

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE (GBV) AND ITS IMPACT

INTRODUCTION

There are many misconceptions about who is most likely to become a victim of Gender Based Violence (GBV). In some instances, most people tend to assume GBV is more prevalent in low-income communities. However, any person can become a victim [of GBV] regardless of their race, ethnicity, age, socio-economic, or educational status.

It is important to understand that there are two classifications of GBV: Blue collar GBV -- which is largely associated with said low-income communities, and white collar GBV, which happens in corporate offices, high-income families, and involves highly educated and well-off individuals. White collar GBV mostly goes unreported because of the stigma [that is attached to GBV].

THE GENDER ELEMENT OF ABUSE

Various studies show that victims of GBV are predominantly women. According to the various crime reports statistics, most reported victims of GBV are women and most reported perpetrators are men who have a variety of personality disorders or psychopathological conditions such as:

- Borderline personality
- Narcissistic personality
- Antisocial personality
- Passive dependant personality
- Passive aggressive personality

Just as there are no typical victims of GBV, there are no typical perpetrators in terms of age, race socioeconomic, status, or other demographic features.

CRITICAL RISK FACTOR

Although there is inconsistency in the literature on abusers, one risk factor that stands out the most clearly is the power and control mode.

POWER AND CONTROL

GBV is not just about hitting or punching. It is a pattern of assaultive and coercive behaviour including psychological, sexual, and physical abuse. These are used to hurt, dominate, and control an intimate partner. Without intervention, the abuse can escalate in frequency and severity. The syndrome of dominance and control by the perpetrator leading to increasing entrapment of the victim is also known as the battering syndrome.

CONCLUSION

GBV affects millions of people daily, with these being mostly women and children. Although physical abuse may be to a single individual, all family members suffer as well. Home for those families is not a safe haven, but a place where violence can erupt at any time.

The effects of GBV are far-reaching, affecting not only families but also communities, institutions, and society as a whole. It adversely impacts the criminal justice system, social services, the legal system, the educational system and the workplace. It also has significant effects on the health care system.

WHERE TO GET HELP

In conclusion, GBV affects all of us, regardless of our standing in the society. So, if you have an issue you are dealing with or know someone who needs help, you should know it's okay to seek help. Contact the following for assistance:

■ **Botswana Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Support Centre (BGBVC)**
+267 3907659

■ **Raylight Holdings**
+267 71 918 619

■ **ICAS Botswana**
+267 319 0019

■ **Men and Boys for Gender Equality**
+267 395 7763

■ **Botswana Police GBV Unit**
0800 600 144