

# Promoting egalitarianism in intimate and other relationships as responses to Gender-based violence and femicide: A review of existing literature

Ngubane S<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Africa Health Research Institute, Somkhele, South Africa, <sup>2</sup>University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

## BACKGROUND

- Globally, gender-based violence (GBV) and femicide continues to be a serious global health, human rights, and development issue.
- Cultural, socio-economic and socio-political factors are the key contributing to the phenomenon.
- Statistics shows that women are more susceptible to gender-based violence. 1 in 3 women worldwide experienced some types of gender-based violence in their family, social, and work life.
- Intimate partner violence (IPV) increased during the COVID-19 pandemic due to increased unemployment, substance abuse and reduced economic status.
- Gender-inequality have been observed to be ahistorical and eternal, with little focus on how its complexity contributes to gender-based violence and femicide.
- Egalitarianism is a philosophical perspective that advocate against the leading factors of gender-based violence and femicide, which are patriarchy and elite.

## OVERALL AIM OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW

- To investigate the strategies towards the normative development of society
- To explore how egalitarianism in intimate and other relationships as responses to gender-based violence and femicide

Gender-based violence is identified as violence that is directed against an individual or a group of individuals based on their gender or sex. It is stemmed from gendered social injustice and inequality, deeply rooted in discriminatory cultural beliefs and perceived powerlessness of a marginal group: in general women and girls.

Femicide is a hate crime which is broadly defined as "the intentional killing of women or girls because they are female",



## METHODS

- Conducted a literature search of ten databases (EBSCOhost, ERIC, Google Scholar, PubMed, Sabinet, CINAHL, Medline, ScienceDirect, Jstor and Science citation Index Websites) using the following keywords: "egalitarianism in intimate and other relationships", "responses to Gender-based violence and femicide".
- Screened retrieved articles for titles, year, and language of publication, and incorporated both peer-reviewed and grey literature.
- Accepted studies were thematically analyzed with a focus on egalitarianism, gender-based violence and femicide.

### SIX CORE TYPES OF GBV



## RESULTS

- 86 articles were retrieved, of which 19 studies were reviewed after the screening process.
- It was found that gender-based violence is represented as an umbrella concept denoting domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual violence and any other psychological violence that reinforces unequal power relationships between gender identities and expressions against females.
- Cultures where patriarchy is exercised, it grooms boys under the mind-set of being dominant which leads them to be aggressive towards females while girls are passive, subordinate, and dependent. This somehow shapes women to be economically vulnerable, and inferior or refusing any form of gender-based violence.
- Gender-based violence among males is underreported worldwide, mainly due to misconceptions about male's experience of gender-based violence, perceptions of power and control in gendered relations, cultural grooming, male's unresolved childhood trauma linked to violence, poor knowledge of conflict resolution strategies among males and females, and perceptions of manhood and masculinity.
- Literature on male's gender-based violence is limited to physical and sexual violence in homosexual relationships with little on emotional, and psychological violence in both sexual and non-sexual relations.

## CONCLUSION

- Gender-inequality and exposure to gender-based violence increases the risk of femicide in our communities.
- Religious leaders and community-based organizations can be used as a medium of communication to promote egalitarianism in communities to fight the discourse.
- Deeper and more inclusive public discourse and engagement about gender-based violence and femicide is crucial for better understanding of the phenomenon, its drivers, and more effective steps towards eradicating it.
- Further research into egalitarianism in intimate and other relationships as responses to gender-based violence and femicide is needed to achieve this.
- Social workers need to make communities aware of this global issue and engage with communities, including community leaders to lobby for friendly legislation that fights against the phenomenon.