Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is a complex phenomenon that has affected individuals and societies throughout history. It refers to any form of violence or abuse that is directed at individuals based on their gender identity or gender roles. Gender-based violence can take many forms, including physical violence, sexual violence, emotional or psychological abuse, economic abuse, and other forms of control or coercion. While gender-based violence can affect anyone, women and girls are disproportionately affected. Violence against women has been documented in many ancient societies, including ancient Greece, Rome, and Egypt. In some cultures, women were seen as property, and their husbands or other male family members had the right to use violence to control them (Walker, 2009).

The emergence of feminist movements in the 19th and 20th centuries brought greater attention to the issue of gender-based violence, leading to increased public awareness and legal protections for women. However, gender-based violence remains a significant problem in many parts of the world, and efforts to address it continue. Recent years have seen an increase in public awareness of gender-based violence and the #MeToo movement, which brought attention to the pervasive problem of sexual harassment and assault in many industries (Gqola, 2007).

4.4.3 African Gender-Based Violence Historical Basis

Gender-based violence (GBV) has a long history in the African continent, with various forms of violence against women and girls occurring for centuries. GBV in Africa has its roots in patriarchal systems, where men hold power and authority over women and cultural practices that perpetuate gender inequality. Historically, practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriages, and widow inheritance were prevalent in many African societies (Walker, 2009). FGM, which involves the partial or total removal of the female genitalia, is still prevalent in some African countries, despite efforts to eradicate it. Forced marriages, which deny girls their right to education and expose them to violence and abuse, are also still prevalent in some African countries despite efforts to end them. Colonialism in Africa had a significant impact on GBV, as it disrupted traditional social structures and norms and imposed patriarchal systems that undermined the status of women. For example, in many African societies, women played important roles in political, economic, and social spheres, but colonialism undermined their status and relegated them to subservient roles (Bennett, 2010).

In the post-colonial era, many African countries have made efforts to address GBV, enacting laws and policies to protect women and girls and hold perpetrators accountable. However, implementing these laws and policies is often hampered by a lack of resources, cultural barriers, and weak enforcement mechanisms (ibid). GBV in Africa remains a significant challenge, with high rates of sexual violence, domestic violence, and other forms of abuse reported in many countries. Women and girls are disproportionately affected, with many experiencing violence and abuse from a young age (Scully, 2011). However, significant efforts are underway to address GBV in

Africa, with governments, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders working to raise awareness, provide support services for survivors, and hold perpetrators accountable (Medie, 2019).

African leaders have expressed a commitment to address gender-based violence on the continent. Several African countries have enacted laws and policies to protect women and girls from violence and hold perpetrators accountable. African leaders have also recognized that GBV is a human rights violation that affects not only individuals but also communities and nations as a whole. In 2013, the African Union launched the "Campaign to End Violence against Women and Girls," which aims to promote gender equality and prevent and respond to GBV on the continent. The campaign has identified six priority areas for action, including legal and policy frameworks, prevention, service provision, data collection and analysis, partnerships and resource mobilization, and research and knowledge management (Thomas & Masijila, 2013).

Many African leaders have also spoken out against GBV, calling for an end to violence against women and girls. For example, in 2019, Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta declared GBV a national disaster. He announced a series of measures to address the issue, including establishing a national GBV hotline and deploying specialized prosecutors to handle GBV cases (Decker *et al.*, 2022). Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari has also spoken against GBV, calling for more action to address the issue. In 2020, he signed the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, which criminalizes various forms of violence, including rape, female genital mutilation, and physical violence (Oparinde & Matsha, 2021).

Overall, the history of GBV in Africa is complex and multifaceted, with a long legacy of cultural practices, colonialism, and patriarchy contributing to the perpetuation of violence against women and girls. However, the growing recognition of GBV as a human rights violation and the increasing efforts to address it provides hope for a future in which women and girls can live free from violence and abuse.

4.4.4 Historical Background of Gender-Based Violence in Kenya

Gender-based violence has been a pervasive problem in Kenya for many years. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable, with high rates of rape, domestic violence, and other forms of abuse reported. Gender-based violence in Kenya is rooted in cultural, economic, and social factors. Historically, women in Kenya were subject to patriarchal norms and practices that limited their autonomy and subjected them to violence and abuse (Bennett, 2001 & Swart, 2012). The colonial period saw the introduction of new forms of gender-based violence, including forced labor and sexual violence against women. Since Kenya's independence in 1963, efforts have been made to address gender-based violence, including the enactment of laws and policies that aim to protect women and girls. The 2010 Kenyan Constitution, for example, provides for the right to freedom from violence and discrimination and recognizes the need for affirmative action to promote gender equality (Baraza, 2022).

Gender-based violence in Kenya takes various forms, with some of the most predominant cases being domestic violence, sexual violence, female genital mutilation, child marriage, and human trafficking. Domestic violence, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, is widespread in Kenya, and women and children are the most affected, with many cases of intimate partner violence reported. Sexual violence is a significant problem in Kenya, with high rates of rape, defilement,

and sexual harassment, and victims include women, men, and children, with many cases going unreported due to social stigma and fear of reprisal (Thomas & Masinjila, 2013).

FGM is a traditional practice that remains prevalent in some parts of Kenya, and it involves the partial or total removal of the female genitalia, considered a violation of human rights. Although FGM was outlawed in Kenya in 2011, the practice is still prevalent in some communities. In 2020, a 12-year-old girl died after undergoing FGM in West Pokot County. Child marriage is another form of GBV that denies girls their right to education and exposes them to violence and abuse. In 2019, a 14-year-old girl died during childbirth in Kajiado County, where child marriage is still prevalent (Baraza, 2022).

Rape and sexual assault are among the most prevalent forms of GBV in Kenya, with many cases going unreported. In 2020, for instance, the police reported a surge in the number of rape cases, with Nairobi County alone recording 3,000 cases. Domestic violence, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse inflicted by intimate partners or family members, is also widespread in the country. A study conducted by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics in 2019 found that one in three women in Kenya has experienced physical violence from a partner.

Child marriage is also prevalent in Kenya, with many girls married off before they reach the age of 18, denying them their rights to education, health, and a life free from violence and abuse. Human trafficking is a significant problem in Kenya, with women and children being the most vulnerable, and victims are often forced into sexual exploitation, forced labor, and other forms of abuse. Human trafficking is a growing

problem in Kenya, with women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation and forced labor. In 2020, Kenyan authorities intercepted a bus carrying 29 girls and women who were being trafficked to the Middle East (Morris *et al.*, 2022).

However, despite these efforts, gender-based violence remains a significant problem in Kenya to date. Cultural norms that justify violence against women, poverty, and lack of access to education and economic opportunities are some of the factors that perpetuate gender-based violence. Additionally, there is often a lack of enforcement of laws and policies to protect women and girls from violence and to hold perpetrators accountable. Efforts to address gender-based violence in Kenya continue with advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns, community-based programs, and support services for survivors (Peterman *et al.*, 2020).

4.4.5 towards the Understanding of Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is a globally prevalent phenomenon that impacts individuals regardless of their geographical location, race, sexuality, socioeconomic status, or gender identity. It is worth noting that gender-based violence affects both men and women but most of the time, women are the main victims of this phenomenon because of their general image and perception by people within the society towards them. The term gender-based violence is widely used as a synonym for violence against women, given that women are the most obvious victims and survivors of violence, just as the instant study posits too (Heise *et al.*, 2002).

Gender-based violence can be discussed from various platforms and angles depending on the type or form, as the concept is wide and detailed. However, it is worth noting that among the key issues that are taking Centre stage in the advocacy arena today is the fight against gender-based violence, as different players are coming up with

various response strategies to the issue. As the fight continues to accelerate, society continues to understand what gender-based violence is and why it is important to fight it (Decker *et al.*, 2022).

Gender-based violence as a societal phenomenon crosscuts all cultural and socio-economic classes in the world. GBV is a sign that points towards the imbalanced nature of gender-related issues and rights, which spans geographical boundaries, culture, religion, and race, eventually touching every community. In most cases, gender-based violence has been condoned by various customs that exist in society and reinforced by institutions. In this light, therefore, there are various discussions that tend to define gender-based violence but eventually point towards the same thing (Medie, 2019).

According to the United Nations (2009) report, Gender violence is defined as an act directed at an individual based on his or her sex, usually intended to reinforce related hierarchies and perpetuate inequalities. In this case, the perpetrator tends to have more control privileges than the victim, as dictated by some variables that favor the perpetrator. Furthermore, gender-based violence describes and includes a continuum of violence, violations, and violent behaviors and attitudes on the basis of sex and gender and always intersects with other dimensions of inequalities, such as age, ethnicity, disability, and sexuality (Bondestam & Lundqvist, 2020).

Benjamin and Murchison (2004) alluded that Gender-based violence originates from various issues that result in imbalances between men and women in society. Furthermore, Baker (2007) says that women commonly experience GBV at various phases of the cycle. From the prenatal period, infancy, childhood, adolescence, and

reproductive age to old age in different forms. Incidents of gender-based violence have been noted in all ages because the perpetrators have acted inhumanly, causing this problem to prevail widely. It is further noted that many people have neglected their duties in regard to the protection of the weak within the family line or community (Baker, 2007).

Gender-based violence describes the specific type of violence that is linked to the gendered identity of being a woman or a man. Gender-based violence is a general term used to capture violence that occurs as a result of the normative role expectations associated with each gender, along with unequal power relationships between the two genders within the context of a specific society (Russo & Pirlott, 2006). Various societies place value on the male gender, and therefore, the relationship between male and female gender creates inequalities that have incidents of dominance and discrimination. The relationship between gender and violence is complex and advanced, demanding to be salvaged from the belief of lower social status (Etienne, 1995).

The different roles and behaviors of females and males, children and adults, are shaped and reinforced by societal gender norms. A 2009 World Health Organization report indicated that, in most societies, women are viewed as subordinate to men and have a lower social status, giving men leverage over and greater decision-making power than women. As a result, this leads to gender-based inequality forging a way and a platform upon which GBV thrives (World Health Organization, 2009). Gender equality is achieved when women and men, girls and boys, have equal rights, life prospects and opportunities, and the power to shape their own lives and contribute to society. Supporting the above definition, gender equality can only be realized when

men and women begin to determine and appreciate each other's human rights and share opportunities and duties objectively (Inglehart *et al.*, 2003).

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (2015) reports that the opposite of gender equality is gender inequality. In this case, unequal power relations and discrimination based on gender are the roots of gender-based violence. Furthermore, the agency goes ahead to elaborate gender-based violence as any harm or suffering that is perpetrated against a woman or girl, resulting in a negative impact on the physical, sexual, or psychological health, development, or identity of the person.

Okello and Hovil (2007) cited Care International (CI) which defines gender-based violence as any harm perpetrated against a person's will on the basis of gender and the socially ascribed differences between males and females. They purport that GBV includes physical, sexual, and psychological abuse of women and girls in the home, community and workplace. This factor of the socially ascribed differences in gender is the real cause of inequalities, even among siblings. Parents put more value on males in the family than females, contributing to more psychological torture of female children in the home.

Leaning on the trends of male domination in history, the male gender grows up with a negative notion about females being of lower value than them. Therefore, the difference gets rooted in the male gender, allowing them to dominate the female gender (Mannes, 2013). USAID supports the CI definition of gender-based violence as violence that is directed at an individual based on his or her biological sex, gender identity, or perceived adherence to socially defined norms of masculinity and

femininity. This includes physical, sexual, and psychological abuse, threats, coercion, arbitrary deprivation of liberty, and economic deprivation (USAID, 2015).

Expanding on the concept of masculinity and femininity Spence & Helmreich (1979) in their book opine that GBV is an old attitude of patriarchal persistence of men perpetrating violence towards women. Additionally, it fosters and encourages a background where men seek to control and abuse women. Gender-based violence describes acts that result in physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, just as the United Nations puts it.

According to the Institute of Development Studies (2017), Violence is done through physical force, and it results in both social and health problems. Violence can also be portrayed in various forms like hatred, crime, hate speech, terrorism, bomb blasts and many types of wars. Further, it can be felt in families, peer groups, and workplaces through sexual abuse and abuse of power. The activities of violence are done to individual people, a community, and group of people or even to a whole nation. Physical force is among the leading examples of violence, which bears both social and health problems have awful implications for women and girls.

Most of the women and girls have gone through considerable tension and at times scared as a result of violence but chose to remain silent in many of such occasions. According to McNeely and Mann (1987), violence is an exercise or an instance of force, usually affecting or intended to inflict injuries or destruction. Comparing the seriousness of human-to-human violence, they opine that violence can be that powerful, untamed, or devastating force compared to the violence of the sea.

Gender violence in Kenya is predominantly physical, sexual and domestic violence

against females, but with a substantial number of male victims. Many gender-based violence victims in Kenya have been killed; some have their hands chopped off and burned alive with petrol (Kimuma & Djamba, 2008). These so many devastating cases of gender-based violence have nasty repercussions on women and girls who live both in the city and rural areas (Keesbury *et al.*, 2012). According to the World Report on Violence and Health (WRVH), violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual force against one act that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury (Krug *et al.*, 2002).

4.4.5 Forms of Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is perpetrated in several forms that can be described or defined by the details entailed in the act. Karam (2012) and United Nations Population Fund (2012), a mapping of faith-based responses to violence against women and girls in the Asia-Pacific region indicated that an extensive list of 34 forms of violence and abuse was included in the survey within which the types can be summarized into five categories: physical, psychological, sexual and reproductive, state and neglect. Within the category of physical violence, domestic violence and physical abuse were the most common forms of violence, resonating with Kajal's (2012) findings.

European Institute for Gender Equality noted that while women face violence and discrimination based on gender, some women experience multiple forms of violence relating to the environment they are in (Hubert & Stratigaki, 2011). A report by the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention brings into perspective the following types of violence: stalking, forced marriage, sexual violence, including rape, forced abortion and sterilization, and aiding or abetting and attempting (Council of Europe, 2012). Gender Equality Observatory of Latin America and the Caribbean Annual Report

(2014) observed the following as forms of violence; rape, sexual abuse, torture, trafficking of persons, forced prostitution, and kidnapping, as well as in education institutions.

4.4.5.1 Physical Abuse

Physical violence is a form of GBV in which the perpetrator tends to use excessive force and inflict pain or hurt the victim by kicking, slapping, shoving, burning and hitting, just to mention a few (Hadi, 2017). Physical abuse can take many forms: serious and minor assaults, deprivation of liberty, and manslaughter (Rivas-Rivero & Bonilla-Algovia, 2022). Typically, this form of GBV is perpetrated in homes, schools and the workplace. In the case of interpersonal violence, numerous physical and marital health effects may be experienced, ranging from visible lesions and severe physical injuries to long-term effects such as poor health status and poor quality of life. Additionally, it may include loss of social network and diminished ability to work (Rutherford *et al.*, 2007).

Most of the health problems that women have persistently gone through have emanated from physical violence. Most of the time, women have suffered at the hands of men who physically abuse them. Eventually, the perpetrators end up dominating them even sexually, leaving them with no room for making their own choices on what is sexually acceptable and what is not. For instance, a woman who has undergone a fair share of physical abuse will not be in a position to suggest the use of a condom in case of sexual intercourse (Rivara *et al.*, 2019). Such experiences not only leave them in danger of contracting sexually transmitted diseases but leave them with unwanted pregnancies as well (Gunila, 2005). Apart from the health-related dangers, the safety of the victims involved in acts such as kicking, biting, slapping, beating, or even

strangling is always at risk as they have to pretend that it is intentionally inflicted injury or often disguised as an accident. Most of the women who have experienced the above acts of violence are warned not to discuss it with other people (Sikweyiya & Jewkes, 2011).

Physical violence mostly against women and girls occurs in all socioeconomic classes; there is strong evidence that wife abuse is more common in families with low-income and unemployed men (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986). In 9 of 11 cases, comparison studies showed that family income was found to be a consistent risk factor for wife assault. Most of the perpetrators of this violence are men who are drug abusers and alcoholic addicts who threaten their partners with murder and harsh, violent language (Watson, 2016). Evidence presented by the National Violence Against Women survey indicates that 41.5% of female victims and 19.9% of male victims reported being physically injured by domestic violence (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2014).

4.4.5.2 Emotional Abuse

As another form of GBV, emotional abuse has been on the rise, as evidence from most research indicated (Loring, 1994; Rees *et al.*, 2011 & Ameli *et al.*, 2017). Emotional abuse may include the following: - rejecting, degrading/devaluing, terrorizing, isolating, corrupting, exploiting, denying essential stimulation, emotional responsiveness or availability and unreliable or inconsistent parenting (Brassard *et al.*, 1993). After the victim undergoes emotional abuse, it manifests itself into a range of negative psychological features, which triggers, to a large extent, the way the person

responds to most of the issues in life. Research has discovered that emotional abuse predicts more depression and anxiety than other forms of abuse (Bryant *et al.*, 2017).

Victims of emotional violence tend to hide their disappointments in life, but the effects may spill over after sometimes as a result of changes in an individual's health or behavior. In their earlier stages of struggling with the issue, victims tend to keep everything to themselves without knowing that they are trying to create a killer aspect in their lives. Most of the victims have come out late to seek help in reaction to what is happening in their lives as a result of emotional abuse (Zavala & Guadalupe-Diaz, 2018). However, in the case of those individual who are stronger emotionally, this kind of abuse only makes them stronger and wiser as they tend to assume the occurrences as they lean on the past experiences of their lives in case they have faced the same and overcame (Elliot-Wright, 2017).

Some victims of emotional abuse may be seen as self-centered, impatient, unreasonable, insensitive, and unforgiving, and they lack empathy and are jealous, suspicious, and withholding emotional abuse, distinct from physical violence (melding, shoving, cornering, braking, and throwing, etc.) and repulsive (Waller *et al.*, 2007). In addition, they may seem to have a speech or behavior derogating, controlling, punishing, or manipulating; withholding love, communication, support, or money are indirect methods of controlling and maintaining power (Webster, 1991).

Verbal abuse is the most common form of emotional abuse, but it is often unrecognized because it may be subtle and insidious. It may be said in a loving, quiet voice or be indirect or even concealed as a joke, whether disguised as play sarcasm or teasing that is hurtful and abusive (Grandey *et al.*, 2007). Another characteristic of emotional abuse is that it can be implied with sarcasm, irony, or mumbling and can be

communicated through body language, rolling eyes, grimaces, tone of voice, disgusted looks, shrugging shoulders, slamming doors, banging dishes, stonewalling, cold shoulders (Acierno *et al.*, 2010).

4.4.5.3 Sexual Abuse

Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (2014) affirms that sexual violence is defined as a sexual act committed against someone without that person freely giving consent and places it into two major acts of this category of violence rape and sexual assault. World Health Organization (2014) observes that sexual violence is any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim in any setting including but not limited to home or work. As a result of sexual abuse mostly directed at women, most women have been left in a disturbing state. Ginger (2013) stated that the effects of sexual violence during and post-conflict are devastating. The consequences of rape and other forms of sexual violence often linger long after the conflict has ended.

According to Miller (2013), gender-based violence puts women's health at an extremely high risk for both physical and psychological problems. Global Public Health confirms that reproductive health outcomes alone include trauma to reproductive organs, including fistula. Further, it leads to the acquisition of sexually transmitted infections disease, including HIV and unwanted pregnancies, which most end up in abortion. Acts associated with sexual abuse have seen international bodies, human rights activists, and other volunteers call for dialogue on the issue, which is somehow perceived as life-threatening. They opine that women must be involved in decision-making related to conflicts, including peace talks (Freedman, 2011).

Sexual Violence Research Centre (2010) indicates that sexual violence affects people of all genders, ages, races, religions, income abilities, professions, ethnicities, and sexual orientations. Furthermore, National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS) affirms that women experience significantly more partner violence than men do; statistically, 5% of surveyed women, compared with 8% of surveyed men, said they were raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, cohabiting partners, or date in their lifetime, 1.5% of the surveyed women and 0.9% of surveyed men said they were raped and or physically assaulted by such perpetrators in the previous twelve months.

National World Violence Research Centre (2010) affirms that evidence suggests that male and female survivors of sexual violence may experience similar mental health, behavioral and social consequences. Girls and women bear the overwhelming burden of injury and disease from sexual violence because they are vulnerable to a number of issues that lead to GBV. Mbuthia (2016) noted that one in three girls who were raped became pregnant as a result. She further states that out of all the cases reported, only 3% of sexually abused girls received professional help.

4.4.5.4 Psychological Abuse

Psychological abuse is a type of violence that is quite common in today's society, though very silent. Hinies and Saudino (2003) argue that approximately 80% - 90% of individuals report at least one instance of psychological abuse (e.g., belittling, monitoring whereabouts and threats to cause fear) within the past 6 months of their romantic relationship, yet it may not be perceived as serious or harmful. In yet another study, it was established that psychological abuse has serious negative effects, which

include depression, anxiety and other forms of psychological distress and trauma (Cooker *et al.*, 2002).

Tolman *et al.* (1991) argue that psychological abuse was more strongly associated with psychological problems for female victims than threats or actual physical abuse. Furthermore, Folling and Stad (2011) affirm that psychological abuse is a multidimensional term with varying definitions. However, researchers agreed that psychological abuse involves dominating and isolating behaviors, verbal and emotional components (such as criticisms, attacking, looks/sexuality, and public embarrassment) and threats as well as intimidation (O'Hagan, 1995).

4.4.5.5 Technology-Facilitated Abuse

As technology advances, it comes with a package that contains both the good and the ugly, as exemplified by technology-facilitated abuse. Technology-facilitated abuse is another form of gender-based violence, technological devices such as cell phones and internet-related devices in which the perpetrators target people of the opposite sex with the aim of harm or taking advantage (Dragiewicz *et al.*, 2018). The rapid spread of internet and mobile technologies has facilitated growth and development worldwide. Speaking on technology and GBV nexus, ICRW (2019) argues that the ubiquity of digital technologies has raised new human rights and safety concerns on a scale that matches the advancement of technology in society.

The connection or relationship between the victim/survivor and the perpetrator informs technology-facilitated GBV. ICRW (2018) further states that the perpetrator's motivations refer to the emotional, psychological, functional, or ideological drivers behind the perpetrator's behavior. Still, ICRW continues to note that the perpetrator's strategy includes stalking, defamation, bullying, sexual harassment, exploitation and

hate speech. Research indicates that unlike physical violence, which requires people to be in the same place, technology-facilitated violence can happen across geographical locations, with abusers being able to access their victims even when they are not in close physical proximity (Dunn, 2020).

Zweig *et al.* (2013) insist that cyber partner abuse is a newly-researched area that focuses on abusive behaviors such as threats and verbal aggression in the realm of electronic communication. Cyber partner abuse is the technology, including text messages, social media and other electronics, to perpetrate psychological abuse against one's partner. Posey *et al.* (2011) attempted to measure cyber abuse with their electronic victimization and anticipated a distress scale. The results assessed four types of electronic aggression: hostility, humiliation, exclusion, and intrusiveness.

Barrajoet *al.* (2015) created the Cyber Dating Abuse Questionnaire (CDAQ) in an attempt to measure cyber partner abuse in couples comprehensively. Factors analysis separated abusive behaviors into two main categories: direct aggression (action intended to harm their partner directly, such as verbal abuse) and monitoring control (i.e., using passwords to monitor activities). The CDAQ included 20 items of problematic dating behavior that make up these two categories. Some other examples included controlling updates on social networks, pretending to be another person, using new technologies to test a partner, and spreading rumors, gossip, and/or jokes through new technologies with the intention of ridiculing (Borrajoet *al.* (2015). Hayden Smith (2010) affirmed that the crime prosecution service said the type of abuse covered by the new offense could include a partner of threats, humiliation, and intimidation or stopping someone from socializing, controlling their social media accounts, surveillance through apps and dictating what they wear.

4.4.5.6 Economical Abuse

United Nations (2013) observes that economic violence is an act of control and monitoring of the behavior of an individual in terms of the usage and distribution of money and the constant threat of denying economic resources. Angela (2014) asserted that economic abuse is defined as controlling a woman's ability to acquire, use, and maintain economic resources. Economic abuse is as common in abusive relationships as physical, sexual, and emotional abuse is. During the research phase of Battered Women's Support Service (BWSS) economic empowerment strategies for women recognizing and addressing the effects of financial abuse, 100% of the participants reported experiencing emotional abuse by their partners, 70% had been physically assaulted, 80% had experienced sexual abuse by their partners and 100% had experienced economic abuse.

Economic abuse violence is not only influenced by partner battering, but women have also reported that their economic dependency is also reinforced by societal and systemic gender discrimination that limits or denies women the opportunities to have access to participate in the labor market and earn equal wages as their male counterparts. Olufunmilayo (2008) postulates that economic violence is experienced by women and describes its consequences on health and development. Economic violence experienced included limited access to funds and credit, controlling access to health care, employment, and education, including agriculture resources excluded from financial decision-making, and discriminatory traditional law on inheritance property rights and use of communal land.

UNICEF (2000) states economic abuse include acts such as refusing to contribute financially, denial food and basic needs, preventing women from commencing or

finishing education or from obtaining informal or formal employment and controlling access to health care and agricultural resources UNIFEM (1999) asserts that although women may live comfortably and their children like in luxury, they have no control over monies in the family or on decisions on how it should be spent. The women receive less money as the abuse continues. Men may use the fact that they have more money to dominate women are view of demographic health.

Surveys in different regions showed that sub-Saharan Africa, compared with other regions, had the highest percentage of husbands making decisions alone on daily household expenditure. According to UNICEF (2007), Estimated wage differentials and participation in the labor force show that women's estimated income is about 30% of the men's in countries of the Middle East and North Africa, 40% in Latin America, and Asia 50% in sub-Saharan Africa, and 60% in East Asia and the industrialized countries. WHO (2015) affirms that the time women spend on these activities directly impacts the type of paid work they can access: Women are clustered in part-time, precarious, and low-paid work and earn less than men. The global gender pay gap stands at 24% of women belonging to ethnic minorities and migrants. Litman *et al.* (2020) supports the argument saying women face even more discrimination when it comes to the type of work they can access and how much they are paid.

There is need for more equitable economic chances in all sections of work place for women as lack of this is among the factors that promote such kind of abuse. Susanne (2010) observed that developed countries substantiate the possibility for their economic expectations and promote the aspect of gender opportunities in their business policies. According to Wittenberg-Cox (2010), developed nations aim at building gender balanced business. For instance, he says that in the United States,

women make 80% of consumer goods purchasing decisions; in Canada, women start 70% of new small businesses. Furthermore, he says UK women will own 60% of all personal wealth by 2025.

World Bank Group (1994) argued that worldwide experience clearly shows that supporting a stronger role for women contributes to economic growth; it improves child survival and overall family health and reduces fertility, thus helping to slow population growth rates. This implies that investing in women is central to sustainable development, and yet despite these known returns, women still face many barriers to contributing to and benefiting from development. Klassen (2002) argues that the barriers begin with comparatively low investment in female education and health, continue with restricted access to services and assets, and are made worse by legal and regulatory constraints on women's opportunities.

Crossman (2017) affirms that tensions and conflicts arise when resources, status, and power are unevenly distributed between social groups and that these conflicts become engines for social change. Conflict theorists such as Coser *et al.* (1957) argue that conflicts are inevitable and valuable aspects of all human association because conflict is part of correcting inequities and problems. Straus (2007) expands further, saying that what is harmful is not the conflict itself but the use of coercion, including force and violence, as a tactic for resolving conflicts.

4.4.6 Causes of Gender-Based Violence

Sanjel (2013) opines that GBV is caused by various issues which may vary from one society to another based on geographical or cultural factors. Violence against women and girls arises from a mixture of individual, biological and psychological characteristics. Other factors are social, economic, political environment and cultural

attitudes. Traditional and cultural norms play a great role where women are suppressed and support patriarchy. Kunhiyop (2008) states that in Most African communities, demonstration of power and control over women is common and almost found in every African society. In order to prove this and to uphold his image as the “lion” in the family, a man will not permit any insubordination by his wife or children and resorts to physical and verbal violence to assert his control over them.

Koss *et al.* (2003) observe that the term “gender-based” is used because gender roles and status in society shape such violence. Gender-based violence against women does not encompass every violent act a woman may happen to experience (being threatened by a weapon during a robbery, for example). A complex mix of gender-related cultural values, beliefs, norms, and social institutions implicitly and even explicitly have supported intimate partner violence and provided little resource for its victims.

Glover *et al.* (2018) reiterate that in African societies, men always react to women harshly and intimidatingly to prove themselves as male figures in the family. Galambos *et al.* (1986) referred to this demonstration of power towards women and girls as traditional attitudes towards women and girls. Contrary to this, some African feminists blame women themselves, as well as men, for not doing enough to end traditional attitudes that perpetuate violence against women (Foerstel, 2006). Research further indicated that such attitudes might be managed or may persist because some of these attitudes have been practiced until they have become part of society's norms (Nayan, 2013)

Once norms have been established in a given society, they are difficult to eliminate and forget. In any given society or community, norms are more or less the same as

cultural traits that are carried on from one generation to another, hence, becoming hard to change (Hall, 2016). It is widely understood that gender-based violence, be it in the form of isolated acts or systematic patterns of violence, is not caused by any single factor. Rather, it is a combination of several factors that increase the risk of a man committing violence and the risk of a woman experiencing violence (Koppa& Duffy, 2020). Some of those risks are discussed below.

4.4.6.1 Ecological and Socialization

United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (2015) notes that the ecological model underscores the need to develop strategies for reducing and/or eliminating risk through broad-based prevention programming. Therefore, it is critical to develop an understanding of the complex interplay of biological, psychological, social, cultural, economic and political factors that increase women's and girl's likelihood of experiencing violence as well as men's likelihood of perpetrating violence. The ecological model was introduced as a framework for understanding some of the key factors that contribute to women and girls' risk of intimate partner violence. An ecological approach to abuse conceptualizes violence as a multifaceted phenomenon grounded in the interplay among personal, situational and socio-cultural factors (Rawsthorne, 2013).

ER services (2020) affirm that multiple influences on a specific health behavior include behavioral change, behavior change communication, social change, and social mobilization www.healthy.people.gov/2010/advisory.html. This image is significant to this study because it explicitly shows what is involved in society and the way it communicates and relates. ER services (2020) continue to explain that behaviors are determined by an individual's relationships and the environment in which they live.

The figure below portrays the socio-ecological factors conceptual model.

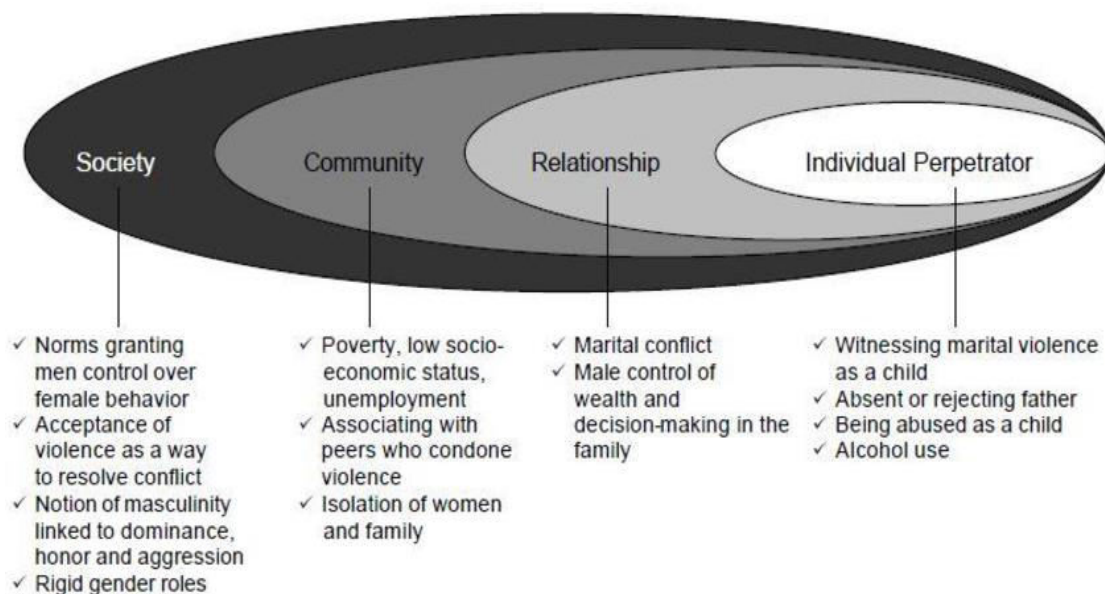


Figure 4.3: A flip chart with ecological model factors associated with gender-based violence.

Source: Banda (2019)

4.4.6.1.1 Individual level factors

The first level identifies biological and personal history factors that increase the likelihood of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence. Some of these factors are age, education, income, substance use, or history of abuse. Prevention strategies at this level promote attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors that prevent violence. Specific approaches may include conflict resolution and life skills training, social-emotional learning, safe dating, and healthy relationship skill programs (Cooper *et al.*, 2013).

This level has factors like marital conflict, witnessing marital male control of wealth, witnessing violence as a child, decision-making in the family, being abused as a child, the notion of masculinity, and alcohol abuse. All these level factors increase violence on the individual level. For example, alcohol abuse and excessive drinking have been established as a powerful risk factor for causing partner violence perpetration by men

(Feder&Howarth, 2014). Furthermore, a woman's odds of experiencing violence go up dramatically if her partner abuses alcohol. Alcohol abuse in Vihiga County is listed among the causes of gender-based violence (Kishor & Johnson, 2004). The perpetrators take alcohol throughout the day, and when they come to the house, they demand to eat food, which the wife has struggled alone to get, and this results in violence. It is surprising that even when women's characteristics, partner's characteristics, household factors, differences between partners in age and education, and community-level factors have been adjusted, women still experience gender-based violence because of alcohol abuse and drug abuse (Phorano *et al.*, 2005). On the individual level, it is important to deal with alcohol drinkers one-on-one through counseling. These factors are very significant here because when we want to reduce gender-based violence, we can begin by starting to handle these factors on the individual level in order to come up with fewer alcohol abusers. In this case, the same can also be done to those other level factors in this category, and many cases of violence can be reduced (Pitpitan *et al.*, 2013).

However, research indicates that among individual-level factors, excessive drinking has emerged as a compelling risk factor for partner violence perpetration by men. Population-based surveys from Cambodia, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Haiti, India, Nicaragua, Peru, and Zambia, among others, uniformly suggest that a woman's odds of experiencing violence go up dramatically if her partner abuses alcohol (Sharma, 2010 & Rondon, 2014). Indeed, the association between men's consumption of any alcohol and women's reports of abuse remains strong even after adjusting for a large range of women's characteristics, partner characteristics, household factors,

differences between partners in age and education, and community-level factors (Peacock & Barker, 2014).

The UN (2015) Women's Framework for Action to Prevent Violence against Women highlights risk factors for perpetration, including mental health problems and various social factors known to be risks for mental health difficulties. The framework cites depression, low life satisfaction, individual experiences or witness of violence, alcohol use, marital discord and low social connectedness as potential contributors to the perpetration of violence. The framework refers to growing evidence that mental health treatment for both perpetrators and victims of violence may not only help prevent violence but also stem the flow of re-victimisation. Additionally, poor mental health is a risk for both victimization and perpetration, suggesting the importance of integrating strategies to prevent violence against women into programs to prevent and respond to poor mental health. This position to integrate GBV response and prevention, in line with mental health services, echoed the previously published WHO Global Status Report on Violence Prevention (Asgary *et al.*, 2013).

4.4.6.1.2 Relationship-Level Factors.

Under the relationship level factors, Heise (1998), Tsui *et al.* (1999), and Jewkes (2002) observed that the burdens of poverty may increase relationship discord or gendered stress, frustration, and sense of inadequacy in some men because of their inability to live up to their culturally defined role of provider. The control of wealth and decision-making in many families results from culturally defined roles that have remained rigid in many males. Any married man who cannot command the above will resort to violence to prove his masculinity. Krug *et al.* (2002) stated that women report a remarkably consistent set of triggers for instances of partner violence,

including female disobedience, questioning the man about money or girlfriends, issues around sex or suspected infidelity, arguments over drinking, and issues around children or in-laws. According to them, men want to maintain their manhood culturally and they do not want to be questioned on what they do. Further, they claim that the cultural norms allow them to have power over women. In some communities where egalitarian relationships are practiced, men and women play equal roles in decision-making. Here, lower rates of relationship conflict and violence are expected. Many women from such communities have been reported to feel valued and respected by men.

Heise (2012) observed that in partnerships where women concede to men the right to make decisions, levels of partner violence are lower than when men dominate decisions, and women disagree with this paradigm. What appears to be most dangerous is when women assert decision-making authority and men disagree or when men maintain strong marital control and women protest. A healthy decision-making marital relationship should consider both genders to have a part to play instead of men dominating the whole process. Cultural norms should be reduced so that in major decision-making like buying a house, buying land, and beginning a business, egalitarian relationships should be applied. This is where equality of genders is shared amicably and dominance is reduced.

Inconsistency form of relative status increases the risk of violence; for example, age difference, educational difference and employment status cause gender-based violence (Haise, 1985). In some relationships where a woman is employed and the man is not, the risk of going through violence is higher. This violence is of two kinds: the woman expects the man to provide as the head of the family, and the man's

inability to get a job causes violence in the family (Scambor *et al.*, 2014). Secondly, the man, with the support of his cultural norms, demands to dominate the woman so that the woman surrenders her salary totally on the table for the two to distribute and designate to various uses.

The above will obviously cause gender-based violence on either side than when both men and women are employed, where the likelihood of experiencing GBV will be lower in such a setting (Jewkes, 2002). Relationship-level factors are so significant to this research study because once these factors are discovered and considered carefully and then applied to any relationship, the risk of men or women becoming victims of violence will be lower (Oladipo *et al.*, 2011).

4.4.6.1.3 Community-Level Factors

Community-level factors include poverty, low social economics status, unemployment, associating with peers who condone violence and isolation of women and family. According to Gielen *et al.* (1995), Miles-Doan (1998), Gage (2005), Caetano *et al.* (2000), Pearman *et al.* (2003) observed that living in a disadvantaged or poor community appears to increase women's risk of abuse, over and above any individual-level factors. Women who come from such communities are the breadwinner for the family members. In such a setting, men take advantage of their unemployment to commit violence against their wives. For example, they expect women to provide their children with food, water, firewood, and education.

4.4.6.1.4 Societal-Level of Risk Factors

This is the fourth level and it looks at the broad societal factors that help create environment where violence is encouraged or inhabited. To a very large extent, the society has contributed in a way either directly or indirectly to flourishing of GBV

given that there are prevailing societal standards that are acceptable regardless of the effects (Ambrosetti *et al.*, 2013). These factors include social and cultural norms that support violence as an acceptable way to resolve conflicts. Basically, Men who come from such societies are violent sanctioned because culture or society grants the right to do so. They claim that their culture allows them to dominate women and therefore women have to live by the prevailing circumstance as the culture dictates (Cooper *et al.*, 2013).

Other societal factors that may promote GBV include health, economical, educational and social policies that help to maintain economic or social inequalities between groups in the society. Additionally, a factor like masculinity notion of dominating women in the society increases the chances of women going through GBV (Ibid). Finally, rigid roles in the society that increase the probability of women experiencing gender-based violence as they cannot penetrate some areas that are within their rights. If loosened, such rigid roles can allow women to have enough space to exercise their rights and equity in the society. Therefore, understanding these societal-related factors is ideal in the fight against GBV (Haise, 1985).

Van Horn (1979) stated that feminist scholars have long contended that high levels of violence against women in intimate relationships derive in part from the laws, social arrangements, and patriarchal institutions that systematically subordinate women to men. Kidwai (2001) further expounds that women's lack of power translates into social norms that condone, or at the very least, tolerate violence against female partners and make it difficult, if not impossible, for women to leave abusive relationships.

4.4.6.2 Microsystems factor

Across the world, distinct roles and behavioral involvements lead to differences between men and women, which later favor one group. Such inequalities in social, economic, and political status, education, and relationships are deeply felt between men and women. The less privileged groups will be rendered to domination and exploitation by the more powerful groups. This kind of domination and exploitation deprives the lesser groups of their social needs like education, health, security, and economic accessibility (Sabbah *et al.*, 2017).

4.4.6.3 Ecosystems factor

The ecosystems factor refers to the social structures both formal and informal. The ecological framework is based on evidence that no single factor can explain why some people or groups are at higher risk of interpersonal violence while others are more protected from it. This framework views interpersonal violence as the outcome of interaction among many factors at four levels - the individual, the relationship, the community and the societal. Violence against women, according to Lori Heise (1998), is an ecological approach to abuse that conceptualizes violence as a multifaceted phenomenon grounded in the interplay among personal, situational, and sociocultural factors.

Robert (2007) states that female genital mutilation, Parental employment, income, and setting affect child development outcomes. For example, low-income parents involved in work-based antipoverty programs are likely to experience frequent gender-based violence. In typical families with high rates of gender-based violence and poverty, local illicit drug trade like bang and illicit brews like chang'aa are on the rise.

4.4.6.4 Patriarchy and Power

Walby (1989) discusses the operationalization of the concept of patriarchy; she states that “patriarchy is composed of six structures: the patriarchal mode of production, patriarchal relations in paid work, patriarchal relations in the state, male violence, patriarchal relations in sexuality and patriarchal relations in cultural institutions, such as religion, the media and education”. Patriarchy is not derived from capitalism, although these six structures relate to it; it both pre-dates and post-dates capitalism. Sultana *et al.* (2012) postulates that Patriarchy tends to be deployed as an overreaching concept to signify a power difference between men and women in which women are the victims and men are the unnamed perpetrators of gendered wrongs. Jones (2013) describes patriarchy from the Latin word which means the rule of the father. In popular discussions of the time, it is more often used to the rule of men over women. More broadly, it refers to the web of economic, political, social, and religious regulations that enforces the domination of men by women throughout the ages. The patriarchal systems lead to discrimination and oppression of women and sometimes abuse.

The concept of patriarchal masculinity affects women in many nations; UN WOMEN (2015) confirmed that the masculine as superior to the feminine is one of the foundations of gender inequality, or patriarchy. The main values of patriarchal society were the perpetuation of the family and the clan and the protection of property. In a patriarchal family structure, the daughter depends on her father or brother, and the wife becomes totally dependent on her husband. The wife’s primary task in life is to bear children, and her greatest honor is motherhood. Patriarchy emphasizes the superiority over femininity and authority of men over women. Patriarchy is a system

of social stratification and differentiation on the basis of sex which provides material advantages to males while simultaneously placing severe constraints on the roles and activities of females.

System Gender Oppression argues that power control and privilege in patriarchal societies are simply vested in males. Violence against women maintains the structures of gender oppression. It is a system for maintaining class, gender, and race - relying on crude forms of oppression, like violence and inequalities. El-Khoury *et al.* (2004) affirm that in patriarchal cultures, sexism and misogyny determine relations of power between men and women, women and women, and men and men that enshrine inequality and support the status quo. Walby of Pambazuka News agrees that patriarchy is a system of social structure in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women. Patriarchy means the rule by the male head of a social family. This kind of system in the Tiriki sub-tribe gives men full authority to dominate and suppress women's rights.

4.4.6.5 Culture and Gender-Based Violence

Culture defines the spaces within which power is expressed, where gender-based violence is negotiated and gender roles are re-defined. Cultural norms are highly influential in shaping individual behavior, including the use of violence. Different cultural and social norms support different types of violence. WHO, Violence Prevention the Evidence, (2009) affirmed that traditional beliefs that men have a right to control or discipline women through physical means make women vulnerable to violence. They further concurred that some traditions do not value female children and a woman's freedom should be restricted.

Cultural contexts are critical to the analysis of gender-based violence and are always applicable since everyone has a culture. Culture is often responsible for how the problems of violence against both women and men are viewed and addressed. For example, believing that women from a particular culture are passive and do not seek help or speak out about violence shames the family or the tribe. According to WHO (2009), culture and social norms are highly influential in shaping individual behavior, including the use of violence. These norms offer social standards of appropriate and inappropriate behavior.

Changing cultural and social norms that support violence is vital to curb gender-based violence. Different cultural and social norms support different types of violence. Traditional beliefs that men have a right to control or discipline women through physical means make women vulnerable to violence by intimate partners and place girls at risk of sexual abuse. Equally, cultural acceptance of violence, including sexual violence, as a private affair hinders outside intervention and prevents those affected from speaking out and gaining support (WHO,2009).

The broad set of cultural values and beliefs, like male supremacy and the notion of masculinity, are linked to dominance, toughness and honor. Microsystem highlights the relationship between the forms of gender-based violence, youth experience, and the marginalized and deprived habitats. Oduro (2011) says that this violence is linked to the ways in which young men use violence as vehicles of revenge and retribution, a desire for respect, control over female sexuality, and, ultimately, the assertion of collective notions of masculinity.

4.4.7 Effects of Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence results in a number of effects that affect both the victim and the perpetrator. The effects range from mild to profound depending on the type of violence and the environmental context. However, the effects of gender-based violence may not only affect the parties involved but may have a spillover effect on the community and society at large. Discussed hereunder are some of the effects of GBV on individuals, communities, and society at large.

4.4.7.1 Physical and Health-Related Effects

Individuals who experience gender-based violence may suffer physically in a number of ways. Studies indicate that most of the victims of gender-based violence have reported various physical and health-related effects (Heise *et al.*, 2002). For instance, victims of gender-based violence suffer from immediate injuries that they sustain during the violence process, such as cuts, bruises, fractures, internal injuries, and sprains. The extent of the injuries depends on the nature and intensity of the violence, which most of the time leads to a medical emergency, stitches and surgery for victims (Acosta, 2020). Cases of physical assault reported in most cases indicate that victims suffer long-term effects that eventually alter their way of life. For example, a victim who has lost her body, like an eye or arm, fractured a bone or sustained a back injury ends up living with such a condition for a very long period of time (Thapalas *et al.*, 2021). This implies that some of the victims may be totally disabled or disfigured, lowering their mobility and ability to work as they used to.

Additionally, victims of GBV suffer from various sexual and reproductive health complications. Statistics from medical facilities indicate that over 50% of the women who report cases of sexual violence are diagnosed with STDs (Grose *et al.*, 2021). In

most cases, the victims would be found to have contracted diseases like syphilis, Gonorrhoea, HIV, Chlamydia, Hepatitis and Genital Herpes. Medical examinations carried out on victims of GBV further indicate cases of reproductive system damage (Silverman *et al.*, 2007). Along the same line, GBV victims have reported unwanted pregnancies, which sometimes lead to abortion, hence affecting their health. Besides that, GBV may result in other short-term reproductive health like vaginal bleeding and pelvic pain to victims (Mosavel *et al.*, 2012).

Victims of GVB also suffer from psychological and emotional health. Survivors of GBV often experience some sought of traumatic disorders like flashbacks, hyperarousal, and nightmares, which lead to emotional and psychological disorientation. Such traumatic disorders may lead to anxiety, fear, lack of trust in others, and repeated feelings of vulnerability (Senjel, 2013). Furthermore, victims who have undergone GBV often feel guilty, live with shame, and always blame themselves and others for the grievances they went through, a fact that damages self-esteem and relationships with others. The combined effect of all these is that the victim struggles to settle the scores, leading to depression, feelings of sadness, and loss of interest in most of the things. The danger to this is that a victim may end up committing suicide as a way of solving the psychological and emotional oppression she undergoes if proper support services are not offered as required (Ali, 2018).

4.4.7.2 Stigmatization and Discrimination

Survivors of GBV often grapple with the aftermath events and fail to come to an agreement in most cases over what ensued. As a result of the feeling of shame and guilt, self-stigmatization is one of the common effects that encompass GBV victims. Some of the victims who have shared their experience of undergoing GBV seem to

point towards self-blame and shame (Bernett, 2016). Such instances of self-stigmatization lead to the isolation of the victims in efforts to find justification for what they always think about. One of the factors that worsen the aspect of self-stigmatization is the societal norms and cultural imbalances towards women which push them to less privileged zones where they cannot seek help. It is worth noting that society looks at women differently, blames them for most of the occurrences, and questions every move they make, reinforcing the belief that women cause what they go through themselves (Lemelson *et al.*, 2021).

However, stigma from society is far more damaging than self-stigmatization that the victims tend to undergo. Most victims of gender-based violence report cases of vile messages that are so harmful to society. Victims often go through humiliating incidences like being labeled and character deformation to the extent that some of the members of society isolate themselves from the survivors. Whereas society may understand well that most of the occurrences are not caused by the victims, the kind of treatment victims go through stigmatizes them and tends to give them a different perception of how the world is not fair to them, leading to discrimination (Bernett, 2016).

Although some of the women who undergo GBV may be already married, the effects of GBV on unmarried women are totally devastating as it causes a lack of trust and discrimination among the victims, who eventually end up living in denial. This happens because the image of the victim is always tainted. In some cultures, such as within, they are stigmatized to the extent that they are driven out of their homes and residences as they are seen as a curse to society, especially those who undergo sexual-related violence like rape (Banda, 2020). This implies that most of the victims would

prefer remaining mum in case they undergo rape without the knowledge of any other third party. Rather than helping the victims recover from GBV effects, stigmatization and discrimination of the victims have caused them to suffer more, remain in hiding, and commit suicide to avoid the shame that accompanies forms of GBV (Muluneh *et al.*, 2020).

4.4.7.3 Career and Economic Consequences

Gender-based violence consequences span, to a great extent, economic effects not only to the victims but to perpetrators too. For instance, it is difficult for an individual who has been exposed to GBV, which left her physically disfigured, to continue with the duties assigned to her by the employer, meaning that she has to lose her employment. Additionally, a lack of security concerns may lead a GBV victim to abandon work for personal safety (Joseph & Doon, 2021). Apart from leaving the job voluntarily, a victim of GBV may be terminated due to lack of productivity, which emanates from absenteeism in search of medical attention or justice, incompetence and isolation syndrome. This implies that the financial status of a victim is direly affected, leading to other effects resulting from such a state of financial desperation (Spark, 2011).

Another instance that victims of gender-based violence face is education and career disruption, especially for school-going girls. Gender-based violence on school-going girls has an impact on their perception of education and career depending on the nature of GBV she is exposed to. Cases of girls and college or university students dropping out of school due to gender-based violence have been reported. In most cases, sexual GBV leads to unwanted pregnancies, STDs, and loss of trust in teachers or lecturers, hence dropping out of school. Still, a student who is mistreated by his

lecturer or teacher may end up losing interest in the unit or subject being taught by the said tutor, hence affecting his or her performance. Eventually, such a student gets results that may not fit the career requirements (Dune & Humphreys).

Studies show that victims of gender-based violence incur many expenses and lose property in the process of treatment and pursuit of legal justice. The costs involved for some of the victims to get proper medical attention like going to ICU, treating side effects of aborted pregnancy, treating reproductive health complications and taking care of severe physical injuries caused. On the other hand, it takes a long period of time for a victim to get justice (Pierobom de Ávila *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, the process is so involved financially, as legal fees and other related costs may lead to financial derailment and burden. Despite the spending, it is not guaranteed that the victim will win the case and be compensated, as some end up losing the case after spending much money. One devastating effect of this is that most of the victims may fall into the hands of abled perpetrators financially. In order to get justice services, the victim may be forced to sell properties that render her bankrupt upon losing the case (Carvalho & Schia, 2011).

4.4.8 Gender-Based Violence during Biblical Times

The Bible has long suffered from labels of sexism, patriarchy, and misogyny. The Hebrew and Christian scriptures originated in a patriarchal society and perpetuated the androcentric (male dominance) traditions of their culture. Stanton (1995) summarizes the Bible as the origin of women's subjection. Gardener (2006) argues that the Bible requires everything of women and repays them with contempt and oppression. Stanton (1995) claimed that unvarnished texts speak for themselves about the degradation of women and that Deuteronomy emanates from the obscenest minds

of a barbarous age. Deuteronomy position on gender equality has the concept of absolute patriarchy, which refers to the sociocultural system of male dominance in regard to privileges and authority over women.

Meyers (2014) observed that patriarchy privileges designated males as the head of the house who hold legal power over their wives and daughters as part of their property. Terrazas-Carrillo *et al.* (2016) affirmed that on several occasions, women lost their freedom for one reason or another. It could be because a man had incurred debts and pledged the woman as a security, standing bail for him. Stol (2016) further noted that in times of need, daughters were sold as slaves.

However, it must be noted that the Bible is not totally patriarchal. It includes professional women: Deborah is a leader and judge (Judges 4), Miriam (Exodus 15:20) and Huldah (2 Kings 22:1) are prophetess. Women of the Ancient Near East were also powerful and demanded fear due to their seductive prowess, as evidenced by Tamar (Genesis 38). Exum (2015), while quoting Katherine Defferts-Schori, presiding Bishop of the Diocese of North Dakota USA, observed that the Jewish and Christian religions grew out of a world where men dominated women in all areas of life, Politics, religion, economy, and in the home. Everyone assumed it was true that women and slaves, and even children to some extent, were less than living and were simply possessions of men. This is called a patriarchal society, and many societies in the world still operate on the assumption of male superiority.

Sims (2016) stated that Biblical patriarch, in its simplest terms, refers to the gender roles and hierarchy of authority prescribed in a very literal reading of the Bible. In the bible, Sarah was to call Abraham “LORD” in the except of 1 Peter 3:1-6 in the same way, accept the authority of your husband, so that even if some of them do not obey

the word, they may be won without a word by their wives' conduct, when they see the purity and reverence. Do not adorn your selves outwardly by braiding your hair and by wearing gold ornaments or fine clothing; rather, let your adornment be the inner self with the lasting beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit that is very precious in God's sight. It was in this way long ago that the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves by accepting the authority of their husbands. Thus, Sarah obeyed Abraham and called him Lord.

Joyce (2009) affirmed that these dedicated wives (bow) down to the hardship of their husbands by laying aside their own ambitions to further the cause of the lord and his representation here on earth ...Sims (2016) stated that in the Biblical patriarch, the justifications for male headship began with the creation order as outlined in Genesis 2. Within that patriarchal authoritative construct, the interpretations insist that man was created first and that woman was created from man to be his helper, thereby solidifying the stance of male authority. The fundamentalist reading also takes this step further to justify female submission based on the concept of "helper" that women were created not to exist equally with their males but rather as subordinates. Strahm (2010) stated that man was seen as the standard form of humankind and as the image of God and there was the idea that woman was subservient to men as created being these things help consolidate the views that men are closer to God. The discrimination against women in the Roman Catholic church is based on a patriarchal understanding of the ritual uncleanness of women, the image of sexual allure, and the church has still to be overcome.

Fu *et al.* (2021) asserted that this challenge to patriarchy as an appropriate term for the Israelites does not mean that women and men were equal. Men still dominate for

example, in most community roles. Rather, it acknowledges that calling ancient Israel patriarchal prevents us from seeing the many ways that women contributed to family and community life. Moreover, because they focus on gender, it obscures other inequalities based on social class, race, ethnicity, sexuality, and age –in the world of the Hebrew Bible.

Scholarly opinion on the Old Testament and women portray a picture of a woman who is oppressed by patriarchy, which was a dominant element of Israel culture (Ademiluka, 2018). Primarily, the roles of women were childbearing and motherly responsibilities. Understanding the background of a woman in the Old Testament is key in pointing out the cases of gender-based violence. Speaking about GBV in the Old Testament, a few issues need to be put into consideration in order to bring home the context. first, it is imperative to note that, due to the nature of the Bible, which is deemed sacred and purely the word of God, spotting an incident that may seem contrary to the expectation is not easy as the reader's mind has already taken a position. Secondly, different schools of thought, which tend to bring divergent views on some biblical occurrences, may bring out the argument that one perspective is wrong as compared to another. Lastly, most of the individuals have taken the first account when they heard biblical interpretation from a given context given by their spiritual leader, rendering their mind monotonous to the first encounter. However, it is noble that scriptures be interpreted with an eye focusing on salient issues presented. Understanding the robustness of scriptures is important and an additional advantage to the sacredness of the text written therein.

For instance, the image of Abraham in the bible is presented as a hero, which is totally agreeable as the scriptures demonstrate. In reality, he is one man of his own kind, who

begins by obeying God's order of leaving his people to establish a generation of God's people after his own name. However, at a point, Abraham's actions demonstrate some aspects of GBV that can be contextualized. For instance, the case of Abraham, his wife Sarah, and Hagar from Genesis 16 presents the salient case of GBV, which can be termed as domestic violence and sexual violence. In this context, Sarah, after realizing that her days would not allow her to get a child with Abraham, calls him to craft a deal that involves their slave without her consent. In particular, Sarah advises Abraham to have an act of sexual intercourse, which would eventually lead to her getting pregnant, after which they chase her away when Sarah sees that Hagar despises her.

To clearly understand this, it is imperative to revisit the key concepts of GBV from the United Nations perspective which posits that "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 in private life." From this definition, two aspects of Hagar's treatment can be seen. The way Abraham and Sarah decide to use Hagar presents the first case, which can be termed as sexual harassment, given that she was not consulted. The coercion part implies that Hagar gave in because she was a slave to Abraham, so her life was under the mercy of her master. Even though Abraham did rape Sara, the way the whole ordeal was planned and executed points directly towards sexual gender-based violence. The second aspect, based on the definition given in this case, can be termed as emotional or mental violence, as the chasing away of Hagar against her wish tortured her mentally. Her encounters in the desert before the angel

of God appears to her imply a tired woman who was ready to throw away his child, despite the fact that the child was from Abraham, a man of God.

4.4.8.1 The Story of the Levite Concubine

In the book of Judges 19, the story of a Levite concubine is presented in a way that subtly depicts GBV. Readings from this book expose the story of a Levite who had taken to himself a concubine who ran away back to his father's house. The incident caused the Levite to go after her, spending some time at his father-in-law's place and later going back home in the late hours, causing them to seek refuge along the way. They found the home of one old man in the land of Gibeah, where they relaxed for some time before a wicked incident occurred. The incident involved some men from the tribe of Benjamin with the intention to rape the woman. Seeking to placate the incident, the old man, who was so much frightened, decided to hand over her daughter for the men to enjoy raping her instead of the Levite concubine. However, in the process, the Levite threw out the concubine, who was raped and found dead at dawn with her hand on the threshold (Reis, 2006).

The woman's death, though catalyzed by the Levite, who threw her out, causes a twist in the plot, eventually making things worse. The aftermath of the whole idea led to some tribes of Israel gathering and fighting the tribe of Benjamin. However, from this story, the rape, torture, and death of the Levite concubine depicts the state of lawlessness in the protection of women during the Judge's reign in Israel. Such an incident portrays a society where violence against women was prevalent, yet it was in the nation of God (Bembry, 2018).

4.4.8.2 Tamar and Amnon Rape Case

The story of Amnon and his step-sister Tamar in 2nd Samuel 13 depicts an image that is so heartbreaking, given the relationship that existed among the two, brother and sister, through step and the laws pertaining to the breaking of virginity in the land of Israel. Various scholars have opined from this story that different dimensions of GBV can be drawn depending on a reader's understanding. The storyline begins with Amnon looking at his sister with a lustful eye, leading him to a friend, Jonadab, who notices something is eating up Amnon. Upon inquiring about the incident, it becomes clear that Amnon is lusting after his half-sister, and Jonadab helps him craft a pretend that he is sick to lure Tamar into a trap. The plot of the craft is done in a way that only Tamar can attend to his brother Amnon, who pretends to be very sick. Upon getting into the room where Amnon is lying, he coerces his sister into a sexual act, which the text refers to it as rape (van Dijk-Hemmes, 1995).

From this story, the first element of GBV that is evident is the sexual violence through rape. In ancient Israel, the virginity of a woman was so much valued that the birth of Jesus Christ happened through Mary, a Virgin. This implies that there was a great violation of cultural and religious values through the act of rape that Amnon did to his half-sister (Keener, 1996). During those days, a virgin was deemed to be pure and received much honor, implying that Amnon had taken away precious elements from her sister. This occurrence escalated into the second element of violence to Tamar, emotional violence. Given that what she went through was humiliating and tainted her image in society, the text records that she was so distressed and hated herself. The aspect of being distressed and hating herself implies that she lived in denial as what was taken from her would never be given back even with the gold or silver that was

owned by their father, King David. Additionally, the fact that a stranger did not rape her, but rather, her own brother, left her even more distorted as she was disturbed emotionally as she had committed incest, a forbidden act in the laws of Israel. The most devastating effect of Tamar's plight is that she was forced to live with this incident, which left her forever in the house of Absalom, his brother, for the rest of her life (Peters, 2021).

Another element of GBV portrayed in this text points towards patriarchy, a dominant aspect in the land of Old Testament Israel. One notable facet from Amnon is that he was the eldest son of King David, implying that he enjoyed the power of firstborn but misused it against his step-sister, hence promoting patriarchy (Keener, 1996). The patriarchal nature of Amnon led her to violate Tamar's consent, which is fundamental to any sexual relationship. The fact that Tamar repeatedly pleaded with Amnon to reconsider his position, yet all was in vain, clearly portrays an element of male domination over women's rights in historical Israel. Finally, this story brings into perspective the theme of societal failure in recognizing and addressing the rights and needs associated with women. Tamar's appeal for justice failed because of the pervasive influence of patriarchal norms, which greatly promoted the perpetuation of GBV (van Dijk-Hemmes, 1995).

However, as much as the system failed to show justice to Tamar, a lesson is to be learned from the aftermath of the incident, which failed justice in cases of GBV might lead to. After reporting the incident, Absalom behaves like everything is okay but takes revenge for her sister two years later by killing Amnon. This displeased David but had little to do as he loved his son Absalom, who later turned against him and died trying to overthrow his father (Keener, 1996). Such an example of Absalom

revenging his sister is among the many cases of revenge that might not have been discovered or mentioned in society.

4.4.8.3 The Case of Dinah, Jacob's Daughter

Dinnah was Jacob's daughter, born from the house of Leah and was Jacob's first wife, as indicated in Genesis 34. Jacob was a polygamous man with four wives: Leah, Rachel, Zilpah, and Bilhah. Dinnah lived for a very long time in her grandfather's land, Haran's region, with her father, her mother, her aunt Rachel and the other two of Jacob's concubines. Occasionally, some family drama ensued which sometimes resulted from Jacob's affairs with the women around him. One day, a serious conflict arose between Jacob, Laban, and his sons (Genesis 30) over the livestock, which forced Jacob and his family to depart from Laban's land without his knowledge. In their adventures, a serious issue arose, where Shechem, who was the son of Hamor, by then the prince of the land, upon seeing Dinnah, was filled with lust and took her, eventually raping her (Capsi, 1985).

After learning of the incident that had taken place their sister, Simon and Levi, Dinah's blood sister, were totally displeased with Shechem to the extent that they killed him and other Shechemites. From this ordeal, the reason that leads to the killings points towards the two brothers considering the fact that their sister was taken as a whore by Shechem, a fact that really irritated them. Again, just like Tamar, in this case, her consent was violated, and the patriarchal element was revealed as women's rights and autonomy were violated. Additionally, the revenge taken by his brothers is an evident indication that GBV in society led to serious repercussions when the normal justice system failed due to patriarchal structures that favored men over women (Ramras-Rauch, 1990).

4.4.9 Linking Women Activists, Faith and the Fight against Gender-Based Violence

Activism and feminism have gained mileage in society in various issues affecting women and girls daily. The main role of women's activism is geared toward improving women's conditions and rights in society. The role encompasses a number of issues, such as equal pay, reproductive rights, ending violence against women, and promoting women's political and social representation. To achieve their goals, women activists often organize campaigns, demonstrations, and events to raise awareness about these issues and put pressure on decision-makers to make changes (Kaladelfos&Featherstone, 2014).

Feminism, on the other hand, is a broader movement that seeks to challenge and change patriarchal systems and structures that perpetuate gender-based discrimination and inequality. Feminists advocate for a wide range of issues that affect women, including those mentioned above, as well as issues such as addressing gender-based violence, improving access to education and healthcare, and promoting gender equality in all areas of life. While all feminists are women activists, not all women activists are necessarily feminists. Women activists may focus specifically on advocating for women's rights and equality. At the same time, feminists may have a broader perspective that encompasses a variety of social and political issues related to gender and equality (Harris, 2010).

Christian women activists and feminists have played a significant role in fighting gender-based violence by raising awareness about the issue, providing support for survivors, and advocating for policy changes. Their work has centered on working with churches and communities to educate and mobilize people to take action against

violence against women. This section, therefore, discusses the efforts by various women activists and feminists, inter alia, Ruth Graham, Gloria Steinem, and Dorothy Day, in their efforts to fight and curb gender-based violence in society (McKay, 2020).

4.4.9.1 Dorothy Day: The Peace and Nonviolence Activist

Dorothy Day, a staunch and faithful Roman Catholic believer, was a peace and nonviolence activist who strongly criticized war and militarism and believed that true peace could only be achieved through nonviolence. She actively protested against nuclear weapons and the Vietnam War, and her activism was informed by her Catholic faith and her belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every human being. In her work with the Catholic Worker Movement, Day emphasized the importance of personalism and the idea that every individual is unique and deserves dignity and respect. This personalism is reflected in the Movement's approach to helping the poor, which emphasizes providing direct aid to individuals in need and building relationships with them rather than simply providing them with material goods or services (Presley, 2014).

Day fought against gender-based violence through her writings and activism. She spoke out against the injustices faced by women and advocated for their rights and dignity. Through her work, she established houses of hospitality to provide support and shelter to women who were victims of domestic violence and abuse. Day also wrote articles and gave speeches on the issue, raising awareness and calling for social change. She saw the struggle for women's rights as an integral part of the larger movement for peace and justice (McKay *et al.*, 2009).

Throughout her life, Day faced opposition and criticism from some quarters, but she remained steadfast in her commitment to social justice and her belief in the power of nonviolence to bring about change. By doing this, she became known in various quarters and received several awards and honors for her work, including the Pacem in Terris Award and the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Dorothy Day's legacy continues to inspire and influence people worldwide who work to combat poverty, violence, and injustice. Her work and her writings continue to be widely read and studied, and many Catholic Workers today continue to follow her example of compassionate service to the poor (Boehrer, 2018).

4.4.9.2 Mother Teresa: Missionary for Charity Founder

Mother Teresa, also known as Saint Teresa of Calcutta, was an Albanian Catholic nun who devoted her life to serving the poor and sick, particularly in the slums of Calcutta, India. She is known for her compassion and selflessness, and her work has had a lasting impact on the lives of countless people. While Mother Teresa primarily focused on serving the poor and sick, she also worked to raise awareness about the issue of violence against women and advocated for their rights. She recognized that poverty, lack of education, and societal attitudes toward women contributed to violence against women, and she worked to address these underlying issues (Henry, 2003).

Mother Teresa founded the Missionaries of Charity, a Catholic congregation of nuns dedicated to serving the poor and sick, and also established a number of homes and shelters for women and children who were victims of violence. The purpose of the homes was to provide a safe and supportive environment for these women and children and also offer them education, training, and other resources to help them

rebuild their lives. Furthermore, Mother Teresa also spoke out against the practice of dowry and advocated for women's right to choose their own partners and educate themselves. Mother Teresa's work to combat violence against women was an extension of her broader mission to serve and empower the poor and marginalized. She believed in the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and her work to support women who were victims of violence was an important part of her efforts to promote peace and justice in the world (Prashad, 2012).

In addition to founding homes and shelters for women and children who were victims of violence, Mother Teresa also worked to raise awareness about the issue of violence against women and advocated for their rights through her speeches and interviews. She spoke out against the societal and cultural attitudes that perpetuated violence against women and called for a change in the way society viewed and treated women, especially in their roles in family, workplace, and general interactions with men in respective places (Jetter *et al.*, 1997).

In her efforts to fight gender-based violence, Mother Teresa also recognized the importance of education in preventing violence against women. She established schools and educational programs for women and girls to empower them with the knowledge and skills they needed to support themselves and their families. As a way forward, she believed that educating women and girls was an important step in breaking the cycle of poverty and violence and that it was essential to give women the opportunity to reach their full potential. Another critical issue that she advocated for was the rights of women to control their own bodies and make their own reproductive choices. She recognized that women's reproductive rights were closely linked to their

overall well-being and empowerment and spoke out against forced sterilization and other forms of reproductive coercion (Henry, 2003).

In addition, Mother Teresa also worked to support women who were abandoned or rejected by their families due to their pregnancies, helping them to have a safe delivery and providing them with the necessary care and support for both mother and child. Generally, Mother Teresa's work to combat violence against women was an important aspect of her broader mission to serve and empower the poor and marginalized. She believed that everyone deserved to be treated with dignity and respect, and her efforts to support women and girls who were victims of violence were an important part of her lifelong commitment to promoting peace and justice in the world (Prashad, 2012).

4.4.9.3 Malalai Joya: Activism through Politics

Malalai Joya is an Afghan activist and politician who has been a vocal advocate for the rights of women and girls in her country, including working to combat gender-based violence. As a Christian, her faith has paramountly influenced her activism. Coming from a society that has cultural norms that favor men over women, she has for a long time been vocal over such issues in Afghanistan and has advocated for the rights of women to live free from violence and discrimination. As a vocal critic of the traditional practices in Afghanistan, such as forced marriages and honor killings, which perpetuate violence against women, she has for some time been affected by the public who feel her efforts are against cultural and traditional bearings (Joya, 2011).

In response to the societal mishandling of gender-based violence victims, Joya has also been actively involved in the establishment of women's shelters that provide safe

spaces for women who are victims of violence and abuse and also provide them with legal and medical assistance. Still, she has, to some extent, lobbied for funds that end up helping victims to establish alternative ways to earn a living. Just like other activists, Joya has also been a strong advocate for women's education, as she believes that educating women and girls is essential in breaking the cycle of poverty and oppression, and empowering them to make their own choices in life (Das & Joya, 2022).

4.4.9.4 Margaret Sanger: Using Faith for Activism

Margaret Sanger was raised in a Catholic family, but she rejected many of the traditional teachings of the Catholic Church and developed her own belief system that incorporated her Christian faith with her activism for birth control and women's rights. Sanger believed that the Bible supported her cause, and she often quoted from scripture to support her arguments. Using the bible, she supported her belief that God created sex for procreation and pleasure, and that birth control was not a sin but a means to control the number of children in a family. She also believed that the Bible supported the idea of women's autonomy and that it was an important aspect of Christian faith. Sanger saw the Bible as a tool to empower women, and not as a means to subjugate them. She believed that the Bible upheld the idea of women's rights, and that it was her duty as a Christian woman to help other women achieve the same rights (Shone, 2019).

Sanger also saw her work as a way to help the poor. She believed that providing access to birth control was a way to alleviate the suffering of women who were forced to bear too many children and care for too many mouths to feed. She saw the poverty and suffering caused by overpopulation as a moral issue and believed that it was her

Christian duty to help alleviate it. Sanger believed that birth control was a way to reduce poverty, improve the health and well-being of women and children, and promote social and economic justice (Katzive, 2015).

4.4.9.5 Gloria Steinem

Gloria Steinem is an American lecturer, feminist, and activist who believes that violence is mostly directed at women due to their gender, which disadvantages them in some areas. Raised in a Jewish background, she used religious platforms to pass her message on gender-based violence. Her broader role in curbing gender-based violence is through her activism and advocacy for women's rights and gender equality (Duncan, 2023). By raising awareness about the issues facing women and working towards achieving equality for women, Steinem helped create a cultural shift that made it more acceptable to talk about and address issues of violence against women. Steinem's work also helped to create a space for women to speak out about their experiences with violence and abuse and to demand change. Her writings, speeches, and activism helped to empower women to speak out and demand change in different forms of violence, including domestic violence and sexual assault (Eisenman, 1996). Furthermore, Steinem's work helped to create a political and social environment that is more conducive to addressing and ending gender-based violence. Her activism and advocacy helped to push for policy changes such as the Violence Against Women Act, which provided funding for services for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and made it easier for them to seek justice (Howell, 2009).

In a nutshell, all the women discussed endeavored to fight and conquer female oppression in society on different platforms by using a faith-based approach. This was critical in perpetuating the feminism theory, which has always stood out as a way for

women to voice their concerns and express their grievances resulting from societal-based occurrences. The feminist movement has pushed the agenda of GBV eradication through supporting survivors, educating communities, challenging societal norms that oppress women, advocating for legal and policy changes, and linking victims to various support agencies. It is worth noting that, upon this foundation of feminism, most FBOs that have advocated for gender equality and the ending of GBV are built upon the feminist ground.

4.10 Chapter Summary

The chapter delved into exploring gender-based violence as a societal phenomenon where various concepts were discussed, including forms, causes, and effects of GBV. Findings indicate that forms of gender-based violence include, include sexual harassment, economic violence, emotional and psychological violence, physical violence, verbal violence, and discrimination and harassment. Additionally, the literature reviewed focused on the causes of GBV. Concerning the causes, the findings in this chapter show that patriarchy and gender inequality, social and cultural traditions normalized in society, legal and institutional failures, biased religious practices, substance abuse, and power and control are the leading causes of GBV. Furthermore, the chapter reveals the effects of GBV, including health effects like injuries and STIs, psychological and emotional destabilization, stigmatization, isolation, breaking of marriages and relationships, resource wastage, and employment disruption. The chapter also brings out GBV during the biblical era, especially in the Old Testament, the epitome of GBV, which is seriously anchored on the Jewish cultural background. The chapter further brings out the Feminist activism against GBV by discussing the contributions of notable feminists like Mother Teresa, Malalai

Joya, and Margaret Sanger, all anchored on the Christian foundation. The next chapter presents findings on the role of FBOs in curbing GBV.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE ROLE OF FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS IN WOMEN CURBING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

5.1 Introduction

The second objective of the study sought to establish the role of faith-based organizations in curbing gender-based violence. Faith-based organizations (FBOs) have revolutionized the world in social, spiritual, and economic aspects, given the ability embedded in their operations. One of the clear instances that faith-based organizations have relentlessly chipped into the developmental agendas of the nations is taking part in humanitarian activities. Various studies have questioned the role of faith-based organizations as they are perceived to have much ability to engage in various issues of social justice, and yet, for some, their influence on the ground is somehow questionable. This study sought to establish the role played by various faith-based organizations in curbing gender-based violence. However, before delving deep into the role of FBOs on the subject matter, it is imperative that the study also puts the aspect of faith-based organization in context for clarity purposes.

Various scholars, when trying to explain or define faith-based organizations, agree on some aspects and differ in some, hence leaving no acceptable definition. However, the term has mostly been used to refer to organizations or religious institutions that are influenced by faith. Given that they serve diversely, they may operate as a church, a mosque, a temple, or a nonprofit organization outside the three aforementioned religious outfits, but roots and guidance are based on them. Therefore, the aspect of being rooted in a given faith gives FBOs a value-based aura, which separates them from other non-profit organizations (Le Roux & Bowers-Du Toit, 2017).

Most of the people in the world belong to faith-based organizations of their choice, given that 80% of the world's population claims to have a religious affiliation or belief in some kind of religion. One of the unique characteristics of faith-based organizations is that they are treated with some sought of reverence given that they are religious in nature, as most people point their faith to God or "god" whom they revere (Le Roux, 2016). Generally, FBOs serve society both locally and internationally through charitable work and aids, sharing faith-based tenets, advocating for justice, equality, and peace, and deepening relationships and reconciliation in various cases of conflict. Therefore, based on this contextualization, this study's perspective on FBOs is not only based on nonprofit organizations based on a given religion or faith but also on the religious outfits themselves, like churches, mosques, and temples (Wamue-Ngare *et al.*, 2023).

5.2 Interfaith Intervention on Gender-Based Violence Matters

When dealing with the issue of gender-based violence, it is imperative to take into consideration the fact that most of the perpetrators and even victors belong to a certain religion or rather faith. This is true given that at least 80% of the world population claims to be attached to a religion or certain faith. In this regard, one keeps asking himself/herself whether or not religion has a role to play in the fight against gender-based violence, a phenomenon that is on the rise (Chirongoma, 2022). It was in the interest of the instant study to establish the role of faith actors in curbing gender-based violence as a societal phenomenon.

Religions worldwide differ in their beliefs, how they carry out rituals, and more on doctrinal issues. As a result, many religious movements have been emerging over time, and even with those already established, factions have been experienced, leading

to more divisions for reasons that are well-known to the propagators (Gruber, 2020). However, in some critical moments, despite their divergent views, a converging point is sometimes forged for the benefit of all parties. At this point, it is worth noting that some religious leaders do not believe that there is a phenomenon known as gender-based violence. Instead, they believe that there are times when humanity suffers injustice that needs to be addressed. However, those who believe that gender-based violence is real, at one point or another, have also been questioned on what they stand for. The main issue in most religious movements is the patriarchal debacle, which has been questioned given that some religious movements have fought tirelessly against gender-based violence outside their walls, but still, some traces are seen in their gatherings (Kwok, 2014).

Nevertheless, the efforts put in by various religious leaders in curbing gender-based violence are commendable despite various background differences. It is true to accept that when various religious leaders come together, the network they form brings various ideas that can be discussed and implemented for change. Religion has been deemed to be more of a spiritual and social endeavor, hence proving a point on why it is a key player in the fight against gender-based violence, especially when religious differences are set aside. Today, it is easy to see Muslims, Christians, and members of other religions, like Indigenous African religions, sitting at the same table to discuss gender-based violence (Chirongoma, 2022).

For instance, in the USA, Interfaith Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence is a national interfaith coalition that has done a commendable job in the fight against gender-based violence comprising of Jewish, Muslim, Christian, and Bahai faith backgrounds. The coalition brings together over 38 national faith organizations to

advocate for the recognition of gender-based violence as a societal issue by the government and taking the necessary steps towards curbing it. One of the areas in which the organization has been successful is helping in national legislation and enacting policies that endeavor to fight against GBV. Additionally, the government has recognized the organization through its initiatives, such as conducting societal awareness briefings and sponsoring gender-based events. The organization is motivated by the fact that most victims of gender-based violence end up seeking help from houses of worship besides seeking help from the government. As a result, a proper linkage between the government and the church on matters of GBV is to be established to help the victims, hence the coalition (interfaithagainstdv.org, n.d).

5.3 Role Played by Faith-Based Organization

It is within the domain of various religious communities to deal effectively with the issue of gender-based violence as it does not only portray the spirit of progress but also the spirit of goodwill. For a long time, the church acted as a reflection of what gender-based violence is in areas of concern. To date, most religious organizations, in many aspects, still render women powerless in some positions, which solicits discussions on what really gender roles in society are pertaining to women (Le Roux, 2016).

When biblical history is related to humanity, the context of the domineering culture and historical disposition of events should be considered with an open eye. For instance, the role of women in the early days of the bible is not the same as it is in the later days. Jesus' ministry was made up of at least some women who were seen walking with Jesus throughout his ministry, unlike what is the case in most churches today. Nevertheless, it is imperative to note that the ministry of Jesus Christ bordered

on two aspects, the ending of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament, a fact that called for wisdom in various issues during his ministry (Ademiluka, 2018).

In the real sense, patriarchal issues emanated from the cultural thread of generation that informed the context in which the bible was written. However, still, with such a serious issue of consideration on the general image of a woman in such a society vis-a-vis the roles she played, women would undergo gender-based violence. At one point, Jesus is seen taking care of a woman who was found in an affair in the book of John chapter 8 and who was supposed to be stoned to death, but the man whom she was found in the act with was nowhere in the picture. Such occurrence demonstrates that the culture of the time favored men over women but not the bible as most people would think or say (Aderinto, 2001).

However, Faith-based organizations have emerged as influential actors in curbing gender-based violence (GBV), contributing to the broader efforts aimed at promoting gender equality and fostering safer communities. These organizations, rooted in religious values and principles, harness their unique capacities to address the underlying causes of GBV, provide support to survivors, challenge harmful social norms, and advocate for policy changes (Ademiluka, 2018). The following subsections discuss the role of FBOs in curbing GBV in the society.

5.3.1 Coordination and Collaboration with Other Agencies

The fight against gender-based violence is not an issue that can be achieved with one institution but rather requires efforts from different parties of concern. Law and order enforcement agencies, human rights movements, activists, and other non-governmental organizations all play an imperative role in the fight against gender-

based violence in society. As Kamwengo and Magasu (2021) opine, success in fighting gender-based violence is based on the efforts of faith-based organizations working hand in hand with law enforcement agencies and other organizations of goodwill. They further argue that FBOs have what it takes to bring together various agencies and organizations to strengthen their efforts in dealing with issues of gender-based violence. They already have people at their disposal.

Magezi (2019) states that the church, as an FBO, can engage government officers, human rights activists, and other organizations in campaigns against gender-based violence in society. Through creating workshops, conferences, and other meetings, the church can enhance its operation in dealing with GBV by soliciting both material and human resource help from other interested parties and the government at large. For instance, Imarisha, an FBO in Nairobi County, has worked hand in hand with other organizations to provide support services to the victims of gender-based violence. In 2017-2020, Imarisha reached over 130 women who had undergone various challenges relating to GBV and helped 27 victims get justice from the judicial wing of the government. The organization works with other churches, women's groups, and local administration for referrals of victims, after which they disseminate resources they get from other supporting organizations and individuals to help the victims on the right course of action (Makau, 2020). Imarisha is just a reflection of what most of the FBOs should be in matters curbing GBV.

5.3.2 Creating Awareness Educating the Public

Talking about GBV requires a platform with an audience that can listen to you and understand the case being presented. Faith-based organizations always have this kind of platform that they can use to raise awareness and educate their congregants on various issues pertaining to GBV. In a study conducted by Le Roux and Brower-Due, the importance of FBOs in using their platforms to create awareness and educate their followers is discussed, putting emphasis on the fact that the leaders in various FBOs have a voice over their followers. For instance, the picture below shows Muslim women in Kenya conducting an awareness program against GBV.

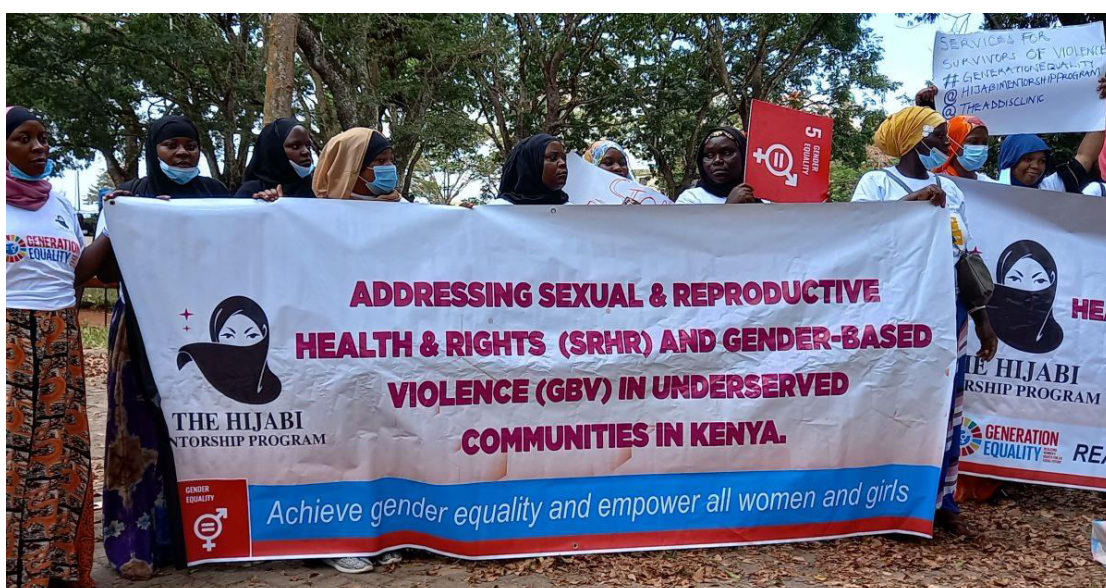


Figure 5.1: A picture showing The Hijabi, A Muslim women's mentorship program in the quest to address Gender Violence in Kenya.

Source: Islamic Women Agenda, (2022)

Musodza *et al.* (2015) posit that victims and perpetrators of GBV are members of various FBOs, reaching almost each one of them in such a setting for awareness and education on GBV is easier and more convenient. It is through awareness that unknown factors, such as the causes and effects of GBV, can be discussed to enlighten the public, who, in most cases, may not be fully aware of GBV as a societal

phenomenon. USAID (2009) reported that the perception of various victims and perpetrators of GBV in society can be easily changed through the faith approach, which will not only prevent the occurrence of such cases but also help the victims to come out of their hiding and seek necessary help.

Meehan (2021) reasons that the church's voice in creating awareness and educating the public on GBV impacts the response of other players like government agencies, non-governmental organizations like human rights organizations and other social institutions on matters GBV. Victor (2016) supports the Meehan argument and adds that through the FBOs initiatives, like encouraging the victims to come speak out on societal ills, various dysfunctions of relevant institutions will clearly be put across, hence, calling them to order as required both by law and societal moral standing.

Musodza *et al.* (2015) reiterate that FBOs' action through awareness and education on matters of GBV goes a long way in helping the victims break their silence. Gender-based violence has long thrived in an environment characterized by secrecy, shame, and trauma. As Brouer (2014) posits, building on such organizations can bring together individuals who can create a platform that can be used to discourage secrecy and shame and heal trauma through sessions that encourage sharing and opening up on various GBV experiences that one might have gone through.

Furthermore, the FBOs, through creating awareness and educating the public on GBV matters, will help the victims to understand and get relevant help both materially and psychologically. Most funders are encouraged to fund victims of gender-based violence through organizations like FBOs. For instance, various FBOs have been geared towards creating awareness and educating society on various issues of GBV, inter alia, World Vision, Islamic Relief Worldwide, Tear Fund and Rape, Abuse &

Incest National Network have been at the forefront in helping the victims with financial, material and psychological support at the same time (United Nations, 2019).

5.3.3 Provision of Support Services to the Victims

Faith-based organizations can play an important role in ensuring that the survivors and victims of gender-based violence get proper support services. In the first place, the church can provide a safe and welcoming space for the victims and survivors of GBV. Churches that are well established or any other FBO can designate specific areas within the church buildings to accommodate victims of gender-based violence who may not have where to run to in case of problems. Additionally, FBOs may collaborate with local organizations specializing in offering support services to direct the victims through the safety and recuperation process, which takes time and requires resources. Specifically, the collaboration can see services like medical services, shelter, and legal aid provided for victims or survivors. Still, the church can also help relay their grievances, which they are mostly shy about sharing, to the relevant agencies for action to be taken against the perpetrators (McCleary-Sills *et al.*, 2013).

Faith-based organizations can also be handy in providing the victims and survivors of GBV with counseling and emotional support to ensure that they heal and move on with life. Given that the church has a pool of resourceful people, which may include counselors, they must deploy their skills voluntarily in an effort to ensure that the GBV survivors get proper psychological and emotional care through counseling services. Additionally, the clergy, given their expertise in dealing with different issues that emanate within their congregation, may play an important role in ensuring GBV survivors get the best emotional and psychological care through pastoral counseling services. The church can train the clergy on handling emerging issues such as GBV

besides dealing with just spiritual endeavors of the congregants. Just as Mclinn (2016) posits, “pastors and servants of God are not just there to take people to heaven only, they are also vessels that God uses to better people's lives spiritually, psychologically, emotionally and physically so that His people may be sober as they walk through the narrow path full of tribulations.”

Furthermore, the church may come in and help curb gender-based violence through advocacy and empowerment of the victims. Churches can work hand in hand with the relevant bodies to enact policies and legislation that aim at protecting the victims and defining the course of action for the perpetrators. Only through church platforms and humanitarian organizations can the voices of the oppressed be heard in society (Magezi, 2019). FBOs, especially the church, can be at the forefront of partnering with humanitarian organizations to advocate for gender equality in society to save women from suffering GBV at home, in the workplace, and religious institutions. In addition to policies and legislation, FBOs can also come up with various programs that aim at enhancing the livelihoods of victims and women who are preyed upon by GBV predators. By joining forces with other interested parties, FBOs can run skills development programs to help vulnerable women and victims make their own money to sustain their livelihoods and those of their dependents (Mclin, 2016).

5.3.4 Theological Reflection and Reforms

Studies indicate that gender-based violence occurs even in the church and, worse still, at the pulpit that is otherwise deemed holy and sacred. Faith-based organizations can champion women's rights in the church by advocating for theological reflection and reforms on practices that tend to put women in GBV situations. Despite the fact that church teachings are centered on the Christian faith, syncretism seems to be in the

driving seat, especially in the case of the African church, which is marred with both cultural issues and faith. In fact, the two are intertwined in some regions, and cultural norms have become part of the guidelines that guide what women say, do, and how they act (Hermkens, 2022). Theological reflections and reforms will not only be effective in helping the victims within the church walls but also become a voice to the society at large.

One of the approaches that the church can use to approach theological reflection and reforms is to ensure that they have a policy that encourages preachers to incorporate gender-based information in their summons. Additionally, some churches that hold on to a patriarchal approach to leadership can revise their thresholds and allow women to serve in various designations (Ah Siu-Maliko *et al.*, 2019). As mentioned earlier, some of the foundational issues in leadership and ministerial roles in the church are pegged on the church leaning too much on what the culture of the land dictates. Despite the fact that most churches have more women than men numerically, most leadership positions are held by men, as well as church rituals. As the world continues to evolve, it is high time the church reconsiders its position on women's ministry in the church by rewiring the theological dictates to accommodate women so that it can lead by example in the war against GBV.

5.3.5 Engaging Boys and Men in Campaigns against Gender-Based Violence

One of the mistakes made by various agencies that deal with issues related to gender-based violence is focusing so much on the victims and failing to mount a campaign and strategies that will help reach out to boys and men, the perpetrators of violence against women. In recent days, cases of GBV have escalated because some of the perpetrators may not be fully aware that whatever they engage in is wrong and may

leave a painful experience for the victims or ruin their lives completely. Faith-based organizations can help curb cases of GBV by engaging boys and men on various topical issues of GBV (Chauke, 2021). The church can encourage male leaders to act as role models for the subjects they lead. Such an approach would be ideal to instill values of empathy, equality, and non-violence and encourage them to engage in healthy relationships. Sexual violence may be rampant today because of what the youth watch on social media and the internet. Therefore, mentorship programs must be carried out on the boy child to help him understand his boundaries when dealing with girls or women (Parkers *et al.*, 2016).

Faith-based organizations can also engage boys and men to be at the forefront of confronting GBV, help out the victims where necessary instead of stigmatizing them, and encourage them to become ambassadors of good behavior in society. In addition, men and youth must be engaged in training and teachings that help them understand the value of women in society and not just be looked upon as vessels to be used by men for various masculine interests. Research indicates that faith can convict individuals of their mistakes and bring them to real repentance or turn around (Chauke, 2021). Similarly, faith can impact someone's behavior and attitude to reflect on issues positively. This implies that FBOs can lean on the potential embedded in faith to drive the agenda of change of behavior and perception towards women, especially with specific topics of discussion that touch on gender issues. When all these are done, the FBOs can greatly impact curbing GBV before it occurs, reducing the number of cases resulting from GBV-related occurrences (Parkers *et al.*, 2016).

5.4 Roman Catholic Church Efforts Towards Gender-Based Violence

Roman Catholic Church is the oldest religion in the church's history, maybe just after the apostolic church that was birthed at Antioch. As a matter of fact, most of the names given to churches that are aligned to Roman Catholic reflect the names of the heroes of faith right away from the ministry of the apostles in the biblical era, as exemplified by the case of St. Peter. Characterized by a radical openness to matters of truth, the practice of faith from the theoretical perspective depicts that the Catholic Church is not nation or culture-bound. This can be proved by the drop-down nature of the sermon, prayers, and rituals that are all the way similar though in varied languages that resonate with distinctive practices which, in a real sense, do reflect the real image of various cultures (Musodza, 2015).

The leadership in the Catholic Church is structured in a very distinctive manner but with one common issue: patriarchy. Like most denominations, the catholic leadership structure dictates that women can only hold specific leadership positions (Chitango & Chirongoma, 2013). Learning from the case of Jesus Christ, the Catholic faith posits that women cannot be ordained to take up roles pertaining to the priesthood, the office of bishop, and even the office of pope, just as Jesus only selected men into his ministry. As a result, women in the Catholic Church have no authority to perform sacrament-related activities. In this regard, women are only allowed to serve at parish liturgies by reading scriptures at mass, leaders of songs, gift bearers, altar servers, greeters, and distributors of communion as Eucharist ministers (Yusufu, 2022).

As a result of the aforementioned issue, one of the critical issues that have raised many questions on the side of the catholic church and their commitment to fighting gender-based violence has been the demand for women to hold all the offices that

men also hold in the leadership as a reflection of the true spirit of curbing gender-based violence. Some women activists, in particular, have called out the Roman Catholic Church to stop the double standards of partially promoting gender-based violence through patriarchy and partially fighting other forms. This has solicited much heat, resulting in Pope Francis acting within his powers and ensuring that he looked into the issue. As a result, he increased women's roles in the church by elevating them to serve at a level where they can serve as deacons, a position that constitutes more roles than they had before (Walker, 2020).

Looking at such a step, women activists posit that this is a positive step towards addressing the issue of gender-based violence, but more still needs to be done by the catholic leadership. In the real sense, the teachings of the Catholic Church on gender roles posit that women and men are equal and complementary. However, what is clear is that several issues affect the gender roles associated with women in the Catholic Church, especially with the cultural roots in question. Research indicates that cultural issues have promoted gender-based violence in the catholic faith rather than the dictates of their doctrine and the bible itself (ibid).

Despite all these, there are remarkably laudable issues that can be attributed to the Catholic Church in matters combating gender-based violence. Various teachings, demonstrations, and even live examples have been put forward in efforts to show the position of the church and discourage some of what would be termed as societal norms that promote gender-based violence. As mentioned before, efforts have been made from the topmost office of the Pope in response to the concerns raised by most of the individuals who always champion women's affairs. Additionally, Bishops have

repeatedly stepped forward to reiterate the importance of social justice and women's rights (Okoli, 2020).

Drawing from the biblical understandings, the pastoral constitution, which originated from the Vatican, describes what would be referred to as the interconnectedness of all people, saying, “The joys and hopes, the grief and anguish of the people of our time, especially those who are poor and afflicted, are the joys and hopes, the grief, and anguish of the followers of Christ as well. Nothing genuinely human fails to find an echo in their heart.” Such foundation teachings imply that the church, in its settings on matters to do with social injustice, does not relate to the negativities that are otherwise portrayed through various forms of gender-based violence. The same comes out well in “When I Call for Help,” a pastoral response to domestic violence (US Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2002).

In the Catholic Church, one of the groups of women that have reported cases of gender-based violence are nuns, a group of faithful who rarely interact with people outside their domain. In particular, they have suffered from sexual harassment from the quotas of individuals who closely associate with them. This is so contrary to the expectations of many, given that most people would expect such a group of individuals like nuns to be safe and free from gender-based violence given that they are segregated from society and stay within church walls, a place where safety should be (Mwale, 2022).

For instance, AMCEA (2021) reported that nuns in Malawi congregated to push an agenda that aimed at seeing violence against women stopped. The reason behind this campaign was motivated by the fact that the nuns experienced gender-based violence in the wall of the church. Then they guessed that those outside that church must face

the greatest challenges given that the environment was totally hostile. Speaking on the reason why they had the initiative, the Country Coordinator, Sr. Theresa Mulenga, said: “It appears gender-based violence, and child abuse is now a pandemic’ affecting people in all aspects of life. That is why we gathered these nuns who are working at the grassroots level of the communities, in schools and hospitals, to be equipped with knowledge on this issue so that they can ably handle them and play a role in liberating the people from this ‘pandemic’ through their apostolates.”

From the narration above, it is evident that Catholic Church, despite being in some dark books with over the cases of gender-based violence in Africa, is putting in some initiatives through the nun's program to ensure that gender-based violence is controlled or curbed. The Malawi case is just but an example of what most nuns in the African continent are doing to ensure that women in the church are among the groups of people advocating for women's rights.



Figure 5.2: Malawi Nuns in anti-GBV campaign

Source: AMCEA (2021)

In Kenya, the Catholic Church has immensely contributed to the fight against gender-based violence through various ways like rehabilitation centers where counseling services take place, the opening of businesses, health-related help, and giving various victims of gender-based violence some training that is worth life-changing. For instance, a center in Nakuru that is affiliated with the Catholic Church known as Love and Hope Center has stood out in Nakuru County and coordinated with the community and the government to ensure that they not only offer rehabilitation services to the victims of various forms of gender-based violence but also give them a life worth living after. The center operates under the initiative of St. Franciscan Missionary Sisters for Africa-run Centre, a purely nuns' program (Lucy, 2014).

In the last few years, the organization has helped over 600 victims of serious gender-based violence, who would have otherwise faced it rough if such help had not come their way. The organization realized that only helping such women who have been traumatized in society by various cases of gender-based violence through counseling alone would not serve them any better service. As a result, they counsel, train and empower women with both business ideas and resources for posterity. The narration below from Njeri (not her real name), who is one of the beneficiaries, summarizes the case for Love and Hope Center.

“I was gang raped. However, after I was introduced to Love and Hope, I received counseling services, and after I healed, I was sponsored to attend a hospitality course, and today, I am now employed as a waiter in one of the hotels in town.”

Looking at the statement above with a keen eye, one of the factors that comes out clearly is the fact that most of the victims need to be taken a notch higher when dealing with matters that entail gender-based violence. Such demonstrates the power

of a woman in understanding fellow women's problems and becoming a solution in the century, and women need to lean on the strength within themselves to overcome every tide that works against them.

Finally, the Catholic Church has stood out to condemn the aspect of female genital mutilation in Africa and Kenya, a form of gender-based violence that has predominantly affected young girls and is perpetrated mostly by mature women. Basing its roots on cultural orientation, female genital mutilation has affected most of the girls in communities like Samburu, Masaai, Somali, Samburu, and Kisii. However, it is worth noting that the Catholic Church has not only created awareness of the issue but also initiated programs within the affected communities that aim at eradicating FGM (Waweru & Rono, 2020).

Research on FGM indicates that over 4 million women and girls in Kenya have undergone FGM, with the consequences being dire for some of them. Despite the fact that the statistics are alarming, joint efforts from the church, human rights activists, NGOs, and the government have seen a drop in FGM cases (UNICEF, 2021). Catholic Church has provided a platform for awareness of the dangers of FGM and the importance of understanding the rights of a girl and women in society. The church has campaigned much more on educating the girl child and protecting her against such heinous act that depicts gender-based violence (Waweru & Rono, 2020).

5.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter delved into establishing the role of FBOs in curbing gender-based violence. Findings in this chapter indicate that FBOs have great potential for gender-based violence mitigation. Fundamentally, FBOs have been on the frontline to challenge harmful beliefs, promote gender equality, and promote a culture where

respect devoid of gender prevails, hence, a violence-free society. Among the measures that FBOs have taken in mitigating GBV are Promoting theological reforms and reflections, collaborating and partnering with other institutions, creating awareness and educating the public, providing support services, and engaging boys and men in various anti-GBV forums. Furthermore, findings in this chapter indicate that plenty of resources are required for the FBOs to fulfil their mandate in curbing GBV. Some organisations with goodwill have tried their best in the fight against GBV, but the major impediment has been a lack of resources. Seeking funding from donors, well-wishers, and the government stood out in this chapter as the only way for FBOs to realise their potential in the fight against GBV. From a general perspective, the chapter reiterated the implementation of structural functionalism theory, which calls out the church to stand out in disseminating its role alongside other independent institutions to curb GBV. The next chapter discusses the response of the PAG church in curbing GBV in Vihiga County, Kenya.

CHAPTER SIX

PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CHURCH RESPONSE ON CURBING WOMEN GENDER VIOLENCE IN VIHIGA COUNTY

6.1 Introduction

The study's third objective sought to establish the Pentecostal Assemblies of God's church's response to curbing GBV. As a denomination that has existed for quite a long time, PAG has spread all over Kenya, with the headquarters in Vihiga County. Its impact in other areas of life has been felt in society, as it has influenced many social, economic, and spiritual issues. It is, therefore, imperative that the current study establishes how PAG deals with GBV as a societal phenomenon.

The PAG Church foundation in Kenya has a mark of success in matters to do with women and ministry as a woman started it, Marion Keller, together with her husband, Otto Keller, back in the year 1918. Later, in 1924, the couple fully affiliated with the church that they had begun to, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAC). After this affiliation, missionaries from Canada came to Kenya to strengthen the church and the bible school that was in operation in Nyangori. Interestingly, most of the early missionaries who strengthened the PAG church in Kenya were women who were totally involved in most of the activities that were taking place.

Marion was an extraordinary young lady, possessing a sharp intellect and unwavering determination. Following her recuperation, she chose to go back to the mission station, living there in solitude and dedicating herself to the mission's endeavors for an arduous four years. She embraced a lifestyle akin to the local Africans, residing in a mud hut, sharing their dietary habits, which often included zebra meat, and cooking on a traditional African stove consisting of three stones. Her mastery of the Kiswahili

language reached such heights that the administration entrusted her with the responsibility of establishing the examination for incoming civil servants in the country. This background on the history of PAG church, with Marion a leading pillar in establishing PAG church, lays a foundation that women have a big role to play in ministry work as opposed to the patriarchal issues eating them up.

6.2 Pentecostal Assemblies of God Understanding of Gender-Based Violence

The main problem in the church that the church is facing is that it does not clearly gender-based violence. Across the board, most people tend to think that gender-based violence refers to acts of violence that are directed toward somebody who inflicts physical harm. Most people think that gender-based violence is the same as domestic violence and only takes place in the homes of married individuals. In the course of the current study, the researcher sought to establish the understanding of the respondents on the issue of gender-based violence. Some of the narrations below depict what most of the respondents understood about gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence, according to my understanding, is the fighting between men and women who are married in the same house, whether married or not. Such violence, in most cases, affects women, given that they are weak. Hence, they cannot defend themselves during the fighting. What is evident in most of the homes is that the cases of gender-based violence are real and rampant (Assembly Member FGD, Respondent 11).

Yes, I have a clear understanding of what gender-based violence is all about. First, gender-based violence is the act of using force to inflict harm to a partner in a relationship that is either marital or during dating, as youth call it. Second, the people involved in gender-based violence are mainly married men and women who fail to reach an agreement on most of the issues they undergo and, hence, end up having physical exchange (meaning fighting), which results in more serious injuries. The cases are so common in our society today and even in the churches. As a leader, I have witnessed much of this through the accusations brought to us by the victims (FGD, Respondent 309).

Yet another one sarcastically said:

It is hilarious that in this century, you can still ask whether one understands gender-based violence, yet it is the order of the day in our houses (meaning marriages). Today, if you ask a woman how many times her husband has injured her, she will tell you it is uncountable, implying that violence takes place every day. Therefore, gender-based violence is not something new, given that at least almost everyone goes through it. What I understand well as a man is that it has been portrayed as something that affects women mostly, but even men have seriously suffered at the hands of women (FGD, Respondent 56).

Reading through the narrations above, a number of issues are clear about the issue of gender-based violence in society. To begin with, the respondents understood that gender-based violence was on the increase in society and affected even people who were in the church, let alone non-churchgoers. Furthermore, gender-based violence is an issue that mostly affects women, at least men. However, at the societal level, most of the respondents do not understand the scope of gender-based violence but only have a clue of what it is. This implies that most people have not taken the time to establish most of the underlying issues on the topical issues of gender-based violence. This was a good beginning point as the researcher used the sessions to elaborate on various issues to the respondents for them to understand the topic matter.

6.3 Prevalence of Gender-Based Violence in Vihiga County

Statistics of Gender-based violence in Vihiga County, according to Ngutu *et al.* (2018), indicate that emotional abuse comprised 113 victims out of 338 (12.0%), Psychological violence constituted 128 victims out of 338 (13.6%), verbal abuse stood at 266 out of 338 (28.3), Sexual violence comprised 136 out of 338 (14.5%), physical abuse consisted 216 out of 338 (23.0%) while spiritual abuse counted for 81 out of 338 (8.6%). These statistics imply the prevalence of GBV in Vihiga County,

calling for concerted efforts from various institutions, including the church, to deal with the phenomena.

Elsewhere, a study conducted by KDHS (2022) indicates that an average of 34 % of women in Vihiga County had suffered some kind of violence, with 80% of the perpetrators being men. However, most of the cases that were reported to authorities include sexual harassment and physical assault, with 3 out of 4 reported cases related to the aforementioned two. Additionally, the report reveals that domestic violence and intimate partner violence were leading forms of gender-based violence in the County. This was attributed to the fact that the area holds dearly to the cultural aspects which put a woman under the control of a man.

The current study sought to find out whether PAG church women experienced any form of gender-based violence or not. Previous studies have proved that there is a problem in the church on the subject of gender-based violence since most of the people in the church fear expressing themselves sometimes pertaining to the problems they go through. During the focus group discussion, the researcher engaged in various issues pertaining to women's experience with gender-based violence came to light. Results are presented in the figure below, with discussion thereafter.

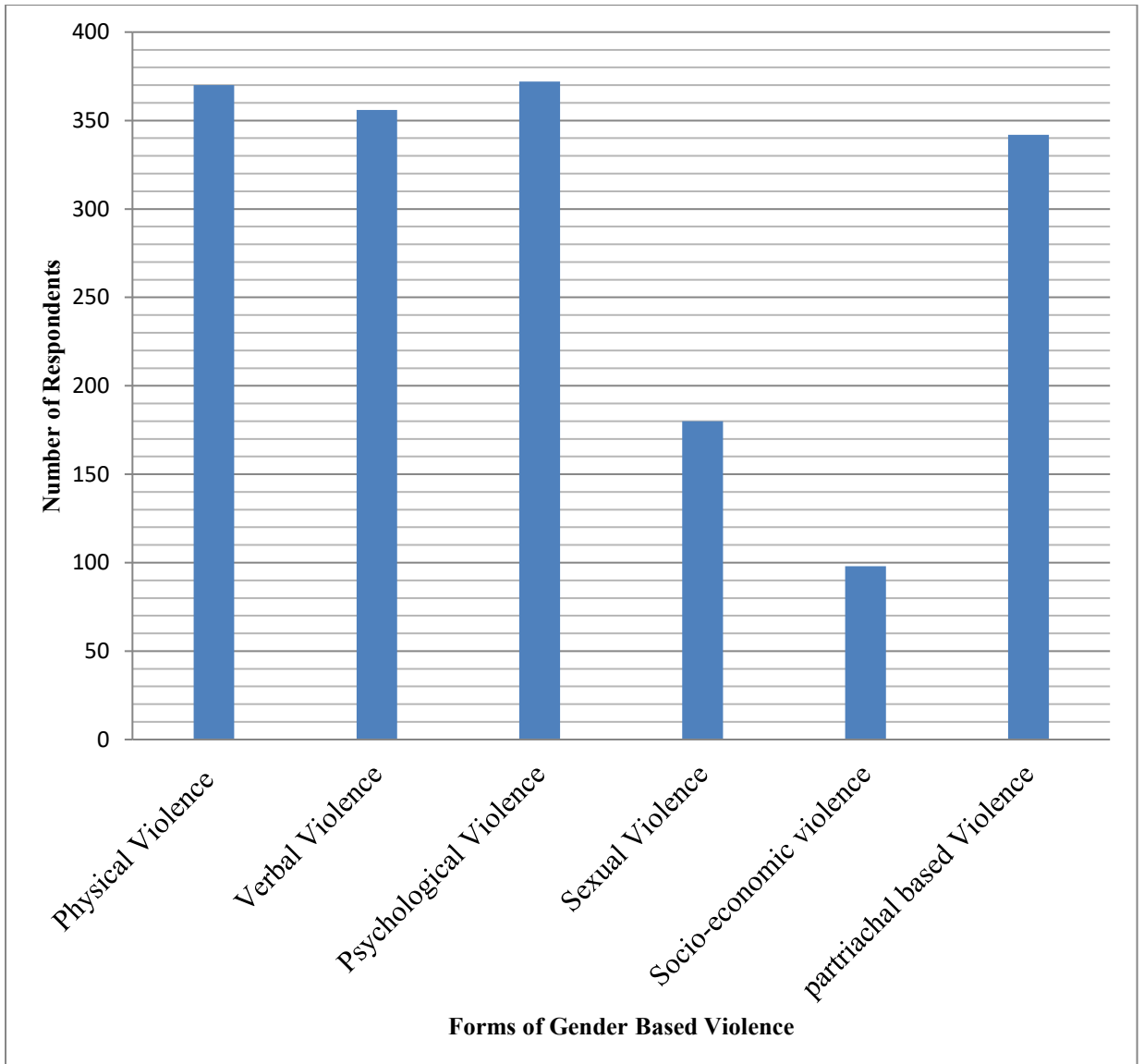


Figure 6.1: Various Forms of Violence Experienced by Women in PAG Church

Source: Filed Data, 2021

Results from the figure above portray various forms of gender-based violence that women in the PAG church in Vihiga County pointed out that they have at a point experienced. As indicated, physical violence, verbal violence, psychological violence, and patriarchy were the most experienced forms of violence, with over 360 respondents indicating that they had, at a point, experienced them. The least experienced form of gender-based violence forms was sexual and socio-economic

violence, with 180 and 97 respondents, respectively, indicating that they had experienced the two.

During the FGDs, various respondents shared their experiences on the said forms of gender-based violence and how they navigated through the circumstances. More so, the researcher insisted on finding out whether the church knew the issue and how the church came through in helping them solve the issues that they underwent during the period of instances they experienced the said form(s) of gender-based violence. The selected narrations below are grouped categorically according to the forms of violence that the respondents experienced;

My name is Liz (not her real name). I am 58 years old and a mother of 7 children. The children are of different fathers, given that this is my second marriage. I have shared this because you must understand that I left the first marriage for the second one for a reason. The first marriage was hell in that my husband would come home drunk and beat me up thoroughly to the point that sometimes I could find myself unconscious. Unfortunately, I did not share this pain with anybody, thinking that I was doing myself a favor to save my marriage. One day, he hit me with a blunt object, and this scar (pointing to her head) almost killed me. I decided to go back home and recollect myself before, and after 6 years, I met my current husband, with whom I have lived together for about 15 years. At one point, he also wanted to become violent, but I could not keep quiet after the experience I went through. I shared the experience with my pastor, and he counseled me. Though we normally have differences and quarrel sometimes, I can now confirm that I am safer than before. I discovered that what causes us to go through such hell is that we do not come out as victims to complain (FGD, respondent 310).

I have not much to say on my part since life has taught me to speak less. My husband is a pastor but still believes in the rule of the land that wife beating is the order of the day and the only punishment that can make a woman whom a man thinks she can become. Just this year alone, I have had domestic violence cases in my house over 5 times. My husband is more than a bully but still ministers with PAG church, though not in this locality. Sharing my grievances with my own pastor is not a solution. I shared this with the former pastor before he was transferred, and he told me that we would be praying over the issue, and since then, he never got back. Currently, we have pastoress. She has played an important role in ensuring that the families stay together

well, but given the fact that she is a woman, there are issues that she cannot address beyond her gender, including issues of summoning such a person into the position of my husband. Therefore, I can say that pastors may be the perpetrators and sometimes the solution, but they have not been empowered (FGD, Respondent 92).

The first narration above depicts an image of a woman who fully understands domestic violence, specifically physical and psychological violence. Typical in a church, especially those in rural settings, understanding violence means pointing towards physically related violence, which most of the women suffer, just as this case portrays. However, we find very little effort the church put in, just as it is in the second narration. The paradox in the second narration is that the perpetrator, in this case, is a pastor, whom, most of the time, people ought to be running to for help. Therefore, such a scenario indicates one of the reasons why the church may be at a crossroads when it comes to gender-based violence matters, at the same time justifying to a point why the victims see no need to come out and express their grievances.

As indicated in the figure above, most of the women during the FGDs indicated that they do experience or have experienced gender-based violence in the form of verbal abuse. After the study expanded the scope in terms of respondents understanding that gender-based violence is wide and is not only at the domestic level, the respondents indicated that most of the time, they had suffered verbal abuse during their interactions with various calibers of people in day-to-day activities. Their experience seemed to point towards almost the same issues as the three narrations below bring out.

I work as a food hawker in this small market (one of the markets in Vihiga County), and given the nature of my business, it is tough to deal with people of every caliber. In the course of this business, I have undergone an overwhelming share of insults, sexual harassment

pronunciations, intimidations, and generally hate speech. In the beginning, it was so devastating and emotionally derailing, but as time went by, it became the norm for me. When people utter such a thing, I assume them or take them as jokes. In my opinion, I feel like the church has very little to do to confront the debacle of verbal gender-based violence, given that most of the incidences cannot be reported as they happen outside the church, and very little can be said about with no evidence to present (FGD, Respondent 37).

Having a body figure like mine is trouble out here. I have experienced body shaming in most cases, especially from men. This has caused me to be careful about my choices of dress and how I present myself before people. One day, one of the church members with whom I had differed on a certain issue took time and lectured me on how I looked like a mistake that could not be rectified even by God Himself. He described how bad I looked and demonstrated while we were in front of people. The incident completely reduced me to nothing, causing the shame of a lifetime that continues to go through my mind every day. I reported this incident to the church, but I found no help as the person was a leader in the office of men welfare. This is just one of the examples of tough times I have gone through in the church set up, left alone outside (FGD, Respondent 302).

Verbal gender-based violence is, I think, one of the common forms of violence that women go through today. Just take a walk on the road, and you will realize that, as a woman, the majority of men will want to talk with you, and when you attempt to resist, they begin insulting you with all manner of insults. However, it is astonishing that this issue has spread its roots even in the church. In this church where I fellowship, we have heard of cases where men speak to women in a form that depicts sexual harassment. In the year 2019, I reported a case to my pastor about an elder in the church who has been following me for sexual advances for quite a long period of time. Upon refusal of his advances, he began throwing me hate speech, which eventually led to an altercation. I decided to report the case to the local pastor, who handled it very well to my satisfaction. What shocked me was the fact that this elder had again undergone another situation with another woman who eventually left the church because he managed to use her and then turned against her. The elder was eventually expelled from the church and went, given that he was warned before (FGD, Respondent 14).

The three nations above on verbal gender-based violence point toward cases of sexual harassment, hate speech, and body shaming. Factually, this is what most women have suffered over time in the streets, the workplace, churches, and places of business, just to mention a few. As the respondents pointed out in the third narration, it is possible

to handle such cases, especially if they occur within the church walls. However, one of the challenges, as pointed out in the second narration, is the influence that the perpetrators carry with respect to church leadership. Mombo and Joziase (2022) opine that the church has made it difficult to curb gender-based violence within its wall as it propagates the message “Familia” (which is translated as just persevere) to its members despite the seriousness of the situation at hand.

Pastors were asked to give their experience on gender-based violence issues, especially on how they handle and the various cases they encounter. Just as indicated earlier, most of the pastors did not understand well the dynamics of gender-based violence as most of them related it to intimate partner violence and, more specifically, physical violence. In the course of interviews, most pastors expressed their amazement at how deep gender-based violence was. In the beginning, before the researcher delved deeper to inquire about other cases of gender-based violence, the majority of the pastors (98%) opined that they had received cases of physical gender-based violence that emanated specifically from intimate partner relationships. The narrations below summarize most of the pastors’ opinions and experiences on gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence is so common, and as pastors, we receive many reports, say on a weekly basis. In the case of my church, I have over 100 couples who stay together as husband and wife. As a result, differences must crop in, eventually leading to a fight. During this month alone, I have received two complaints of couples quarreling and fighting. What is true is that women are the most affected individuals in this case, but it is also worth noting that even men have suffered at the hands of women, as is in one of the cases that I am currently dealing with. One of the issues I have come to understand is that most people go through this despite their social status or rank in any leadership position, including us, the servants of God. It is, therefore, very difficult to point a finger at another person’s issue, yet we have the same case eating you out. However, most of us have developed

pretense characters where we want to poke our noses too much into other people's issues, portraying how safe we are as ministers (Interview, Pst 9).

As a church, one of the mandates bestowed upon us is restoring sanity in our marriages and relationships. However, it cannot go without saying that we have much work to do in the cause of our pastoral duty. Regarding the family setup, most people will tell you they suffer a lot due to relationship shortcomings, which eventually result in sharp differences and fights. Therefore, as pastors, we are always on alert concerning family wrangles that are always reported to us by the victims. Over the fifteen years I have been serving as a senior pastor in PAG churches, I have had a lifetime experience with issues of violence in families that extend to the children. I recall one specific issue where I went to bury a church member three years ago as a result of domestic issues. The woman differed with the husband over his infidelity issue, and one day, a strong argument ensued, resulting in the death of the wife in what the husband claimed was a self-defense issue (Interview, Pst 41).

The assumption that gender-based violence is domestic violence or narrowly intimate partner violence was ideally what almost all the pastors had in mind, just as the two respondents above demonstrated. According to the researcher, such an assumption is so dangerous when dealing with the issue of GBV as it narrows it down to the extent that the real monster in question cannot be handled well by the church. Furthermore, as the narrations above put, pastors assume that their role in dealing with gender-based violence in their churches is just to deal with cases that emanate from domestic differences. However, four pastors had a clear understanding of what gender-based violence was all about before the researcher could go ahead and explain what it was about, as she did in most of the cases after exploring the pastor's experiences with gender-based violence and discovering that they were shallow. The narrations below summarize what two of the four pastors said.

Gender-based violence is a broad issue that requires sensitization and the creation of awareness, especially in this century we are living in, as it occurs in various ways at different places on a daily basis. Astonishingly, most of the victims of gender-based violence have very little knowledge yet go through a lot of this. My experience as a pastor

span over 29 years, and I am well-informed in theological studies with a doctorate degree. I came to understand what gender-based violence was all about when I visited the United States back in the 1990s for studies. It was so encouraging to see that one of the ways that bible colleges in the United States promote the fight against gender-based violence is by dedicating some time to teaching students to understand and be equipped to handle it. As an African preacher, young, visionary, and with an African background, all I knew was that women are literally weak and do not deserve as much as men do. When I left there, I understood that our church would not understand this issue clearly when approached once with emphasis on it, so I began using the platforms I got to prepare sermons and teach people indirectly about GBV issues. I believe a little bit that in the churches where I have ministered, this issue is not strange, and most people have an understanding of how to handle it (Interview, Pst 17).

Africa is an amazing continent with a blend of good and bad issues. Speaking about bad issues in the African setup, one would not fail to mention how our culture has looked upon women not only at the societal level but also in the church. Women are going through a lot of GBV-related cases, but very few report their experiences for fear and other reasons well known to them. In PAG church, especially in the area I come from, GVB is so evident that women pastors are not allowed to carry out a number of church ceremonies like dedications, burials, and ordinations.

6.4 PAG Church Measures on Curbing Gender-Based Violence in Vihiga County

The current study sought to establish various strategies that the PAG church has implemented to curb gender-based violence in Vihiga County. As discussed earlier on the role of faith-based organizations in curbing GBV, the PAG church, as an FBO, has the mandate to help curb gender-based violence. Findings on the measures of the PAG church to curb GBV are presented and discussed thematically below.

6.4.1 Collaboration and Partnership with other Agencies

As established early on, the role of FBOs in curbing GBV, as well as coordination and collaboration with other agencies of interest on the matter of GBV, was one of the roles of the church as an FBO. For instance, in Vihiga County, there is a rescue and empowerment center for GBV victims, which PAG church can align with and refer victims of GBV for accommodation and assistance during the period that the victim may need some solace. The rescue center is well equipped to handle such victims devoid of their cases. The picture below shows the rescue center launch.



Figure 6.2: Vihiga County Rescue and Empowerment Center Launching

Source: X platform (2024)

PAG church pastors and district leaders (overseers and district women directors) were asked to indicate how they coordinate and collaborate with agencies dealing with GBV issues. Responding to this, 31 (94.14%) of district overseers and 33 (97.2%) of district women directors indicated that they had not established any coordination and collaboration with agencies that deal with matters of GBV on the county and national government level. Furthermore, 17 (85%) pastors indicated that they had not

established coordination or partnership with other agencies dealing with the eradication of gender-based violence.

The study further wanted to establish from the agencies that deal with curbing gender-based violence the role that the PAG church has played in curbing gender-based violence. For the role to be established, the research was conversant that there ought to be programs promoting collaboration and partnership between the PAG church and agencies dealing with GBV issues. Responding to this, all the 10 (100%) respondents who represented agencies that deal with curbing gender-based violence indicated that the church had no structures and programs in place that would enable collaboration and partnership in curbing GBV. For instance, one of the respondents, a FIDA representative posited:

The church has not presented its agenda on programs fostering collaboration and partnership in fighting GBV with our organization. Working with churches has been among our priorities, given that they command a number of congregants at least on a weekly basis. As an organization, we have a few cases presented by the church, with various churches seeking our intervention in matters concerning GBV on victims who are their members. However, mapping the churches on the basis of their number visa vis the number of cases they do present, one would clearly say that they have not done enough in relaying information on GBV. As it stands, cases of GBV escalate day by day. The question of whether PAG churches in Vihiga County have ever presented any information, complained, or asked for help on the GBV case is a good start for us to question the role of major Christian denominations in fighting GBV. From our desk, we only have one case presented by PAG church, from Kisumu County but not Vihiga County. We, however, have several cases of GBV from Vihiga County reported implying that women in Vihiga County need help in this matter (Interview, NGO rep 7).

The narration above implies that the collaboration between the church and other agencies that deal with cases of GBV violence is poor. However, reading from the response, it is evident that much needs to be done, not only with agencies like FIDA but collectively as a society. Leaning on the church's strength, bringing

people together and getting the relevant information, the PAG church must take a step forward in helping handle cases of GBV in conjunction with other interested agencies. Given that cases of GBV are prevalent in Vihiga County, as revealed in the narration above, the church can act as a link between the victims and such agencies in seeking justice and general help required by GBV victims.

Reporting cases of GBV to relevant authorities is a task that is entitled to every citizen, government officer, and non-state actor, such as the church. Based on this, the current study sought to establish whether or not the PAG church had any information on reporting cases of gender-based violence. Results indicated that 18 (90%) of the local pastors did not understand how they could report cases of GBV violence to the relevant authorities dealing with GBV. Most of them pointed out that they are always engaged in ministry work and rarely get time to interact with other groups of interest within the society. Additionally, the study asked representatives from various agencies that relate to matters of GBV how they work with the PAG church in reporting and collaborating on the cases.

A representative from the Ministry of Public Service and Gender said

There is a fragile link between the government and the religious organizations, more so the church. The church is rich in information but rarely fosters the relation that it should have with the state as other non-state actors like nongovernmental organizations do. The other non-state actors know there is a channel to report cases related to GBV, but most church leaders have no information on this. Though you asked about the PAG church, I must mention that all churches do not understand the procedure involved in helping the victims of GBV in society. During the COVID-19 period, cases of GBV escalated, and because there were minimal activities, most of the survivors suffered, with some only able to reach their pastors and confining their GBV grievances in them. The public needs to note that to report cases of GBV, the church can use National GBV helpline 1195, and assistance can be provided to survivors (Interview, Public Service Rep).

Just as the narration above indicates, there is a disconnect between the church and state agencies relating to GBV matters. However, this should not be the case as there should be a good working relationship between the two to help each other in disseminating societal mandates vested in them as institutions. As a global matter of concern, cases of GBV should be given the weight they deserve through the non-state, such as the church working closely with both county and national governments.

6.4.2 PAG Church and Provision of Support Services to the Survivors

PAG church, being an established religion, can solicit resources that would enable the survivors of gender-based violence to get the assistance they need in both financial and material support. The study further asked the church leadership (pastors and district leadership) whether they had programs in place that offered support services to the GBV survivors. Responding to this, 30(88.2%) of the District Overseers and 32(94.08%) of the women district directors indicated that they had no programs in place that aimed to offer support services to the survivors of GBV. Furthermore, 19 (95%) of the pastors indicated that they had established such programs that endeavored to offer support services to the GBV survivors within their church. One of the pastors speaking about the issue in context said;

As a church, we have only mercy ministry, where we deal with the widows and orphans in the church. We receive help from well-wishers to run such programs that provide basic needs for widows, starting small businesses and paying fees for orphans, and providing shelter to some of them who have totally nowhere to stay. On the side of GBV, we have not done much given that it is an emerging issue that needs much attention to understand the dynamics involved and the approach to dealing with the victims, let alone helping by offering financial or material support (Interview, Pastor 18).

As indicated in the narration given by one of the pastors above, the church has focused more on mercy ministry, a ministry that deals with vulnerable individuals in

the church, mainly widows and orphans. However, some members who can be otherwise categorized as vulnerable cases have been left out, the GBV victims or survivors. What is evident from the narration above is that the church has not fully embraced the issue of GBV because the church leadership has not well understood it. However, as mentioned in the narration, well-wishers support the church in running the mercy ministry, which supports the widows with basic needs and even starts small businesses and supports orphans by paying their school fees and other necessitating them with shelter; the same can be extended to survivors of GBV and their children. Various agencies that deal with GBV work hand in hand with the rescue centers for GBV survivors for GBV, an opportunity that the PAG church can tap into to give support services to victims of GBV. For instance, while commenting on the issue of offering support to rescue centers for the GBV survivors, one of the agency representatives from KEFADO stated;

KEFADO has worked closely with very various community-based organizations in the larger western regions in training, empowering, and mentoring women, including GBV survivors from various rescue centers and those we are directed to by individuals and other agencies dealing with GBV matters. As KEFADO, we are fully aware of the role the church is playing in changing society in various aspects of life. However, we have not gotten a chance to work with most churches in dealing with GBV matters. What I know is that PAG church is dominant in Vihiga County, but we have not worked closely yet with them in offering support services to the victims of GBV. I hope we will have an opportunity to work together in the near future.

6.4.3 Pentecostal Assemblies of God and Gender-based Violence Awareness.

The study further sought to establish the extent of awareness that PAG churches have put in place to bring to public attention the GBV issue to its congregants. This was imperative given that awareness programs are carried out by some other players who have tasked themselves with the mandate of fighting gender-based violence, including faith-based organizations. In the first place, the war against gender-based violence

cannot be won if awareness programs are not even in place. Second, it is more important to understand that churches always organize weekly meetings, mostly on Sundays, as is the case of the PAG church, giving a good forum for them to engage the congregants on various issues of concern, including gender-based violence.

The study asked the respondents to rate the statements below on a scale of 1-3 where 1= Always, 2=Sometimes and 3=Never and thereafter leave a comment on each. The results are presented in the table below (n=34).

Table 6.1: District Overseer Responses

Statement	1	2	3	Total
The church has a policy framework for creating awareness of gender-based violence	0	0	34	34
The church organizes seminars and meetings that address gender-based violence issues	0	7	28	34
We encourage pastors to talk about gender-based violence during their sermons	0	0	34	34
We have successful cases of rescued victims who are used as crusaders of matters pertaining to gender-based violence	0	0	34	34
We deliberately speak about issues of gender-based violence during leaders' meetings	0	3	31	34

Source: Field Data (2021)

Findings in the table above indicate that most of the PAG church has no policy framework that directs their various local churches on creating awareness, given that 20 (100%) respondents indicated that the church has no policy framework on curbing gender-based violence. Most of the comments given on this issue pointed towards the fact that the issue of gender-based violence has not gained recognition within the church domain. Furthermore, 7 (25%) of the respondents indicated that the church

sometimes organizes seminars and meetings to address the issue of gender-based violence, while 28 (75%) of the respondents indicated that this never takes place. Comments on this statement indicated that the meeting and seminar conveners must decide which issue they are to handle during such sessions. This implies that gender-based violence is just tackled by chance as any other topical issue that affects Christians today within their daily lives.

Additionally, the findings show that 34 (100%) respondents indicated that the leadership does not encourage the pastors to include the issue of gender-based violence in their sermons. Commenting on the same, most of the respondents opined that it is the role of the pastor to decide which sermon she or he will be preaching and not the role of leadership, implying that it is not a guarantee that the pastor will prepare a sermon on GBV throughout the year. A study by Maloba (2018) opined that most church leaders fail to address the issue of gender-based violence on the pulpit because of ignorance on the matter and sometimes are the perpetrators of the same.

Another critical issue that the researcher wanted to establish on the issue of the PAG church in Vihiga County creating awareness was whether or not the church had success stories and victims whom they had rescued from gender-based violence. Results indicate that all 34(100%) respondents indicated that they had never had such victims whom they could use in creating awareness of gender-based violence in their churches. Such a scenario paints a picture depicting that PAG churches have not put in enough effort to help gender-based violence victims gain freedom from the aftermath of trauma and bondage. Lastly, 3(15%) of the respondents indicated that they normally discuss issues that are related to gender-based violence in their leadership meetings, while 30 (85%) of the respondents indicated that they never

discuss such issues. Commenting on the reasons why, most of the respondents indicated that they normally have agendas set before the meeting and mostly fail even to exhaust the issues, leaving no time to discuss issues on gender-based violence.

The study also sought to establish the role of pastors in helping the church on matters of gender-based violence awareness. Given that pastors are always in touch with the congregants, it is elementary for them to reach the congregants with the messages that they ought to pass across easily more than the leaders of higher rank.

6.4.4 PAG and Theological Reflections and Reforms

As discussed earlier, the church has a mandate to foster theological reflection and reforms in efforts to curb gender-based violence that emanates from the church's teaching and practices. Members of the church indicated that the church promotes gender-based violence in a number of ways, inter alia, misinterpretation of scriptures, patriarchal structures and practices, misuse of submission and obedience for women in marriage and church, and perceived inferiority of women. Churches in Vihiga County have been deemed to lean towards syncretism, mixing cultural traditions, faith, or religious practices. This has left women with very little to do in disseminating marriage and church duties.

The study asked the respondents to comment on reflections and reforms that have been put in place in relation to the PAG theology as it relates to women. Responding to this, 33 (97%) of the district women directors indicated that nothing has been done to reflect and reform the challenges enshrined in the theological perspectives of the PAG church towards women. Still on the same, 30 (88.2%) of the district overseers opined that the PAG church has not yet done much in reforming their theological

perspectives on women in marriage and church ministry. Speaking on the issue in context, one of the district overseers opined;

PAG church has one of the best theologies, balanced about the biblical teachings and guidelines. In fact, our theology is what most of the churches around draw from, given that most of them have attended our bible school, which has been in existence for a very long period. From where I sit, I have not heard any concern about reforming any aspect of our theological perspectives based on women-related debates like the gender-based violence one. If anything, we have assigned women more roles in the church as compared to what the bible illustrates. Therefore, in a nutshell, I am reluctant to recommend any review in favor of women as there is nothing wrong with what is on the table for them ministry-wise (Interview, District Overseer 28).

Analyzing the narration above leads to the conclusion that the leadership of the PAG church is satisfied with the theological structure put in place for women's ministry and marriage matters. Clearly, one would see that whatever is enshrined in the theological perspectives of the PAG church has been in existence for a long time, and the fact that it has been taught for a long time, changing it means erasing the identity of the church just as the narrator above insinuates.

6.4.5 PAG Church on Engaging men And Boys

The study further sought to establish whether the PAG church had programs geared towards engaging boys and men in the fight against GBV. This was critical given that boys and men are the major perpetrators of GBV in society and even at church. However, assembly pastors, district women directors, and district overseers seemed not to understand the concept of engaging men and boys, which seemed strange to them. For instance, the response below came from one of the assembly pastors, which mirrors most of the responses given by other respondents.

Maybe let me begin by asking you to elaborate on what you mean by engaging boys and men..... (After the researcher explains, the pastor goes ahead to say)... It is not something that we have come across;

however, it seems to be a good idea for the future. We can consider that from now on.

The response in context indicates that society and the church, by extension, are not yet ready to embrace the aspect of engaging boys and men in an effort to curb gender-based violence. However, just as the respondent puts it, the novel idea can prove to be so fruitful in the future when adopted and implemented. In this regard, men can police fellow men and educate each other, creating necessary awareness and strategies to curb GBV.

6.5 Effect of Gender-Based Violence on Women Ministers in PAG Church

6.5.1 Fear and Mistrust

Gender-based violence can create a culture of fear and mistrust within a church. This can occur in several ways. For example, women who have experienced gender-based violence may be hesitant to attend church or participate in church activities, as they may not feel safe or comfortable in the presence of their abuser or in a community where abuse is not taken seriously. Additionally, if a church is seen as a place where women are not safe or respected, it can lead to a loss of trust within the community (Hynes *et al.*, 2004).

This culture of fear and mistrust can have many negative effects on the church community. For one, it can lead to a lack of female participation and representation within the church, which can further marginalize women and perpetuate gender-based violence (Abdi, 2016). Additionally, it can create an environment where women do not feel comfortable sharing their stories or seeking help, which can make it difficult for the church to address and prevent gender-based violence. Furthermore, it can make the church less inclusive and less representative of the community it serves,

which can negatively impact the church's ability to reach out and serve the community.

To address this culture of fear and mistrust, it is important for church leaders and members to actively work to create a safe and inclusive environment for women. This can include educating themselves on the issue of gender-based violence, creating a culture of openness and support for women, and providing support and resources for those who have been affected by violence. Additionally, church leaders need to be transparent, responsive and accountable in handling any cases of gender-based violence reported within the church. Also, it is important to create policies, protocols and procedures that are sensitive to gender-based violence and to ensure that they are followed (Magezi, 2019).

6.5.2 Effect on Leadership

Gender-based violence can lead to a lack of female leadership within the church. This can occur in several ways. For example, women who have experienced gender-based violence may be hesitant to take on leadership roles, such as becoming a Sunday school teacher or serving on the church council, for fear of being further marginalized or abused (Briggite, 2013). Additionally, women may not be given the same opportunities for leadership as men, due to the assumption that they are not as capable or trustworthy. This can perpetuate a patriarchal culture within the church, where men are seen as more suitable for leadership positions than women (Mutuku, 2013).

This lack of female representation in leadership can have some negative effects on the church. For instance, it perpetuates the idea that men are more capable and qualified to lead, which can further marginalize women. This can also lead to a lack of diversity

in leadership, resulting in a lack of perspectives and voices being heard. Additionally, it can make the church less inclusive and less representative of the community it serves, which can negatively impact the church's ability to reach out and serve the community (Michelle, 2018).

In order to address this lack of female leadership, it is important for church leaders and members to actively work to create a culture where women are encouraged and supported in taking on leadership roles (Medie, 2019). This can include providing training and mentoring for women, as well as actively seeking out and nominating women for leadership positions. Additionally, it is important to challenge the patriarchal cultural assumptions that women are not as capable or trustworthy as men, and to actively work to create a culture where women are seen as equal partners in leadership (Michelle, 2018).

6.5.3 Perception

Another issue that was pointed out by 46% of FGD respondents was the fact that - gender-based violence can lead to a negative perception of the church by the wider community. The respondents opined that this can occur in many ways, for example, if a church is seen as a place where women are not safe or respected, it can lead to a loss of credibility and trust in the eyes of the community. Additionally, if a church is not seen as taking gender-based violence seriously or if it is not responsive or transparent in handling cases of gender-based violence, it can further damage its reputation.

This negative perception of the church can have several negative effects on the church's ability to reach out and serve the community. For instance, it can make it difficult for the church to attract new members, as people may not want to be

associated with an institution that is not seen as supportive or respectful of women. Additionally, it can make it difficult for the church to form partnerships with other organizations or to be seen as a credible and trustworthy community leader. Furthermore, it can lead to a lack of trust and credibility among the people the church serves, which can make it difficult for the church to effectively serve and meet the needs of the community. Responding on the approach to be taken, one of the respondents said:

To address this negative perception of the church, it is important for church leaders and members to actively work to create a culture of respect and support for women. This can include educating themselves on the issue of gender-based violence, creating a culture of openness and support for women, and providing support and resources for those who have been affected by violence. Additionally, it is important for church leaders to be transparent, responsive and accountable in handling any cases of gender-based violence reported within the church, and to communicate openly with the community about the steps the church is taking to address and prevent gender-based violence. Finally, it is important to be proactive in communicating the church's stance on gender-based violence and to take an active role in promoting gender equality and preventing violence in the community (FGD, Respondent 14).

6.5.4 Psychological and Emotional Harm

Gender-based violence, including sexual harassment and assault, can have a particularly devastating impact on women who minister in churches. This is because these women often have a deep sense of commitment to their faith and to the community that they serve. When they experience abuse or harassment within the church, it can be particularly difficult for them to reconcile this with their beliefs and values (Malika, 2017). The trauma of such experiences can lead to a range of negative effects, including depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and a loss of trust in others. These women may also face additional barriers to seeking help and support, as they may feel that they will be disbelieved or blamed, and may fear

damaging their reputation or losing their position in the church. Furthermore, if the abuse is committed by a person in a position of authority, it can make it harder for the victim to speak out and report the abuse, which can further exacerbate the trauma (Daisy and Milla, 2016).

Additionally, the impact of gender-based violence can be compounded when the abuse occurs within an institution that is supposed to be a place of safety and support, such as a church. This can lead to feelings of betrayal and isolation and make it difficult for women to continue participating in the church or seeking support from its members. They may also question their faith and call to ministry and struggle with guilt and shame. It is important to understand that this type of abuse can have far-reaching and long-lasting effects on the victim's mental and emotional well-being and that it is essential for churches to have clear policies in place to address and prevent gender-based violence.

6.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter in context endeavored to establish the response of Pentecostal Assemblies of God Church on curbing GBV in Vihiga County, Kenya. Findings in this chapter reveal several issues related to the PAG church in Vihiga County and GBV. To begin with, the findings indicate that despite the efforts that other FBOs in other regions have achieved, the PAG church in Vihiga County has done very little to emulate the potential embedded in FBOs. This can be attributed to the fact that the knowledge on GBV is limited to Intimate Partner Violence regardless of the wide GBV scope and lack of goodwill due to strong patriarchal and cultural dictates of the land, which extends to the church. Additionally, the chapter established that the church had not put in place any measure to curb GBV even within the church's confinements, making

it difficult to help victims who suffered from external GBV. Finally, the chapter established the dysfunctional part of the church as conceptualised by structural functionalism theory, where it only focused on the spiritual aspect, ignoring or failing to align with other social issues like GBV. The next chapter presents the challenges faced by the PAG church in curbing GBV in Vihiga County, Kenya.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE CHALLENGES THAT PENTECOSTAL ASSEMBLIES OF GOD EXPERIENCE IN DEALING WITH WOMEN GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE IN VIHIGA COUNTY

7.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the research findings of the fourth objective, which sought to bring to understanding the challenges encountered in the fight against gender-based violence in PAG churches in Vihiga County. This section contains the research findings obtained from the focus group discussions and Key informant interviews. The major challenges experienced in the fight against GBV were highlighted, and this was preceded by an analysis of statements made regarding the research findings.

7.2 Lack of Awareness and Education

As indicated earlier, gender-based violence is a very serious issue that affects people across the board. However, as the study established from the knowledge of the respondents on gender-based violence early, the church lacks awareness and education on the same. Given that the study was conducted in an area where cultural traditions and patriarchal issues are prevalent, most of the people who understand the issue of GBV have not stepped out to educate society and the church at large.

In the course of this study, 63% of the assembly pastors indicated that the church lacked proper awareness programs that would put the issue of gender-based violence in perspective. This implies that even those who access the pulpit and have time to speak to the congregants have not factored in issues of GBV as a concern in contemporary society. Furthermore, 78% of respondents of various FGDs pointed out that they lacked in the beginning a proper understanding of the issue of GBV just as the two excerpts below posit:

From my perspective, I believe that the lack of proper education and campaigns on gender-based violence in this society and the church, in extension, has been a major hindrance to addressing the aspect of GBV. As you have seen and heard (referring to the moderator), most of us misunderstood the issue of GBV, thinking that it is only in line with domestic violence. However, through this session, we have noticed that GBV is a very serious issue that requires serious sensitisation and awareness forums in various places that we meet, like in “Chamas,” churches, and public barazas.

I never knew that I was a victim of GBV until today when we held this interactive session. Imagine I am a learned leader in the church but I had very little knowledge on GBV! What about the person who is on a lower level in education and position of influence like mine? I do not need to say that I will wait for the government to come in to initiate programs that aim to create awareness and sensitisation on GBV matters. With my position of influence, I am going to become an agent for women against GBV in society. Personally, I believe we have to educate each other as women and overcome our ignorance on this issue.

The narrations above bring out two critical issues on the aspect of lack of awareness and education on GBV. First, from the first narration, the narrator is clearly expressing the position of most people, especially women, in church and society at large: lack of knowledge of what GBV is and what it entails. This in itself calls for the church, which is a crusader of values in society, to step up and educate its members on the issue of GBV. In the second case, the narrator points towards the fact that even the learned people and the leadership of the church do not understand GBV and, therefore, have done nothing to create awareness and sensitisation on the same. However, the narrator believes that she can be a crusader of the anti-GBV campaign to create much-needed sensitisation and awareness.

Furthermore, 90% of the District Women Directors and 83% of the district general overseers pointed toward this same issue of lack of awareness and education. This is in support of the results from the FGDs, as discussed before. A study by Kapuma (2015) indicated that the church has failed to address the issue of GBV within its rich

network because it has not done enough to ensure that its members have an understanding of what it is in the first place. Therefore, he posits that this has put the church in a bad shape to be part of the solution. The same position is found in the study that was conducted by Mukuka (2013), stating that the church body of Christ has been wounded diversely but with no knowledge and understanding of what the wounds are (meaning cases of gender-based violence) to an extent that even the pastoral unit of the church perpetrates.

Nkaabu (2019) posits that the church, through its leadership, has a great role in averting GBV but, to an extent, lacks the initiative to create awareness and sensitisation on the said issue. As a result, she further says that the church leaders are obligated to organise conferences, seminars, and family meets to address this issue. Her argument supports the arguments by Musodza *et al.* (2015), who depict the church as a place where GBV awareness should be given much emphasis as the podium is the right place to pass across a message that carries the voice and the thoughts of God on humanity, which are against the issue of gender-based violence. Even though their study established that the church in Zimbabwe was doing much better in creating awareness of GBV, they further question its efforts in crusading the same message to the community at large rather than confining it just within the walls of the church.

When proper awareness and education on GBV are carried out, society will be in a position to understand what it is, the types involved, the causes and the measures that ought to be taken to combat it. Most of the campaigns and awareness programs that have been in place have placed much emphasis on zero tolerance on all forms of GBV as well as informing women and girls about their rights in the society at large. As the

study by Guedes *et al.* (2002) put it, when human beings understand their rights in society, they tend to know the direction to take when their rights are violated. In their case, they posited that GBV is the major depriver of human rights and various authoritative bodies, including the church, ought to rise and incorporate the message of human rights and anti-gender-based violence campaigns to help the victims.

7.3 Stigma and Shame from the Victims

Stigma and shame from the victims of gender-based violence were among the key challenges that came out during the current study. In this regard, 67% of the assembly pastors and 73% of district overseers pointed out that some of the church members may be afraid to share the grievances they go through on matters concerning GBV because they are afraid that they may be stigmatised or end up facing shame. One of the reasons the assembly pastors associated with the challenge of stigma and shame was the fact that some of the acts that the victims go through, like rape and exchange of sex for favours, might taint their image negatively in society despite the fact that they are just but victims of GBV circumstances. Additionally, 90% of District Women Directors pointed out the same challenge, with most of them citing the aspect of the place and women in society as one of the contributors to this challenge. For instance, 7 district women leaders indicated that women fear being stigmatised because they lack a voice of expression in society.

During FGDs, most of 70% of the respondents pointed out that stigma and shame are major challenges in addressing GBV in society. Sharing their experiences, some of the respondents insinuated that they have some embarrassing issues that they have faced, which are related to gender-based violence that they cannot dare mention before people. Just as the District Women Directors had pointed out earlier,

respondents pointed out that their position in society makes it difficult to come out and express issues to do with gender-based violence in that society demeans them. It was, therefore, in their opinion that sharing some of the issues they go through would imply that they undergo some issues that are culturally based besides people failing to believe in them because of the domineering patriarchal nature of the society. The narration below sums up the challenge in context.

I have had two cases at my disposal of women who came seeking advice. The main issue is that they had gone through some issues related to gender-based violence but did not know the approach to take. In one of the cases, the lady had been raped by one of the brothers-in-law who was very close with her husband. The main problem here was that the husband would always defend his brother at the expense of the wife whenever the wife reported that the brother-in-law had some suggestions. At one point, she said she experienced physical violence as a result, pointing out the brother's illness. Therefore, when the incident happened, the lady became ashamed because she would be branded as a disgrace to the family, and so she chose to pretend like nothing happened. The second case involved a lady who borrowed five thousand shillings on interest. After a period of 3 years, the money had accumulated to about 40 thousand. Because the lady was unable to pay, the debtor began using her sexually. She could not report this case because she feared she would be traumatised or be the talk of the village. Though I managed to help her pay the money, she had already been misused and had nothing to do about it.

Just as the narration above puts it, women stand in a position that compromises their freedom of expression in some ways. Just as in the first case that the narrator encountered, women lack someone who can support their issues in society, but rather, they are traumatised and blackmailed by the very people to whom they should be attached for protection. One aspect that is clear even from the second case is that men have always taken advantage of women's vulnerability and economic status to sexually abuse them. Because women read through the script and realise that they will eventually be ashamed and traumatised, they tend to shy away.

A study conducted by Margherita and Troisi (2014) points towards the serious issue of trauma and shame that accompanies victims of gender-based violence that comes out in search of justice. They postulate that, reading from experience, most of the victims end up confirming the issues that require the pursuit of justice just to preserve their public image. The study further brings out the fact that most of the victims who have come out to seek justice on issues related to GBV have ended up suffering emotionally much more than getting the justice they deserve. As a result, a leeway is created for perpetrators to know that they are at liberty to explore women's vulnerabilities to their advantage.

In yet another study by Saint-Arnault and Zonp (2022), the issue of trauma and shame experienced by the victims who come out to report GBV cases is brought out as a major barrier to averting GBV. Based on past evidence, the study posits that most of the people in society, especially women and girls, suffer at the hands of their husbands, relatives and neighbours. As a result, they fear the traumatic aftermath that accompanies the revelation of what they went through, given the proximity of the perpetrators involved. This leaves a gap between the offences and justice, which is the right of the victim.

The church, having ministers who have gone through various theological courses, should understand the way they ought to handle the issue of gender-based violence in relation to what the victims go through after revealing what they have undergone. Combining wisdom, understanding and collaboration with other players or systems of justice should be prioritised by the church in fighting GBV for success. The researcher realised that most of the respondents, especially those who have undergone various forms of GBV, would prefer to keep their issues off from the church because

the pastors and other ministers would not take it seriously but rather use them as examples during summons.

7.4 Questionable Doctrine through Misinterpretation of some Scriptures

Respondents indicated that Pentecostal Assemblies of God church doctrine has some aspects that act as a challenge in the fight against GBV. The study established that the doctrine is aligned with some of the scripture from the bible, which, to an extent, is misused. This was deemed by the respondents a promoter of domestic and patriarchal sort of violence, which has for a long time affected women within the PAG church. This problem was highlighted by 90% of District Women Directors who expressed their concern about the treatment they received from the church leadership about the roles they play in the church. For instance, when responding to this, one of the respondents said;

The setup of functions within the PAG church, to an extent, has a problem that ought to be rectified shortly. The reason why I am pointing this out is that female ministers in this denomination are not allowed to carry out some functions in the process of their ministry work on the basis that the bible does not allow. Most of the time a woman minister in the church would mostly be involved in activities like preaching and specific kinds of prayers. This is a typical image of a patriarchal society where leaders of the church are not ready to accept that we are not living under the law but by grace. For instance, Paul's writing, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet," from his first letter to Timothy, has been misused by most people. In this regard, Paul was speaking concerning the culture of Jews, but non-Jews have used this against women who have been called to ministry. This is just but an example among many other scriptures in the bible that have been used to stereotype women in society.

During the focus group discussions, the issue of misuse of biblical perspectives on women was presented by 65% of the respondents. Among the key issues mentioned during the discussions include the roles of women in leadership positions in the church, limitations in performing some church rituals, their involvement on the table

of decision making and their voice in gender-based matters. Citing examples from the bible, women expressed some of their disappointments on the trajectory of the church on the matter in context. For instance, one of the women narrated this particular ordeal from the bible as stated below;

Most of the preachers in the church still subscribe to the case of the woman who was found in adultery as portrayed in the Gospel of John. The Bible clearly states that Jesus was brought a woman who was found in adultery, and the crowd wanted to stone her. In this story, I notice that the man was given special treatment since the bible says that the woman was caught in the very act. This implies that the man was present, but the crowd did not see any fault in the man but rather decided that the woman should die. Given that the law of the land by then permitted this and Jesus rejected it implies that Jesus changed the order of this and brought equality in perspective of sin and a place of a woman. However, what some church leaders are doing today, even within PAG, would imply that they still believe that the law is still in control and that women should be mistreated because the bible says so. Too bad.

From the narration above, the plight of women on GBV can be seen as well as felt. A point to consider here is the fact that the church leaders are being mentioned as part of the problem instead of being part of the solution. Just as the narrator ended her narration, “too bad” implies that something somewhere is going a mess and needs to be addressed, just as the previous passage from the district woman director indicated. True to the statements in the two passages, 40% of the pastors pointed towards the fact that some church leaders do not understand the position of the role of women in biblical times versus modern times. Some of the pastors indicated that they believe the role of women has evolved in the church and should be allowed to teach and preach alongside performing other church rituals.

Kugler *et al.* (2019), in their books, highlight two critical issues relating to the role of the church in gender-based violence. First, they postulate that the church should align the scriptural issues that are related to gender-based violence in the context that it fits

to avoid the misuse of various scriptures to disadvantage women and promote GBV. Second, the church should correctly separate the aspect of cultural and biblical concepts when addressing GBV. Similarly, a position that was early held by Graham (2004) had besieged the church to reconsider their perspective on GBV, especially in line with the reasoning of the biblical concepts.

Campaign (2007) argued that it is true that the bible has traces of what can be termed as serious cases of GBV on various occasions, but each one of them has to be taken in the context it deserves to be. He states that some cases of gender-based violence were seriously condemned, and perpetrators were taken into account, while others seemed not to favour women as the law was somehow oppressing women. However, he posited that the bible has every word that can be used to condemn cases of GBV rather than promote it as some tend to misuse it. Early on, the work by Heise (1998) laid a platform for GBV to be understood on a biblical basis, saying that the bible chooses the words to use when defining the relationship between men and women. For instance, she explains the use of words like “submission” and “respect” as the bible calls on women to act and reflects on the way the two are misused to perpetrate gender-based violence.

7.5 Culture and Traditional Challenges

Every institution boasts of its collective values, beliefs, norms and practices, which define and shape the way they conduct their activities and interactions. In the case of PAG, church institutional culture is defined by their theological perspectives, leadership structures and styles, societal context and traditions. This implies that decisions are made based on this culture, and the position taken on various societal issues should incline to the cultural dictates. In the African setup, institutional culture

is mostly affected by the culture of the land. In this case, some of the tenets that religious institutions are built on are informed by the cultural directions, just as the case is in Vihiga County.

During the focused group discussion, 73% of the respondents pointed out that culture and traditions can significantly hinder the church in its fight against gender-based violence due to deeply ingrained norms, beliefs, and practices that perpetuate harmful attitudes and behaviours towards women. Among the issues they mentioned encompassing cultural values and gender-based violence include traditional gender roles, patriarchal structures, and the notion of male dominance, which often contribute to the marginalization and subjugation of women, creating an environment where violence against them is tolerated, justified, or even normalized. For instance, a member of FGD opined:

Women have no voice in the culture and traditions of Africa, especially in this region of western Kenya. It is very difficult for even church leaders to change their perspective on women as they have grown up in the same culture that discriminates against women and alleviates men. This is a saddening truth in a society characterized by growing Christian faith. What a paradox (FGD, Respondent 203).

A study conducted by Omuga (2010) indicates that the PAG church in Vihiga County has more women as compared to men. This indicates that women respond more to church-related activities than men. However, in her discussion, she reveals that women tend to follow the cultural dictates when relating to their husbands at home and equally tend to fulfill the requirements of the church. This implies that there is a mixture of both faith and culture so that they may be fully accepted in society. It is, therefore, worth noting that syncretism has taken centre stage in promoting gender-based violence as the church is fully aware of what the culture detected and lacks what to say as it is part of the same society. The most dangerous part of this practice

is that it tends to lean more on the side of the culture than on the side of religion or, rather, faith dictates.

7.6 Resources Constraint

Resources for FBOs in their quest to combat GBV are so fundamental aspects for effective and successful results. To begin with, the PAG church's lack of resources hinders it from developing its capacity to understand, prevent and respond to GBV effectively. When speaking of capacity building, it is imperative that the dedicated staff that deals with cases relating to gender-based violence be facilitated and trained to volunteer on issues that are GBV related, including spotting signs of abuse, developing a clear framework on trauma-informed care and giving other support services related to GBV cases. Just as Njagi (2017) posits, FBOs ought to find a way to facilitate their teams dedicated to dealing with GBV cases they encounter often. This can be achieved by ensuring that they have the capacity to handle various issues that come their way and give a lasting solution rather than encouraging them to fail to help.

Furthermore, fighting GBV requires that the PAG church develops programs and follows them up to ensure that implementation is well done. Marshall *et al.* (2021) argue that most institutions come up with very good plans but fail to implement them because they lack what it takes in terms of the resources required. In this light, therefore, the PAG church's lack of resources means that they may not be in a position to implement the programs that are geared towards curbing GBV. An important point to note is that churches have their own routine programs, which they fundraise to facilitate; therefore, getting extra resources for other programs like GBV related proves to be a tall order for most of these churches, especially those situated in rural

setups. For instance, programs geared towards awareness campaigns, counselling services, organising workshops and pursuing legal action for victims prove to be expensive for a church like PAG to manage due to its limited resources.

Research indicates that resources generally play a vital role in the war against gender violence as they enable various institutions involved in the war to provide support services, develop and implement programs, champion policy change, engage various stakeholders and build capacity. Success stories from FBOs and GBV emanate from organisations marshalling for resources from donors, well-wishers, other NGOs and the governments to successfully strategise and implement their programs. (Le Roux *et al.*, 2016). Despite the fact that PAG church has a resource base in terms of people, financial and material support implies that even if the plans were to be put in place, they would still encounter the challenges presented by lack of resources.

7.8 Chapter Summary

The Chapter established that the Pentecostal Assemblies of God church faces significant challenges in addressing gender-based violence within its community. Firstly, deeply ingrained patriarchal structures and traditional interpretations of religious texts often perpetuate harmful gender norms, reinforcing the power imbalances that contribute to violence against women. Challenging these deeply rooted beliefs requires a delicate balance of promoting gender equality while respecting religious teachings. Additionally, the stigma and shame associated with discussing issues of gender-based violence can hinder survivors from seeking help within religious communities, and clergy members may lack the necessary training and resources to respond to such cases appropriately. The chapter further established that limited resources available within religious institutions, both in terms of financial

support and specialised services like counselling and legal aid, can further hinder their ability to address gender-based violence comprehensively. Lastly, the chapter established that lack of awareness, or adequate knowledge and understanding of the complexities of gender-based violence, including its causes, consequences, and appropriate responses, hinder the ability to provide effective support and guidance to survivors of the church community. The next chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

The main aim of the study was to explore gender-based violence as a societal phenomenon in reflection on the Pentecostal Assemblies of God church response to the phenomenon in Vihiga County. This chapter presents a summary of study findings, conclusion, and recommendation as informed by the study findings.

8.2 Summary of Study Findings

First, the study established that gender-based violence refers to any form of violence or discrimination inflicted upon individuals based on their gender and affects women mostly, as was the case in the current study. Gender-based violence encompasses a wide range of abusive behaviours, both physical and psychological, targeting individuals due to their gender identity or perceived gender roles. The study established various forms of gender-based violence, like domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment, trafficking, forced marriages, and female genital mutilation, among others. Further, the study established that the causes of gender-based violence are deeply rooted in societal structures, cultural norms, and power imbalances. Discriminatory attitudes, rigid gender roles, and the reinforcement of patriarchal values contribute to the perpetuation of violence against women, girls, and gender minorities. Economic disparities, lack of education, and limited access to resources further exacerbate the vulnerability of marginalised individuals, leaving them more susceptible to violence. In this regard, gender-based violence has far-reaching and devastating effects. For instance, survivors often experience physical injuries, health complications, emotional trauma, and long-term psychological consequences. Furthermore, their sense of safety, self-esteem, and overall well-being are severely

compromised. Gender-based violence also perpetuates cycles of abuse, affecting future generations and hindering social progress. Moreover, it undermines social cohesion, perpetuates inequalities, and inhibits the full participation of individuals in society.

The second objective established that Faith-based organizations play a vital role in curbing women gender-based violence by utilizing their influence and moral authority to address the issue within their communities. Faith-based organizations have the potential to challenge harmful beliefs, promote gender equality, and foster a culture of respect and non-violence. The study further established that they can raise awareness about GBV through education, sermons, and awareness campaigns, promoting healthy relationships and challenging gender stereotypes. Moreover, the findings reveal that faith-based organizations provide survivors with crucial support and counselling services, offering a safe space and access to resources. Through advocacy, faith-based organizations can push for policies and legislation that protect survivors and prevent GBV. Additionally, faith-based organizations engage men and boys to redefine masculinity, address harmful gender norms, and encourage their active involvement in combating GBV. Lastly, the study findings reveal that, by collaborating with other stakeholders and implementing prevention programs, faith-based organizations contribute significantly to curbing GBV and creating inclusive communities that prioritize the rights and well-being of all individuals.

Even though faith-based organisations have played a very significant role in fighting gender-based violence, including the church, the church's response to gender-based violence is not uniform across all denominations and communities, and challenges persist as the study established in the case of Pentecostal Assemblies of God church.

The denomination in context has not only done little to combat gender-based violence but has also not understood gender-based violence well. As the findings indicated, most of the respondents confused gender-based violence with one of its forms, domestic-based violence. Findings further established that there has been very little done by the clergy to address gender-based violence; in fact, instances of clergy promoting gender-based violence and mishandling of cases have further eroded trust in the Pentecostal Assemblies of God church's response. Cases of female clergy gender-based violence are still rampant within the denomination in context, as the current study established that patriarchal issues hinder women from doing much of the work that other women in Pentecostal denominations, especially in church rituals.

The study established that the Pentecostal Assemblies of God church faces significant challenges in addressing gender-based violence within its community. Firstly, deeply ingrained patriarchal structures and traditional interpretations of religious texts often perpetuate harmful gender norms, reinforcing the power imbalances that contribute to violence against women. Challenging these deeply rooted beliefs requires a delicate balance of promoting gender equality while respecting religious teachings. Additionally, the stigma and shame associated with discussing issues of gender-based violence can hinder survivors from seeking help within religious communities, and clergy members may lack the necessary training and resources to respond to such cases appropriately. The study further established that limited resources available within religious institutions, both in terms of financial support and specialized services like counseling and legal aid, can further hinder their ability to address gender-based violence comprehensively. Lastly, the study established that lack of awareness, or adequate knowledge and understanding of the complexities of gender-

based violence, including its causes, consequences, and appropriate responses, hinder the ability to provide effective support and guidance to survivors of the church community.

8.3 Conclusion

As the findings of the study established, gender-based violence is a societal phenomenon that encompasses a range of harmful behaviours and actions that are rooted in unequal power dynamics and societal norms. What is evident is that gender-based violence continues to escalate in society and manifests in various forms, such as physical, sexual, and psychological violence, affecting individuals across gender identities. The causes of gender-based violence can be defined as complex, including deep-seated cultural beliefs, discriminatory attitudes, and systemic inequalities. The effects of such violence are far-reaching, impacting the physical, emotional, and social well-being of survivors, perpetuating cycles of trauma and reinforcing gender inequality.

Religion, faith-based organizations in particular, play a crucial role in curbing gender-based violence by addressing its root causes and fostering a culture of equality, respect, and compassion. Through their teachings, values, and outreach programs, these organisations provide a moral compass, guidance, and support to individuals and communities affected by gender-based violence. By promoting gender equality, challenging harmful beliefs, and advocating for women's rights, faith-based organisations contribute to changing societal norms and attitudes. Additionally, they often provide safe spaces, counselling services, and empowerment programs, offering survivors the necessary tools to heal and rebuild their lives. Collaborating with other stakeholders, such as government agencies and non-profit organisations, faith-based

organisations can create a comprehensive network of support, education, and advocacy to combat gender-based violence effectively. Through their collective efforts, faith-based organisations bring hope, healing, and a vision of a world free from violence, where every individual is treated with dignity and respect, regardless of gender.

Despite the efforts by faith-based organisations showing signs of progress in curbing gender-based violence globally, Pentecostal Assemblies of God in Vihiga County seems to have very limited progress in curbing gender-based violence. The limited progress in curbing gender-based violence can be attributed to various factors prevalent in the area. Historically, the church has often adhered to traditional gender roles and interpretations of scripture, which have perpetuated harmful patriarchal norms and reinforced unequal power dynamics. Additionally, the church's hesitancy to openly address sensitive issues related to sexuality and gender has created barriers to meaningful dialogue and education. In some cases, institutional structures and hierarchies within the church have hindered the implementation of comprehensive policies and support systems for survivors. Moreover, there have been instances of clergy misconduct and abuse, which have eroded trust and further marginalised victims. However, it is important to recognise that many individuals and faith communities within the church actively work to challenge these shortcomings, engaging in advocacy, education, and support initiatives. By acknowledging and addressing these shortcomings, the church has the potential to play a transformative role in curbing gender-based violence and fostering a more just and compassionate society.

8.4 Recommendations

1. Pentecostal Assemblies of God should work towards establishing a team which can be responsible for developing and implementing strategies, organizing events and awareness campaigns, providing support services, and coordinating partnerships with relevant organisations.
2. Comprehensive leader training should be carried out for clergy and entire church leadership, which tackles education on the dynamics of gender-based violence, care of the victims and skills to support the survivors and hold perpetrators accountable
3. Pentecostal Assemblies of God should develop and implement clear policies and procedures outlining expectations for behaviour, reporting mechanisms for incidents, and guidelines for supporting survivors. These will help prevent and respond to gender-based violence within the church community by ensuring that all members are aware of these policies and that they are consistently enforced.
4. Increased collaboration with the Community and the government to forge partnerships that will see the mobilisation of resources and smooth operations among the three to eradicate the monotony of government dependency and discrepancies in dealing with cases related to gender-based violence.

8.5 Suggestions for Further Studies

- i. The researcher suggests that another comparative study can be done on the response of the PAG church in Vihiga County compared with that of other churches or religious institutions.

- ii.** The study further suggests that a study should be conducted on the Response of the PAG church on Violence against men in Vihiga county to fill the scope gap left by the current study, which focused on Women GBV only.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Introduction Letter

CATHERINE GANIRA

P.O BOX

VIHIGA

DATE:

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

I am a student at Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology pursuing a PhD degree in Religion. Currently, I am carrying out research titled: “Curbing Gender Based Violence in Kenya: A Critical Rejoinder of Pentecostal Assemblies of God Church, Vihiga County.” I am glad to inform you that you have been considered to take part in this study as a respondent. Your honesty and willingness to participate in this study will be highly appreciated. Note that your response will be treated with uttermost confidentiality.

Thanks for your co-operation.

Yours Sincerely.

CATHERINE GANIRA

PhD Student

Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology

Appendix II: Focused Group Discussion Question for Pag Assembly Women Church Members

Part A: Prevalence, Types, Causes and Effects of GBV in Vihiga County

1. What is your understanding of Gender Based Violence?
2. Do you have any personal experiences of Gender Based Violence? explain.
3. What types of gender-based violence are prevalent in Vihiga County?
4. What are the causes of various GBV cases in Vihiga County?
5. In your understanding, how does GBV affect a victim?

Part B: Response of PAG church on GBV in Vihiga County

6. Do your leaders have an understanding of GBV within your church?
7. Are there instances of GBV within the PAG church? If yes, give some examples.
8. Have you ever sought assistance from the PAG church on matters related to GBV?
9. Who did you approach and what was the response?
10. Do you think the PAG church has a mandate to curb GBV, or is it an issue that should be addressed legally only?
11. Does the PAG church carry out awareness programs on matters related to GBV?

12. Does the PAG church collaborate with other institutions and organs that have an interest in curbing GBV?
13. Which kind of support services can you mention in reflection to PAG church offering to the victims affected by GBV in their church?
14. In your observation, has the PAG church revised its theological and doctrinal guidelines that are deemed to promote patriarchy within its structure?
15. As an effort to respond to the growing nature of GBV, has the PAG church facilitated events that would see boys and men, who are the major perpetrators of GBV, engaged in various issues?
16. What do you think the PAG church can do to improve its response to GBV-related issues in the church and society at large?
17. In your observation, has the PAG church revised its theological and doctrinal guidelines that are deemed to promote patriarchy within its structure?

Part C: Challenges faced by PAG church in curbing GBV

18. Do you think the PAG church has enough resources to respond to various needs that arise from the victims of GBV?
19. Do you think the culture and traditions of the land may impede the PAG's quest to curb GBV?
20. Can you relate how a lack of awareness and education on GBV may affect PAG's efforts to curb GBV?

21. In your perspective, how do patriarchal structures within the PAG church act as a challenge for the PAG church in curbing GBV?

22. In your own understanding, what are some other challenges that may be standing in the way of PAG church in its effort to curb GBV?

Appendix III: Interview Schedule for District Women Directors

Part A: Prevalence, Types, Causes and Effects of GBV in Vihiga County

1. How do you understand GBV as a woman and a high-ranking leader in PAG church within the context of Vihiga County?
2. Based on your own experience, can you provide an overview of GBV prevalence in PAG church and Vihiga County in general?
3. From your perspective, what would you term as the primary causes of gender-based violence in Vihiga County?
4. What are the main types of GBV that are prevalent in Vihiga County and why is that the case according to your understanding?
5. What are some of the short-term and long-term effects of GBV on victims from your leadership point of view?
6. How often in your office have you received complaints or cases that are related to GBV?

Part B: Response of PAG church on GBV in Vihiga County

7. Have any specific initiatives or plans from the District Women's Directors' offices been implemented in response to GBV cases?
8. Do you have a collaboration structure with other agencies that deal with cases of GBV, and how has this been effective?

9. Given that you hold the office of District women director, what have you personally done to ensure that GBV survivors get the support services they need?
10. Looking into the future, what do you think the PAG church should do in terms of strategies and interventions in response to reducing GBV cases?
11. In your observation, has the PAG church revised its theological and doctrinal guidelines that are deemed to promote patriarchy within its structure?

Part C: Challenges

12. What do you perceive to be the most challenging issue that the PAG church faces in its effort to address GBV?
13. Do you think that the cultural and traditional orientations of the land impede the efforts of the PAG church in addressing GBV?
14. As a top leader, what are some of the internal challenges that the PAG church presents in the quest to curb GBV in Vihiga County?
15. Do you have limitations in terms of resources that limit your ability to handle various cases related to GBV in the church and community at large?
16. In your perspective, how do patriarchal structures within the PAG church act as a challenge for PAG church in curbing GBV?

Appendix IV: Interview Schedule for District Overseers

Part A: Prevalence, Types, Causes and Effects of GBV in Vihiga County

1. How do you understand GBV as a high-ranking leader in the PAG church within the context of Vihiga County?
2. Provide your own experience, can you provide an overview of GBV prevalence in PAG church and Vihiga County in general?
3. From your perspective, what would you term as the primary causes of gender-based violence in Vihiga County?
4. What are the main types of GBV that are prevalent in Vihiga County and why is that the case according to your understanding?
5. What are some of the short-term and long-term effects of GBV on victims from your leadership perspective?
6. How often in your office have you received complaints or cases that are related to GBV?

Part B: Response of PAG church on GBV in Vihiga County

7. How do you incorporate various principles relating to gender equality and women's empowerment into the broader agenda of curbing GBV?
8. What is your take as a leader on men taking the key leadership roles in the church as opposed to women in the case of PAG church?
9. Do you subscribe to the traditions and culture of the land in relation to the role of women and men in the separation of duties?

10. Have any specific initiatives or plans from the District Overseer office been implemented in response to GBV cases?
11. Do you have a collaboration structure with other agencies that deal with cases of GBV, and how has this been effective?
12. Given that you hold the office of District overseer, what have you personally done to ensure that GBV survivors get the support services they need?
13. Going into the future, what do you think PAG church should do in terms of strategies and interventions in response to GBV cases reduction?
14. In your own observation, has PAG church revised its theological and doctrinal guidelines that are deemed to promote patriarchy within its structure?

Part C: Challenges

15. What do you perceive to be the most challenging issue that the PAG church faces in its effort to address GBV?
16. Do you think that cultural and traditional orientations of the land impede the efforts of the PAG church in addressing GBV?
17. As a top leader, what are some of the internal challenges that the PAG church presents in the quest to curb GBV in Vihiga County?
18. Do you have limitations in terms of resources that limit your ability to handle various cases related to GBV in the church and community at large?
19. In your perspective, how do patriarchal structures within the PAG church act as a challenge for PAG church in curbing GBV?

Appendix V: Interview Schedule for Pag Local Assembly Pastors

Part A: Prevalence, Types, Causes and Effects of GBV in Vihiga County

1. As a local assembly church pastor, what are your roles prescribed in the PAG church constitution?
2. How do you understand the aspect of GBV from your perspective?
3. How do you assess the prevalence of GBV in the area of your jurisdiction and church at large?
4. What are the common forms of GBV in your church and the locality you serve?
5. Do you think your members have a clear understanding of GBV?
6. How many cases of GBV are reported to you by your local assembly church members in a year?
7. In your own experience, can you provide an overview of GBV prevalence in PAG church and Vihiga County in general?
8. From your perspective, what would you term as the primary causes of gender-based violence in Vihiga County?
9. What are the main types of GBV prevalent in Vihiga County, and why is that the case, according to your understanding as a pastor?
10. What are some of the short-term and long-term effects of GBV on victims from your perspectival point of view?
11. How often in your office have you received complaints or cases that are related to GBV?

Part B: Response of PAG Church on GBV in Vihiga County

12. How do you incorporate various principles relating to gender equality and women's empowerment into the broader agenda of curbing GBV?
13. What is your take as a pastor on men taking the key leadership roles in the church as opposed to women in the case of PAG church?
14. Do you subscribe to the traditions and culture of the land regarding the role of women and men in the separation of duties?
15. Have any specific initiatives or plans from the pastor's office been implemented in response to GBV cases?
16. Do you have a collaboration structure with other agencies that deal with cases of GBV, and how has this been effective?
17. As the pastoral office holder, what have you personally done to ensure that GBV survivors get the support services they need?
18. Going into the future, what do you think the PAG church should do in terms of strategies and interventions in response to GBV case reduction?
19. In your observation, has the PAG church revised its theological and doctrinal guidelines that are deemed to promote patriarchy within its structure?

Part C: Challenges

20. What do you perceive to be the most challenging issue that the PAG church faces in its effort to address GBV?
21. Do you think that the land's cultural and traditional orientations impede the PAG church's efforts to address GBV?

22. As pastor of a big congregation, what are some of the internal challenges that PAG church presents in the quest to curb GBV in Vihiga County?
23. Do you have limitations in terms of resource that limits you to dealing with various cases related to GBV in the church and community at large?
24. In your perspective, how do patriarchal structures within the PAG church act as a challenge for the PAG church in curbing GBV?

Appendix VI: Interview for Chiefs

1. What is your understanding of the aspect of GBV as a chief?
2. What are some of the normal cases that relate to GBV you handle in your area of jurisdiction as a chief?
3. What are the causes of GBV in your area of administration?
4. In your perspective as an administrator, what effects of GBV on your victims?
5. How does local administration collaborate with religious organizations on curbing GBV-related issues?
6. Do you agree with the culture where women seem to be suppressed and subjected to what can lead to GBV cases?
7. What are some of the challenges that you think religious organizations face in their quest to deal with GBV?
8. Which strategies and interventions can the church employ to deal with the issue of GBV?

Appendix VII: Interview for Ngo Representatives

1. Which organization do you work with?
2. How do you understand the aspect of GBV in your perspective?
3. How do you assess the prevalence of GBV in your area from your experience?
4. What are the common forms of GBV that you have encountered in the course of your work?
5. Do you think the public has a clear understanding of GBV?
6. How many cases of GBV are reported in the course of your work?
7. In your own experience, can you provide an overview of GBV prevalence in PAG church and Vihiga County in general?
8. Do you collaborate with PAG church when dealing with GBV Cases
9. What is your structure of work in relation to the FBOs?

Appendix VIII: Administrative and Political Units in Vihiga County

Constituency	Sub-county	Area (Km2)	Divisions (no.)	Locations(no.)	Sub locations (no.)
Vihiga	Vihiga	90.2	1	5	18
Sabatia	Sabatia	110.9	2	8	31
Emuhaya	Emuhaya	94.5	4	16	38
Luanda	Luanda	84.7			
Hamisi	Hamisi	156.4	4	8	28
TOTAL		536.7	11	37	115

Appendix IX: MMUST Authorization Letter



MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (MMUST)

Tel: 056-30870
Fax: 056-30153
E-mail: sgs@mmust.ac.ke
Website: www.mmust.ac.ke

P.O Box 190
Kakamega - 50100
Kenya

Directorate of Postgraduate Studies

Ref: MMU/COR/ 509099

Date: 9th Sept, 2020

Catherine Kavosa Ganira
REL/H/03/2015
P.O. Box 190-50100
KAKAMEGA

Dear Ms. Ganira,

RE: APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL

I am pleased to inform you that the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies has considered and approved your Ph.D proposal entitled: *'The Role of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God Church in Curbing Gender -Based Violence in Vihiga - County of Kenya'* and appointed the following as supervisors:

1. Dr. Loreen Maseno - Department of Religion – Maseno University
2. Dr. Angeline Savala - Department of Social Sciences- MMUST

You are required to submit through your supervisor(s) progress reports every three months to the Director of Postgraduate Studies. Such reports should be copied to the following: Chairman, School of Education Graduate Studies Committee and Chairman, Department of Social Sciences. Kindly adhere to research ethics consideration in conducting research.

It is the policy and regulations of the University that you observe a deadline of three years from the date of registration to complete your Ph.D thesis. Do not hesitate to consult this office in case of any problem encountered in the course of your work.

We wish you the best in your research and hope the study will make original contribution to knowledge.

Yours Sincerely,

DEAN
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
MASINDE MULIRO UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Prof. John Obiri

DIRECTOR DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Appendix X: Research Authorization-Vihiga County Commission

REPUBLIC OF KENYA



THE PRESIDENCY

MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND COORDINATION OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Email: vihigacc1992@gmail.com

Telephone: Vihiga0771866800

When replying please quote

COUNTY COMMISSIONER,
VIHIGA COUNTY,
P.O. BOX 75-50300,
MARAGOLI.

REF: VC/ED.12/1 VOL.III (121)

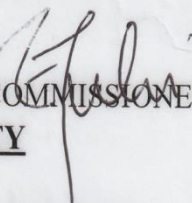
8th December, 2020

All Deputy County Commissioners,
VIHIGA COUNTY

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION-MRS.CATHERINE KAVOSA GANIRA

This is to introduce to you Mrs. Catherine Kavosa Ganira of Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology to carry out research on "*Gender Based Violence in Kenya: A Critical Assessment of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God Churches Rejoinder in Vihiga County*" for a period ending 4th December, 2021.

Kindly accord her all the necessary assistance.

ROBERT NZUKI 
FOR: COUNTY COMMISSIONER
VIHIGA COUNTY

Cc. Catherine Kavosa Ganira

Appendix XI: Research Authorization-County Education Director



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

STATE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY LEARNING AND BASIC EDUCATION

Telegrams:
Telephone: (056) 51450
When replying please quote

COUNTY EDUCATION OFFICE,
VIHIGA COUNTY,
P.O. BOX 640,
MARAGOLI.

REF: CDE/VC/ADM/VOL.3/100/2

8th December, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: AUTHORITY TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Mrs. Catherine Kavosa Ganira

Reference is made to your letter **Ref No. NACOSTI/P/20/8110** dated 4th December 2020.

Permission is hereby granted to the above named student from Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, to conduct research on "**Gender Based violence in Kenya : A critical assessment of the Pentecostal Assemblies of God churches rejoinder** " in Vihiga County to enable her write a project as required by her Institution.

Kindly note, in order for the office to be informed a copy of the same be shared with the County Education office for intervention purposes upon completion of the research.

for:
County Director of Education
Vihiga County

Hellen Nyang'au
County Director of Education
VIHIGA COUNTY

Cc
County Commissioner
VIHIGA

