

Strengthening the Functionality of Families and Grassroots Society to Fight Gender-Based Violence

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Abstract. In South Africa, gender-based violence (GBV) is worsening and has now been declared a pandemic. To effectively address this pressing issue, it is essential to adopt a holistic approach, such as incorporating the Ubuntu philosophy and transformation learning theory within families and society. This study aims to provide a comprehensive strategy grounded in multi-dimensional approaches to address the root causes of family vulnerability to GBV and its consequences. The authors explored methods to strengthen family and grassroots societal functionality in combating GBV, focusing on the following research questions: How do families and other stakeholders understand their roles in fighting gender-based violence? What suitable interventions are implemented by relevant stakeholders and local communities? To answer these questions, a systematic literature review underpinned by Ubuntu philosophy and transformation learning theory was conducted. Data were specifically gathered from publishers with extensive scholarly coverage, including Sage, Taylor and Francis, Emirate, and Springer, covering publications from 1990 to 2023. Inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied during article selection using specific search terms. The search was supported by two broad terms: functional families and society, and gender-based violence. The findings revealed that recognizing the positive goals of a functional family is important in combating violence. Additionally, embracing Ubuntu was identified as a valuable approach to promoting gender equality and mutual respect. Based on these findings, it was recommended to develop the fundamental foundation of the African Ubuntu ideology. Furthermore, a mobile app could be created to transmit rapid signals or alerts to the nearest police station. Blogs can also serve as effective tools for encouraging reflective behavior among families to exchange ideas about gender-based prevention efforts.

1. INTRODUCTION

In South Africa's democratic era, the issue of violence, particularly gender-based violence (GBV), has escalated to a significant level. It is evident that gender-based violence is a problem of enormous public health and human rights significance (Bayene, et al., 2019). Daily media and police accounts of the horrifying and mindless killing, raping, and maiming of women and children in homes and towns overwhelm South Africa (KPMG, 2015). Both women and men frequently engage in violent behaviour, including verbal and physical altercations such as pushing, hitting, throwing objects, and even killing each other. A collaborated effort is required from in mitigating violent behavior (Thobejane et al., 2018). However, men often do not speak out about their experiences of violence due to the stigma attached to them being victims of such violence. Men are also victims of GBV however, available evidence suggests that the frequency, severity, and intensity of such violence are much greater for women and children than for men (Ali, 2018). Thus, in these typical homes where GBV has been observed, the structural elements and interpersonal dynamics of a family, such as problem-solving, communication, roles, adaptation, warmth, intimacy, and behavioral control, do not exist. Therefore, it can be claimed that these families are dysfunctional when the dynamics of the structure and interaction are off. Consequently, it is vital for governmental parastatals to roll up their sleeves and prioritise the eradication of GBV. Unfortunately, there is still room for improvement in this area, as noted by Kunle and Matsha in their 2021 report. Therefore, uncontrolled problems may lead to psychosocial challenges such as anxiety, depression, stress, anger, alcohol and drug abuse, parental absenteeism, and substandard parental care.

Furthermore, an alarming new facet of gender-based violence has emerged in African culture, particularly among families. The laxity of various governmental parastatals in working toward the eradication of GBV is terrifying (Kunle & Matsha, 2021). Despite ongoing efforts, including the implementation of policies and education campaigns at both local and international levels, social issues still persist. However, these efforts serve as a reminder that progress can and will be made through continued dedication and collaboration. Thus, uncontrolled problems can lead to negative psychosocial outcomes such as anxiety, depression, stress, anger, substance abuse, parental absenteeism, and inadequate care. Moreover, loss of life may result in children becoming heads of households, contributing to the breakdown of once-stable families and societies.

1.1. Research Questions

The current study sought direction through the exploration of the following questions.

1. How do families and other stakeholders understand their role in fighting against gender-based violence?
2. What are the suitable interventions implemented by relevant stakeholders and local grassroots society in combating gender-based violence?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theories that underpinned this study include Ubuntu philosophy and transformational learning theory. The researchers discussed the implications of each of the theories in connection with strengthening the functionality of families and grassroots society to fight gender-based violence.

2.1. Ubuntu Philosophy

According to Ubuntu, it is essential to uphold the ethical principles that guide people's moral decisions as demanded by the community. The philosophy suggests that people are shaped by their culture, social and moral norms, and interpersonal relationships, which collectively impact their lives (Etzioni, 1997). Furthermore, Rorty (1998) suggests that the determination of what is good and bad is based on the beliefs, myths, and narratives of the community rather than external texts. Consequently, there cannot be an absolute definition of social constructs, including unethical behaviour in families and society. Every context and culture has its own set of ethical principles that define moral conduct. Thus, universalist reason can be problematic because it disregards the diverse contextual and life experiences that individuals may have, as noted by Benhabib (2002). Ubuntu philosophy places great emphasis on the importance of respecting human and community relationships, which is central to the way of life in many African regions such as East, Central, and South Africa, according to Nussbaum's (2003) and Broodryk's (2006) research. The knowledge, customs, expressions, culture, principles, and convictions of Africans, passed down from one generation to another, are shared through relationships that promote the survival of individuals, communities, and spirituality (Mwanga-Zake, as cited in Mugumbate & Chereni, 2019). The idea that a person is defined by their relationships with others is most effectively summarised by the phrase "Umuntu ngumuntu Ngabantu" which is a South African term. This thought is also conveyed through Mbiti's (1990) statement, "Since I am we are" (p. 106). In the broader context of society, a family is considered as such because of the people who surround them (Palsule & Mkhize, as cited in Metz, 2018). Pobee (1979) suggests that a family is related by blood, and hence a people exists because they belong to a specific family. This implies that a functional family plays a crucial role within a network of relationships and collaborates with others to promote the common good of the community (Msila, 2008). The African worldview is grounded in ethical conduct, which is an integral part of the Ubuntu ethic. As a result, the Ubuntu ethic outlines the acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in African contexts. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate how cultural perspectives shape the understanding of family and grassroots society to fight gender-based violence.

2.2. Transformational Learning Theory

The transformational learning theory, introduced by Jack Mezirow in 1990 and 1991, has undergone significant adaptation and evolution. With its robust pedagogical framework, it empowers families and grassroots societies to effectively combat gender-based violence. Transformational learning is a theory that pertains to adult learning. It provides a structure for understanding the process of constructing and adopting new and revised interpretations of the significance of an experience in the world. This is explained by Taylor (2008) who states that transformational learning involves the acquisition of new and revised interpretations of the meaning of an experience. Intentional program design can provide a wonderful opportunity for families and grassroots society to promote positive learning outcomes (Bowman & Brandenburg, 2012). Families and grassroots societies have valuable experiences that can contribute to transformational learning. These experiences strongly align with the changing frames of reference identified by Jack Mezirow, regardless of the process, content, or context involved. Taylor and Mezirow's (2010) research highlights six essential elements that can foster transformative learning. These core components include reflecting on one's individual experiences, engaging in critical reflection, participating in dialogue, adopting a holistic orientation, being aware of one's situational context, and forming authentic relationships. By incorporating these elements into the learning process, individuals can enhance their personal growth and development. Therefore, employing the principles of Transformational learning theory and its core elements can provide an effective approach to combat gender-based violence.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of the review was to analyze current literature, studies, and case examples to shed light on important aspects of strengthening the functionality of families and grassroots society to fight gender-based violence. The review identified several significant emerging themes in this area, which are the characteristics of healthy and functioning families that grassroots communities as crucial in combating gender-based violence, and the impact of Gender-based violence in the community. The following sections provide an overview of the empirical review.

The characteristics of healthy and functioning families that grassroots communities regard crucial in combating gender-based violence.

The family is widely recognised as a fundamental building block of civilization and plays a significant role in our lives, from our earliest days until we start our own families. As such, the family serves as a crucial foundation for personal and societal growth (Phylis, 1994). The phrase "healthy and functioning family" denotes a family that enjoys the virtues of harmony, warmth, comfort, and a well-rounded lifestyle (Phylis, 1994). Moreover, a healthy family is a stress-effective family because it can work at its utmost capacity and manage daily pressures (Curran, 1983). Despite the challenges that all families encounter, healthy families are adept at adapting and thriving amidst the demands of daily life. Consequently, even a single-parent family can be deemed healthy if it adopts constructive processes to manage its unique needs and pressures (Chen & Lin, 1991). In order to have a healthy family, it's important to consider more than just the family's structure. To this end, Stinnett (1995) outlines the key characteristics of a functional and thriving family as follows:

3.1. Commitment

Similar to an organism, a family possesses life and energy. It is made up of numerous interconnected components. To ensure the prosperity of the family, these interdependent functions must collaborate, plan, and assist one another (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). Family members' responsibilities to each other are vital, as well as their support and cooperation. In order to maintain the well-being of the family, prioritizing family life may require sacrificing personal interests or reducing work hours (Laura, 2007). As a result, the mutual commitment of family members to one another can establish a solid foundation.

As societal norms evolve, families of all gender identities have struggled to juggle the demands of work and home life (Byron,

2005). As a result, research on work-family conflict has become increasingly prevalent (Sonntag & Michel, 2015). Though work is undoubtedly important, successful families recognize the importance of investing time, energy, and compassion into one another.

3.2. Togetherness

A contented family is one that cherishes spending quality time together engaging in activities like playing games, embarking on family vacations, and commemorating birthdays (Stinnett, 1995). By playing together, members of the family can interact in a relaxed setting, leading to enjoyable and memorable occasions. Additionally, playing together enables family members to express their values, thoughts, needs, and admiration. Families who have less than three dinners together per week are more likely to have youths who plan to use drugs in the future, according to a study by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) in 2010. Spending time with family can help individuals to become more independent and truer to themselves, as reported by Psych Central. In addition, Harini (2022) suggests that spending time with loved ones can boost productivity, decrease stress levels, and improve mental and physical health.

3.3. Appreciation

To be admired and valued by other people is one of our fundamental needs. According to studies, members of healthy families have a high degree of mutual admiration and appreciation (Phylis, 1994). Expressions of kindness increase family life satisfaction. The wives' perception of fairness and happiness with how housework and childcare are split in the family are, by far, most strongly predicted by the husbands' expressions of gratitude for their wives (Duncan, 2000). Children also want to be appreciated too. This is especially true when kids feel like "Mom and Dad, I'm doing this for you!"

3.4. Good Communication

Effective communication improves marriage and other human ties and fosters a sense of belonging. Therefore, family communication is defined as messages that are usually sent with purpose, that are usually taken to be intentional, and that have a consensually agreed-upon meaning between people who are related to one another either biologically, legally, or through marriage-like commitments and who take care of and control each other.

Families are the foundation of our lives and offer a wide range of opportunities for communication, from affection to conflict. Furthermore, Galvin et al (2012) suggest that family communication are networks of individuals who feel themselves to be related and who have a long history of living as a family and plan to continue doing so in the future. These individuals may be related by marriage, blood, or other legal or extra-legal relationships. Caughlin et al (2011) further emphasize the objectives of families as well as the special significance that communication plays in achieving these goals within the family. It is therefore important to master good self-communication in addition to effective communication abilities. Thus, prior to attempting to understand others, strive to understand yourself.

3.5. Spiritual Well-Being

Happy families and high levels of religiosity are positively associated (Stinnett & Defrain, 1989). High religiosity encompasses more than just regularly attending church or temple sessions. However, it also refers to a spiritual side of family life, such as having a shared religion and being more patient, forgiving, and tolerant of one another in general. Differences may emanate from having different faiths. More emotional intimacy is typically seen in relationships when there is a shared religious faith (beliefs and practices). Therefore, faith encourages family members' interdependence and cohesiveness, a shared fate binds people. Through the practice of filial piety, it brings individuals together and establishes appropriate social behaviours and interpersonal ties within the family. The most important precepts, which are seen as the cornerstones of a strong family and, by extension, a vibrant community, are filial piety and ancestor worship (Phylis, 1995).

3.6. Coping with Crisis and Stress

Healthy families may experience various issues, but what sets them apart is their ability to confront reality and collaboratively find innovative and systematic solutions to problems. During challenging times, family members must rely on each other's trust and support. Therefore, Curran (1985) refers to a healthy family as a "crisis-effective family" because they can manage their problems in a peaceful and constructive manner.

3.7. The impact of Gender-based Violence in the Community

One in three women will encounter physical or sexual violence in her lifetime, and one in five will be the victim of rape or attempted rape (WHO, 2021). According to the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSVR) in 2016, gender-based violence is a significant problem in developing countries. This is due to the high incidence of violence, which ranges from 30% to 76%, and the various circumstances under which it occurs. A number of studies have reported that gender-based violence has several negative effects. These effects include increased risk of sexually transmitted infections, the HIV virus, unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions, and vaginal discharge (Gqola, 2015). Emotional and psychological trauma are additional effects of gender-based violence, which can lead to attempted and successful suicide (Ali, 2018).

Gender-based violence has become a cankerworm that has eaten too into people's morals. In educational institutions worldwide, there have been numerous reports of gender-based violence (Beyene et al., 2019). Studies of young women on campuses have found that factors such as the year of study, prior victimization, consensual sexual activity, religious affiliation, ethnicity, marital status, indigeneship, campus residence, and faculty affiliation are predictors of sexual assault and abuse against female students (Abubeker, 2021).

Institutions of higher learning and training in South Africa have not been exempt from the scourge of gender-based violence, which has repeatedly sparked numerous demonstrations across the nation, many of which have focused on sexual assault on college campuses (Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), 2019). But only a small part of the country's documented cases of gender-based violence on and around campuses (Phipps et al., 2018). According to research conducted by Chauke et al. (2015) and Ahmed (2015), individuals may be hesitant to report incidents of gender-based violence due to various

emotional factors such as shame, fear of stigmatization, fear of retaliation from the perpetrators, and fear of being negatively judged by their parents, relatives, friends, and community. Ahmed (2015) argued that fear of future employment repercussions prevents students from reporting instances of gender-based violence. Such advice implies that reporting misconduct will have negative consequences for the student, professor, or university. Hence, reports of sexual harassment may not be made public to protect the university's reputation (Rentschler, 2015).

4. METHODOLOGY

The Systematic Literature Review (SLR) performed by the researchers followed the guidelines set by Keele et al. (2007) and consisted of three main phases: planning, conducting, and reporting. This thorough process ensured that all aspects were carefully considered and addressed. In the planning stage, the necessity of conducting a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was thoroughly examined by the researcher. Precise research questions were formulated, and a review protocol was crafted with great attention to detail. The effectiveness of this protocol was not only established but also carefully assessed. Progressing to the next stage, the review process encompassed various important measures. The process involved finding appropriate research materials, a meticulous selection of studies, and a thorough evaluation of their quality. Moreover, the researchers extracted data and combined the information obtained. Presenting the review's findings was the focus of the third and final phase. This step required compiling and presenting the research results, which were obtained through the use of the SLR method used throughout the entire process.

4.1. Inclusion Criteria

1. Empirical studies, including research and conceptual articles, contribute to the theme.
2. Publications that align with the role of families and grassroots society in fighting against gender-based violence, the interventions implemented by stakeholders, and local grassroots society in combating gender-based violence.

4.2. Exclusion Criteria

1. Articles primarily centred on gender-based violence outside the context of family and society.
2. Studies not aligned with the central theme.
3. Publications from journals lack academic rigour or credibility.

The researchers carefully organized the review process using the outlined steps as a guide. Greater care was taken in selecting articles that aligned precisely with the predetermined research themes and sub-themes.

4.3. Conducting the Review

The researchers initially collected a pool of 150 articles. After eliminating 37 unrelated entries, they were left with 113 unique articles. A rigorous evaluation was then conducted, considering alignment with research questions, and assessing journal credibility. This process led to the exclusion of 44 articles that were focused on gender-based violence in schools resulting in a set of 97 articles. During the subsequent stage, a meticulous review of introductions and conclusions led to the identification of 27 duplicated articles which were consequently excluded from consideration. Ultimately, the researchers arrived at a final selection of 60 articles, detailed in Table 1.

Table 1: Articles selected for the study.

Publishers	Articles included		Articles excluded		Total
		First rejected articles	Second rejected articles	Duplicated articles	
Sage	19	8	11	8	46
Taylor & Francis	15	10	10	10	45
Emirate	15	10	10	5	40
Springer	11	9	13	4	37
Total	60	37	44	27	150

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Thematic analysis from the literature discussed above was used to get findings for this study which are as follows:

5.1. The Role of Families and Other Stakeholders in Fighting Against Gender-Based Violence

Based on the author's review in African cultures, the home is considered a space of personal privacy and seclusion. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the positive goals of functional families, which include providing emotional, social, spiritual, and financial support to members, as well as instilling and preserving positive values and norms of humanity. Addressing gender-based violence is crucial, and it is important to acknowledge that a significant portion of these issues originate in the home. By identifying and addressing these root causes, we can create safer and more equitable environments for everyone. Violence can be categorized into physical, psychological, and emotional forms. Sahin (2019) suggests that investing in a functioning justice system and allocating resources can help break the cycle of violence. Numerous global quantitative and qualitative research studies have shown conclusively that gender-based violence is a problem of enormous public health and human rights significance (Amnesty International, 2004; Garcia-Moreno et al., 2006; Rand, 2008; World Health Organization [WHO], 2003; Bayene, et al., 2019). According to the World Bank (2019), 1 in 3 women will experience gender-based violence in their lifetime. GBV includes rape, financial, sexual, and psychological abuse (Sanjel, 2013). In an effort to combat GBV, South Africa has implemented systems and procedures to hold government officials and societal leaders accountable for taking a strong stance against GBV (NSP, 2020).

Many studies and programs are devoted to comprehending and addressing the issue of gender inequality, but there is still ongoing debate and disagreement regarding the most effective approaches to tackle the problem at its roots. In a culture that

values material possessions, the tension between the wealthy and the poor, especially in rural areas where most residents are poor and resources are scarce, may lead to gender-based violence. However, communities are ready and willing to harness their available individual and collective resources to stop GBV (NSP, 2020). The study conducted by Bayene et al. (2019) has mostly considered GBV a public health issue. However, considering its prevalence now and its historical effects on society and its inhabitants, one may argue that while GBV is undoubtedly a public health issue, it is also a social one. Thus, if we are to regard GBV to be a social issue, it should not only be viewed through the health or human rights lenses but also through a multisectoral approach. According to Maquibar et al. (2018), who used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyse nursing students' discourses on GBV, participants see GBV as a major social issue that demands attention and, moreover, calls for a multifaceted and interdisciplinary solution.

Notwithstanding the importance of interdisciplinary solutions, we need to take note of the foundations of functional families which is home. Up to now, the patriarchal culture has created a hierarchy that permeates every aspect of society (Gupta, et.al., 2023). It has a material foundation, embodies and represents a strong structure, and is founded on both violence and the macho/sexist worldview. To help women fight against domestic violence, it's important to provide them with a strong social support system. Religious institutions, families, friends, and NGOs can offer crucial emotional, spiritual, and material support, as well as valuable information (Gomes, 2015). Even though families are expected to provide support, this is not always the case, Silva (2016) found that when a woman experiences abuse from an intimate relationship, her family abandons her, attributing the violence to the woman and refusing to support confronting the issue. The exposure to violence in family interactions, in turn, contributes to ill health (Vanda, 2016). Children's psychosocial and behavioral growth is hampered as a result, which causes them to engage in drug use, prostitution, and teen pregnancy.

Hence, there is a need for a holistic approach underpinned by multi-dimensional strategies to address the root causes of a family's vulnerability to GBV and its impact or consequences. The cornerstone of instilling and preserving positive values and norms of humanity is reconstructing happy and healthy families that provide emotional, social, spiritual, and financial support to all members. Thus, it is vital to build on our existing efforts to achieve positive outcomes and encourage the broader society to adopt this initiative.

The interventions implemented by relevant stakeholders and local grassroots society for combating Gender-based violence.

5.2. Incorporating Ubuntu into the Societal Framework

It can be learned from the review that Ubuntu philosophy places great emphasis on the importance of respecting human and community relationships, which is central to the way of life in many African regions such as East, Central, and South Africa, according to Nussbaum's (2003) and Broodryk's (2006) research. To initiate the development of the necessary framework for the African Ubuntu philosophy, it is imperative to acknowledge the family as a collective community rather than a mere assemblage of individuals. The Ubuntu operating system offers a robust philosophical foundation for its user community; therefore, everyone should be regarded as an important aspect of the community. Hence, the integration of Ubuntu into the societal system is facilitated by conceptualising the family as a community. Moreover, advocating for the welfare of an individual entails advocating for the welfare of all its constituents, including the community administrative body, adults, and children. The concept of collectivism, which is characterised by the values of harmony and cooperation, entails prioritising the welfare of the collective entity over that of transient individuals.

This approach is founded on a farsighted perspective, as opposed to one that is focused on immediate gains. By implementing the fundamental principles of Ubuntu, including but not limited to humanness, caring, sharing, respect, and compassion, both the society and family can cultivate their humane qualities and consequently enhance their potential as future leaders in our rapidly globalising society. Ubuntu places great emphasis on the importance of harnessing the innate human tendency towards solidarity, as it recognises individuals not by their colour or race, but rather as beings created by a divine entity. The knowledge, customs, expressions, culture, principles, and convictions of Africans, passed down from one generation to another, are shared through relationships that promote the survival of individuals, communities, and spirituality, thus gender-based violence can be combated (Mwanga-Zake, as cited in Mugumbate & Chereni, 2019).

5.3. Promotion of Gender Equality and Mutual Respect

Based on the authors' systematic review, families have the power to combat gender-based violence through various interventions. These interventions involve cultivating a climate of gender equality and mutual respect among family members, enhancing communication and problem-solving abilities, practicing positive parenting methods, educating themselves and others about GBV and its consequences, and seeking professional support when necessary (Mokhele, 2016). Moreover, families can collaborate with community-based organizations to create targeted interventions that tackle the underlying causes of GBV, such as poverty, unemployment, and social inequality. By implementing these interventions, families can enhance their effectiveness and make a meaningful contribution to the fight against gender-based violence.

5.4. Community Mobilization to Modify Harmful Gender Norms

Community mobilisation (CM) strategies, or programs that promote community dialogue and action around shared concerns (Lippman et al., 2013), are increasingly being recognised as a necessary component or "critical enabler" required to activate changes required to achieve large-scale reductions in gender-based violence (Schwartlander et al., 2011). Thus, Abramsky et al., (2014) found that CM-based interventions have shown success in changing social norms, such as modifying harmful gender norms and building social contexts that are more supportive of safer sexual behaviours. The authors further contend that the primary goals of the CM intervention were to raise awareness about the link between gender inequities and HIV and to encourage the community, particularly men, to take action in their own lives and in their communities to address negative gender norms, gender-based violence, and HIV risk. Therefore, based on the One Man Can Campaign, the CM intervention was created in collaboration with the South African non-governmental organization Sonke Gender Justice.

This included local community mobilizers and volunteer cadres known as Community Action Teams (CATs) who were trained to support activities in each community that delivered the intervention. Furthermore, workshops, community activities, and leadership engagement were available to both men and women, with workshops and activity content focusing on seven areas: (1) gender, power, and health, (2) gender and violence, (3) alcohol abuse, (4) gender, HIV and AIDS, (5) healthy relationships,

(6) human rights, and (7) taking action for change. Arming the parents and members of the community with this knowledge was aimed at disseminating the word that violence is unhealthy, unacceptable, and must be stopped. They attempted to attain this goal by sharing information and teaching effective strategies for minimizing violence. Thus, they began reaching out to parents through door-to-door visits and participation in community activities such as local council meetings, school parent gatherings, and consultations by leveraging their knowledge.

5.5. Mentoring

The literature indicates that adolescent girls, especially in developing countries, lack the resources and skills necessary to break the cycle of poverty and take advantage of opportunities (Hazariah et al., 2021). The authors went on to say that inequality, poverty, and the lack of access to economic assets, opportunities, and labour markets are primary drivers for the persistent disadvantage of women relative to men which contributes to vulnerability towards women. The study by Hallman (2005) showed that decreases in social isolation and economic vulnerability are linked to decreases in experiences of sexual coercion and transactional sex. Thus, calls have been made to address women's and girls' health issues via improvements in gender equality and empowerment. The Adolescent Girls Empowerment Program (AGEP) in Zambia hypothesized that one way to improve girls' longer-term outcomes was through a program that aimed to empower adolescent girls by building their social, health, and economic assets, allowing them to, in turn, reduce their vulnerabilities and capitalize on opportunities to improve their health, fertility and educational outcomes (Hewett et al., 2017). A study conducted by Austrian (2014) found that girls who had increased their social and health assets were able to simultaneously increase their economic assets without experiencing an increase in sexual harassment and violence as compared to girls who only built economic assets and experienced an increase in sexual harassment and violence as a result.

5.6. The SASA! Intervention

The SASA! Activist Kit for Preventing Violence against Women and HIV (Michau, 2008) is a community mobilization intervention that seeks to change community attitudes, norms, and behaviours that result in gender inequality, violence, and increased HIV vulnerability for women. SASA! Was designed by Raising Voices and was implemented in Kampala by the Centre for Domestic Violence Prevention (CEDOVIP). Designed around the Ecological Model of violence (Heise, 2011). SASA! acknowledges that IPV results from the multifaceted interaction of factors that operate at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels, and hence, systematically comprises a comprehensive range of stakeholders within the community including community activists, local governmental and cultural leaders, professionals such as police officers and health care providers, and institutional leaders. The main objective of this intervention is to encourage critical analysis and constructive discussions about power and power imbalances. The focus is not solely on how men and women may misuse power and the impact this has on their relationships and wider communities, but also on how individuals can use their power positively to bring about sustainable change at both individual and community levels. SASA! which means 'now' in Kiswahili, is also an acronym for the phases of the approach: Start, Awareness, Support, and Action which structure and systematize the community mobilization efforts. In Start, community activists (CAs) (regular women and men) interested in issues of violence, power, and rights are selected and trained, along with staff from selected institutions (for example, police, health care, and so on).

5.7. Development of a Mobile Application

Violent attacks based on gender are an ongoing concern in our society, particularly in local communities. To address this issue, a mobile app could be developed that would send immediate signals or alerts to the closest police station in the event of an attack on community members (Ngogi & Ajani, 2023). This would allow law enforcement to respond swiftly, potentially saving lives and preventing further harm. The app could also include features such as location tracking and video recording, providing real-time information to authorities to aid in the rapid identification and apprehension of the perpetrators.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the fundamental principles of progressivism center around social justice and democracy. As a result, it's essential to raise awareness, provide education, and sensitize people about the significance of these principles in order to establish a fair and impartial society for all. This can be achieved by implementing community engagement programs, workshops, and campaigns. By doing so, we can create a society where everyone can live without the fear of violence and discrimination.

5.8. Communication Tools

Blogs can be a valuable tool for fostering reflective practice and sharing information. They provide families with an avenue for reflecting on pertinent questions regarding gender-based prevention programs and exchanging ideas. Furthermore, blogs afford community members an effective means of self-expression and staying connected with one another. In addition, they offer individuals an opportunity to reflect on and find resolutions for issues related to gender-based prevention initiatives. A study conducted by Gwizdalski (2016) indicated that blogs, as a form of blended learning, could enhance engagement, collaboration, critical thinking, and digital literacy among users.

It is possible for the community to consider integrating other Web 2.0 technologies to enrich their experience and broaden their scope. One possibility could be to establish a personal blog within a wiki platform, which would facilitate collaboration and integrate social networking features into the blog and wiki. This could potentially attract a wider audience beyond the online forum. In addition, it may be worth exploring the use of audio or video-based reflective journaling, leveraging technologies like Pod Matic and iTunes. Sharing reflective journal entries via video blogs on platforms such as YouTube and Google Hangout can also foster community engagement. Adopting a blog-based journaling approach to facilitate gender-based prevention programs can help promote a greater sense of connectedness and support within the community.

5.9. The use of Audio Computer-Assisted Self-Interview (ACASI)

ACASI is a valuable tool for researchers administering surveys on sensitive topics, as it provides respondents with a sense of privacy and minimizes social desirability bias, ensuring that the collected data is accurate and reliable (Tourangeau et al., 2007). It has been widely used in gathering data from HIV-positive patients regarding sexual behavior and substance abuse, as

well as on the topic of intimate partner violence (Punjabi et al., 20221). When respondents use ACASI, they are more likely to provide honest and genuine responses, particularly when the subject matter is sensitive, taboo, or socially undesirable (Mierzwa et al., 2017). With its potential for decreasing social desirability bias, ACASI is an excellent resource for researchers seeking to gather accurate and trustworthy data.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has critically analysed the innumerable role of families and other stakeholders in fighting against gender-based violence, and the suitable interventions implemented by relevant stakeholders and local grassroots society in combating gender-based violence. Therefore, based on the literature study and the findings, this section provides recommendations on how the functionality of families and grassroots society may be strengthened to fight gender-based violence. It is hoped that the following recommendations will remove revealed constraints and eventually assist in fighting gender-based violence in families and grassroots society.

1. When fighting gender-based violence in families and grassroots level, it is critical to recognise the positive goals of functional families, which include providing emotional, social, spiritual, and material support to members, as well as instilling and sustaining positive human values and conventions.
2. To instigate the process of developing the fundamental foundation for the African Ubuntu ideology, it is critical to recognise the family as a collective community rather than a collection of individuals.
3. To enhance an atmosphere of gender equality and mutual respect among family members, improving communication and problem-solving skills, employing positive parenting techniques, educating themselves and others about GBV and its repercussions, and obtaining professional assistance.
4. In the case of an attack on community members, a mobile app may be developed that would transmit rapid signals or alerts to the nearest police station.
5. Blogs can be an effective tool for encouraging reflective behavior and information exchange. They give an opportunity for families to reflect on and exchange ideas about gender-based prevention efforts. Furthermore, blogs provide effective tools for community members to express themselves and keep connected with one another.

7. CONCLUSION

This study has highlighted the crucial role of families and other stakeholders in fighting gender-based violence. By exploring the suitable interventions implemented by relevant stakeholders and local grassroots society in combating gender-based violence, the researchers have discovered that it is vital to identify the positive goals of functional families which incorporate providing emotional, social, spiritual, and material support to members, as well as instilling and sustaining positive human values and conventions. The study's findings emphasize the significance of developing the fundamental foundation for the African Ubuntu ideology by recognising the family as a collective community rather than a collection of individuals. Furthermore, gender equality and mutual respect among family members could be promoted by strengthening communication and problem-solving skills, implementing positive parenting approaches, educating themselves and others about GBV and its consequences, and seeking professional help. Moreover, in the event of a community member attack, a mobile app might be built to send quick signals or alerts to the local police station. It can further be established that Blogs can be as useful instrument for encouraging reflective behavior and the exchange of knowledge. They allow families to reflect on and share ideas about gender-based preventative activities.

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