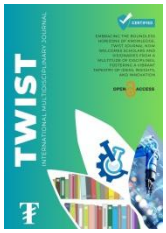
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Analysis of Men's Traditional Songs that Perpetuate Gender-Based Violence

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Abstract
Gender-based violence (GBV) remains a pervasive issue globally, with cultural expressions such as traditional songs often reflecting and perpetuating harmful gender norms. In every society, traditional songs sung by men can reinforce stereotypes and behaviours that contribute to GBV. This paper aims to analyse how these songs perpetuate gender-based violence, drawing on examples from various cultural contexts. Songs that are performed under various circumstances and have varying meanings and rhythms have been chosen for this study. These songs stand out because they share a common theme focused on African cultural formation and belief systems. Researchers have shown that other forms of cultural expression significantly shape societal norms and behaviours. Looking at South African music highlights, how dominant masculine ideals are often portrayed in songs linked to GBV. It is of utmost importance to look at these songs that frequently emphasise themes of power, control, and aggression, which can normalise and glorify violent behaviour towards women. This means that not only have women been exposed to violence in their families, but also men have added an even heavier load through songs that they sing using very light language with a deeper impact on the lives of women. The environment, where cultural aspects of GBV are normalised and tolerated. Lyrics of these songs will be examined to uncover the ways in which these cultural artefacts contribute to the perpetuation of GBV. Gender-based violence has been treated as the norm within societies. Women have been suffering severely under the heavy hand of the masculine gender, who have been treating them as objects. Desktop research is a form of study in which the researcher gathers information from existing sources. Qualitative research design is employed here to show how men's traditional songs perpetuate GBV. The paper is grounded in interpretivism, which allows for understanding the meanings and interpretations that individuals and communities attach to these songs. A purposive sampling method is used to select songs from local gatherings. It can be concluded that men's traditional songs are there to provoke anger, grudge, hatred, and disturbing moments in the entire society through the wording and intent of the songs. It is highly recommended that people, especially the listeners of these songs, distance themselves from the point of singing, as they may fall into traps or become targets.

Keywords
traditional masculinity, aggression, violence, gender representation

INTRODUCTION

The subject of this work is traditional songs sung by men. Women have also been observed using these traditional songs to communicate their feelings, whilst men might sing just to convey intent in amaXhosa. Men's songs, as well as those sung by women, would be performed during various joyful gatherings (Wayise et al, 2024). They had an enormous impact on how amaXhosa men lived. Men's traditional songs are part of amaXhosa culture, as they are included in amaXhosa traditional songs. Traditional songs teach people about their culture and identity. Dery et al. (2023) suggest that, culturally, engaging with traditional songs is one way to communicate and express one's feelings without speaking to anyone.

This study examines the influence of men's traditional songs on daily activities and lives, particularly on their psychosocial health. These men's traditional songs can be used to express sentiments and ideas without resorting to standard speech and are considered poetic by amaXhosa men (Bikundo, 2023). In other words, these traditional songs sung by men are thought to function similarly to poems in which people converse with one another regardless of their position of authority or power. During colonial times, Africans were forced to abandon their culture and beliefs (Dlamini & Shumba, 2021). Studying these men's traditional songs may serve as a reminder to them that their way of life, culture,

and customs are significant and valid in the twenty-first century, as they are believed to define their identity and origins. It is clear from the study's exploration and analysis of men's traditional songs that women use izidlalo zabafazi to communicate with men, manage their mental health, and deal with household and societal issues.

Once more, the study investigates how colonisation affected African civilisations and how it altered the significance and intended use of izidlalo zabafazi. The adverse effects of colonisation on African tribes had also been explained by doing so. The study also found that izidlalo zabafazi are believed to have the ability to restore African women's dignity (Ngcobo, 2024). Traditional songs were utilised in the 21st century to address issues that shape and perpetuate GBV, with a focus on the hidden power and control conveyed in their lyrics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In some African communities, traditional songs are used in rites and other ceremonies, embedding gender norms in the societal fabric. These songs are deeply rooted in the historical events and cultural practices that reflect and reinforce gender norms (Kung'u, 2024). Traditional AmaXhosa songs serve not only as a medium for cultural expression but also reflect and reinforce societal norms that can contribute to the perpetuation of gender-based violence.

According to Wayise et al (2024), the historical context of AmaXhosa songs reveals their profoundly significant role in reflecting and actively shaping societal norms, especially regarding the nuanced dynamics of gender and the troubling perpetuation of violence against women within the community. These songs, through their potent lyrics and emotive performances, provide a rich, multifaceted insight into the complex cultural attitudes and deeply held beliefs that underpin gender relations. It is further noted that they vividly illuminate the urgent need for comprehensive change and the critical importance of addressing pressing issues related to violence against women across all levels of society. The messages communicated through these musical forms not only resonate within the community but also call for broader awareness and understanding, compelling listeners to reflect on their own roles in perpetuating or combating these challenges (Zinyemba & Hlongwana, 2022). Furthermore, the cultural significance of these songs extends beyond mere entertainment, positioning them as vital educational tools that can incite discussion and promote healing as communities work toward a future where gender equality and respect for all individuals are achievable realities. It becomes increasingly clear that AmaXhosa songs encapsulate a history and serve as a poignant reminder that collective acknowledgement and action are necessary to address and move forward from the injustices faced by society today (Sofiani et al. 2024).

Gender-based violence (GBV) represents a multifaceted and deeply rooted societal issue with far-reaching implications. It encompasses various forms, including domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual harassment, and rape, which are critical problems that plague communities globally. Rikhotso, Netangaheni, & Mhlanga (2023) state that GBV refers to any harmful act, whether premeditated or spontaneous, directed against an individual primarily because of their gender and fundamentally contradicting the person's autonomy and consent. The array of GBV manifests through several variations, such as physical, emotional, psychological, financial, neglect, and sexual violence, highlighting its pervasive nature. The focus primarily revolved around physical acts of aggression, yet it is crucial to recognise that GBV also encompasses verbal and non-verbal behaviours that belittle or demean an individual based on their gender, thereby instilling a sense of fear or insecurity in them. These alarming behaviours span a broad spectrum of abuses that often remain socially accepted and normalised within numerous cultural contexts, including within AmaXhosa traditions.

Zhou et al (2022) discovered that these cultural norms tend to reinforce patriarchal structures while perpetuating the idea that such abusive behaviours are commonplace and acceptable. This cultural acceptance creates significant barriers to effectively preventing GBV and leads to enduring detrimental effects not only on individuals but also on the larger fabric of society. As societies evolve, it becomes increasingly imperative to acknowledge and understand the transformations traditions require in today's world. Such adaptations can spark challenging dialogues, especially since many traditional customs are deeply entrenched in countless individuals' cultural and social identities. Nevertheless, it is essential to confront the reality that gender inequality exists at the core of severe social and economic disparities across various communities. The repercussions of GBV are undeniably significant, with manifestations ranging from the most minor incidents, such as slapping or kicking, to horrific extremes like murder. Notably, intimate partner violence has been documented to impact at least 30% of women globally, underscoring the urgent need for a united global effort to combat this pressing issue. This requires implementing collaborative strategies that extend beyond the health sector to involve law enforcement, social services, and legal frameworks to prevent and effectively respond to all forms of GBV. Through these interconnected elements, societies can work towards healing and resilience, ultimately contributing to a safer and more equitable world.

FORMS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Gender-based violence (GBV) encompasses a wide range of harmful behaviours that include various forms of threats, as well as physical, emotional, reproductive, and economic abuse, alongside acts of sexual violence that often occur within domestic relationships, which can extend to situations involving traditional marriages as well. Zhou (2022) implies that threats associated with GBV can manifest in numerous ways, such as sexual abuse, explicit verbal threats intended to instil fear, and more modern forms of harassment like cyberbullying that take advantage of technology. Physical violence within the context of a relationship can include acts such as hitting, slapping, strangling, pulling hair, scratching, biting,

and even aggressive behaviours like throwing furniture, all of which serve to physically intimidate and harm one partner. Emotional violence is particularly insidious as it seeks to control and manipulate a person by utilising threats, insults, humiliating gestures, or outright isolation from their support networks, which often consist of friends and family. The abuse can also extend to the reproductive rights of women; actions taken against women's reproductive organs may aim to enforce control over their reproductive choices, bodily autonomy, or sexual freedom (Sofiani et al, 2024). Sexual violence encompasses not only acts of rape but also conditions of coerced nudity or other sexual actions that cause significant emotional and psychological distress to the victim. Financial abuse is characterised by one partner stealing or deliberately withholding money from the other, creating a power imbalance to exert control over that individual. Economic abuse further represents a form of domination where one partner is restrained from securing or maintaining employment and is forced to manage their earnings under stringent conditions, often leading to irresponsible spending. The social consequences of GBV are far-reaching, contributing to ongoing issues such as the transmission of HIV, diverting critical public funds from essential economic spheres, and perpetuating cycles of poverty that affect entire communities (Nyoka, (2022). Gender-based violence is far from being solely a physical issue; it can possess multiple layers that impact both public and private spheres, a situation that is often exacerbated and perpetuated by prevailing cultural norms and attitudes that fail to address and combat these behaviours adequately. (Zinyemba & Hlongwana, 2022) Gender-based violence (GBV) encompasses an extensive and deeply rooted spectrum of actions, behaviours, and attitudes that serve to perpetuate harm and discrimination based on an individual's gender identity. The pervasive reluctance to completely acknowledge and thoroughly understand this broad and complex spectrum significantly obstructs practical efforts aimed at reducing instances of GBV within any community setting. In the specific context of GBV in South Africa, this pressing issue is frequently typified predominantly as physical abuse, with many harmful acts that take place being characterised by women often being viewed as the primary victims. At the same time, men typically emerge as the instigators or agitators of such violent behaviour. However, it is crucial to recognise that numerous forms of GBV may not be immediately apparent but are equally detrimental to both the mental and physical health of the individuals subjected to these various forms of abuse. Gender-based stereotyping and discrimination are alarmingly prevalent in nearly every sector of society, and these deeply ingrained stereotypes can exacerbate the widespread and more extensive incidence of GBV. Tragically, in most cases, young girls are subjected to harmful and damaging stereotypes from a very young age, which can manifest in various forms of GBV, including emotional, psychological, and sexual abuse that can have lasting impacts on their well-being. It is of utmost importance for GBV policymakers, community leaders, and society to thoroughly understand the expansive and nuanced spectrum of GBV. This comprehensive understanding is critical to encouraging the reporting and acknowledgement of the non-apparent forms of gender-based violence that are often overlooked. The dominant traditional beliefs that prevail and the deeply rooted cultural practices frequently serve to drive and sustain a culture that tolerates and perpetuates incidents of GBV. These entrenched factors have a significant impact on the types of GBV that persist and are tolerated within the community. Addressing these ingrained issues is essential not only for fostering a safer and more equitable environment for individuals of all genders but also for enabling a cultural shift that will respect, support, and empower every person, ultimately achieving a society free from violence and discrimination based on gender.

METHODOLOGY

Desktop research serves as a foundational method for exploring complex social issues, particularly in examining how men's traditional songs can perpetuate gender-based violence (GBV). This approach involves carefully gathering information from existing sources, such as academic articles, books, and ethnographic materials. By analysing these materials, researchers can extract valuable insights without new data collection, making it a time-efficient method that capitalises on existing knowledge. In this study, a qualitative research design is employed to examine the nuances and contextual meanings of men's traditional songs. This design is particularly effective as it emphasises understanding the subjective experiences and interpretations that individuals and communities ascribe to these songs. Grounded in an interpretivist framework, the research underscores that the meanings attributed to these songs are influenced by cultural, historical, and social contexts. This perspective provides deeper insight into why these songs may elicit feelings and responses among listeners, thus contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of their impact.

The methodology utilised includes purposive sampling, which is essential for selecting songs that illustrate GBV themes. By intentionally selecting songs prominent in local gatherings, the study can establish connections among the lyrics, cultural context, and societal norms that either endorse or challenge violence against women. This approach ensures that the selected songs are relevant representations of the cultural practices under investigation. Research methodology is largely qualitative, drawing on the underpinning theoretical framework. The contextually driven thematic analysis has been used as the research tool. The literature review revealed many songs that are considered to perpetuate the negatives of women's identity in society, but this study is limited to specific AmaXhosa songs that have been found to perpetuate gender-based violence narratives.

The language and intent behind these songs can disturb society's collective consciousness, reinforcing detrimental stereotypes and behaviours. This perpetuation of aggression not only affects interpersonal relationships but also contributes to a broader culture of violence against women. The implications of these findings call for a closer examination of cultural artefacts and their role in shaping societal attitudes, ultimately highlighting the need for dialogue

and intervention to address and dismantle the GBV narratives embedded within traditional music. There are only two songs from the society that will be analysed here, and they both have a male voice to harm a woman, as follows:

1. Maninzi la maxhegwazana kule lali masoje elinye (there are more old ladies in this village, let us braai one), and
2. Thina sichama ngentwezimnandi, enye inde inye idabukile, ngathi ndiyayibona (we urinate with delicious things, one is long, one is torn, it's like I see it)

These songs are deliberately chosen to bring the cow home, as they are sung whenever it gets dark, and everyone gets drunk in the rondavel. Both are well known in society, and most fulfil the initiator's intent that day. The researcher also knows these songs because they are from the same local area where she lived; no recordings were done.

DATA ANALYSIS

While there exists a growing consensus among various critical stakeholders that gender-based violence (GBV) undeniably stands as a significant national social issue that cannot be overlooked, there continues to be a conspicuous lack of agreement and clarity regarding which specific forms of music or lyrics should be definitively deemed as incitement to or perpetuation of GBV (Hill et al, 2025). This troubling gap in understanding prompts a thorough and critical examination of how social meanings are constructed, interpreted, and reconstructed across generations, as well as the far-reaching implications these processes have for the fabric of society. In exploring this complex and multifaceted landscape, selected AmaXhosa songs that have the potential to be implicated in or connected to GBV are presented, categorised, and closely analysed for their thematic content and societal impact. Furthermore, a public performance of these songs is meticulously assessed to delve deeply into the multifaceted complexities of GBV against women in post-apartheid South Africa, seeking to uncover and understand the underlying cultural, social, and historical factors that continue to contribute to this ongoing and pressing issue.

The first song sampled here originates from a well-established Xhosa pop group that has been actively captivating audiences since the vibrant 1970s. This groundbreaking and influential group has made significant contributions to the music scene over the decades, earning a devoted following and widespread recognition for their distinctive sound, which blends traditional Xhosa melodies with contemporary pop elements. The second track is sourced from an emerging, energetic youth street band that is quickly garnering attention and making waves in their local community through their passionate performances. The aim is to encourage a fluid and open interpretation of these diverse songs in the quest for a deeper understanding of how music, in its texts and contexts, emerges as politically charged or, alternatively, uncharged within this intensely heated area of debate that continues to resonate in society today. This exploration allows listeners to engage with the underlying themes, cultural significance, and emotional expressions present in these musical works, reflecting the complexities of the social landscape they emerge from and contributing to ongoing conversations about identity and political expression through art. (Zinyemba & Hlongwana, 2022)

In post-apartheid South Africa, there are many nostalgic hankerings for the past, for the 'way things were'. These hankerings surpass mere memory; they also seem to be a function of songs' iconicity and their weaving into public imaginations of nation and community (Barrière, 2021). The same song can be read in diverging ways by different people; indeed, they often are. How popular songs are received by listeners in a Xhosa township, and how they may represent a continuing pull between tradition and modernity, as well as the negotiation of gender roles, is considered (Robitaille, 2014). The songs are sung in isiXhosa, and the English lyrics are translations.

Prioritising the most prominent examples of such songs, the discussed topics will be explored, as will a scrutiny of the language used, focusing on symbolism and the way the artist uses words with the potential to produce an emotional impact on listeners (Delaney et al., 2024). An analysis of certain songs takes account of the context in which they were performed, recognising that they are often performed communally and make a vital contribution to the long-standing tradition (Gobodwana, 2019). The argument that some songs are harmful when performed for their intended purpose is thus explored, while acknowledging that a proper performance of such songs may spark a critical discussion of traditional practice. Although this is not a detailed analysis of every AmaXhosa song-related gender-based violence, the scholars interested in the reception of listeners and, indeed, the interpretations listeners give to the songs, the engagement with which is considered more important than writing a stereotypical message about the songs. A critical engagement with the songs seeks to understand them, recognising that what is said to be a shocking song for a contemporary audience may have been "virtually taken for granted in these songs at the point at which they were composed (Zinyemba & Hlongwana, 2022). Moreover, work considered by contemporary communities to be "ethically reprehensible" is spoken of with nostalgia and respect by those same communities toward scholars. It is therefore noted that interpretations and the listening and evaluation of songs by the AmaXhosa, as well as other African people, vary and cannot be put into one little box. It is argued that, despite a wholesale denial of the harmful effects of traditional music, there is a need to further investigate the question 'What is AmaXhosa people's response to songs for ivory and in what ways, if any, do these songs/maskandi songs express narratives of GBV?'. The analysis of the songs is based on these aims and objectives, as well as broader questions and the research's implications.

IMPACT AND IMPLICATIONS

A woman resides in a tumultuous world that is heavily burdened not just by overwhelming violence but also by the weight of societal tensions and complex power dynamics. Rikhotso et al. (2023) note that this is a world where endless struggles occur daily, as individuals, both men and women, battle relentlessly for supremacy and control over one

another. However, if you were to take a reflective moment to glance over the centuries, yonks, and decades that have swiftly passed by, it will become undeniably clear, as bright as daylight itself, that in a world where the concepts of supremacy and the recognition thereof are fiercely contested, neither silence nor violence is absent from the narrative. These poignant lines taken from the traditional AmaXhosa song poignantly encapsulate the harsh and chilling realities surrounding gender-based violence (GBV), indicating that violence and male domination have an extensive, deeply rooted history that spans many diverse societies across the globe (Delaney et al, 2024). They insinuate a profound link between violence and silence, thereby raising a series of pertinent questions about the implications of the narratives embedded in centuries-old songs that continue to be performed, shared, and passed on in our modern everyday lives. In the specific context of South Africa, the troubling findings presented in the 2016/2017 National Victims of Crime Survey revealed a stark and distressing reality: nearly one out of every four women has faced violence from a male partner, with the incidence of lifetime partner violence being significantly higher in regions like the Eastern Cape. Furthermore, within the complex social fabric of South Africa, the prevalent narratives surrounding domination and control embedded in men's views of masculinity serve to reinforce gender norms that are notably permissive of GBV (Kaźmierczak, 2024). The traditional songs of the AmaXhosa people have been an essential part of their cultural heritage for centuries, carrying stories of both joy and sorrow (Bikundo, 2023). Many of these culturally significant songs are still performed today, while new compositions are continually created and shared across various social contexts and communal gatherings. These traditional songs serve multiple important purposes; they are utilised in significant life events such as funerals and weddings, serve as a means of storytelling across generations, act as valuable educational tools, and are enjoyed as forms of entertainment, to mention only a few of their numerous applications. Within the narratives encapsulated in these traditional songs, disturbing and often heart-wrenching stories of GBV frequently emerge, including harrowing accounts of assault, forced isolation, and humiliation, alongside forced economic dependency and femicide. These narratives portray these deeply troubling experiences often as tales of transformation. This transformation could take numerous forms: it might be depicted as a magical and compelling metamorphosis of a twisted and abusive male figure, weaving tales wherein violence is presented as a form of punishment serving undeniable moral lessons, or as empowering narratives illustrating the rise of the female victim to reclaim her autonomy and strength. There is an urgent need to revisit and critically analyse these old narratives, thoroughly examining how they have been transmitted through the generations without thoughtful reflection on the deep cultural meanings that embody the values and social norms of the artists and performers. Moreover, it is crucial to investigate how these culturally rich songs influence both personal and public perceptions regarding gender roles, societal organisation, and established norms within communities. Lastly, and equally importantly, it is vital to explore how the narratives of GBV resonate on a psychological and social level, particularly concerning women within specific communities (Barrière, 2021). This exploration aims to scrutinise these powerful narratives through a historical lens and to illuminate why GBV narratives can be, or may become, harmful to the very fabric of society. This examination is particularly significant in the context of widespread violence, drawing necessary attention to these critical issues at a time when the international MeToo movement seeks to bring once-silent stories and struggles into the light, thereby advocating for a more just and equal society for all. (Gracious Zinyemba & Hlongwana, 2022).

PSYCHOSOCIAL EFFECTS ON WOMEN

This section discusses in depth the psychosocial effects of exposure to traditional Xhosa songs on women and their overall well-being. It addressed in significant detail how repeated exposure to the rich narratives contained in these culturally profound songs could significantly mould perceptions, self-identity, and self-worth among women of various backgrounds (Kaźmierczak, 2024). While songs and chants certainly serve as protective mechanisms and are necessary for preserving and maintaining African heritage and cultural memory, music that continues to portray women in conditions of gender-based violence (GBV) remains a pervasive, ongoing, and concerning form of cultural expression. On the one hand, these musical works have produced resilient individuals who are capable of emerging from trauma and effectively reclaiming their narratives. However, this discussion critically reflects on the songs that consistently remind women of their challenging social positions within a patriarchal order, often reinforcing deeply rooted negative stereotypes. NSP. (2020) argues strongly that the continuous and relentless exposure to these songs and the accompanying chants significantly reinforces the already existing social, emotional, and psychological experiences of vulnerability and debilitating feelings of worthlessness among women. Furthermore, once the genre is internalised, these identities, along with their associated challenges and struggles, are maintained or even quickly normalised within societal contexts. This troubling and concerning normalisation of the Xhosa music genres could inadvertently contribute to the ongoing perpetuation of the GBV system that traditional Xhosa music portrays, complicating the narratives surrounding women's roles and lived experiences within society. The implications of these dynamics warrant urgent attention and critical consideration, as the interplay among music, culture, and gender continues to shape the lives and identities of women in these communities.

A rather distressful and disheartening number of complex and challenging questions persistently arise with the pervasive and deeply troubling issue of gender-based violence, an issue that is fundamentally rooted not only in South Africa's unresolved and tumultuous past but also in the uncharted and uncertain trajectories that shape its unclear future. How could a population that has once endured such horrific marginalisation and been brutally subjugated by its colonial rulers and oppressive regimes end up not only suffering but, in some particularly shocking instances, also perpetrating

such tragic and grievous violence against its own most vulnerable members? The powerful narratives and compelling stories of extraordinarily brave survivors, alongside committed and forward-thinking policymakers, in conjunction with passionate and concerned activists, unequivocally underscore how the previous leadership has ingeniously crafted, cleverly, deliberately, and cunningly engineered division among various groups within society, an intricate web of discontent and dissent that infiltrates every aspect of life. This deliberate division does not merely maintain a tight grip on power over them but also triggers unforeseen, continuous, unseemly interactions and intense conflicts among these diverse societal groups, perpetuating destructive, damaging cycles of violence that seem to be unending and all-consuming. Furthermore, as South Africa emerges from its complex and troubled history, the echoes of its past continue to reverberate loudly, deeply embedding themselves in the intricate fabric of its current society. With its newfound freedom remaining quite fragile and tenuous, South Africa continues to be indelibly scarred by the scars of historical exploitations and ongoing tensions that refuse to dissipate, fade into the past, or even lose their grip on the collective consciousness of the nation, leaving a deep imprint that profoundly affects generations to come, shaping their experiences and perceptions.

The violence faced by women in this profoundly ingrained and traumatic context is unique in its extreme viciousness and relentless brutality, presenting itself as indeed a multifaceted and harrowing daily experience that profoundly affects the psychosocial well-being of its victims, leaving lasting emotional and psychological marks etched deeply on their souls and lives. McCarry,et al, (2023) confronted with this grim and harsh reality, truly comprehending the debilitating and devastating effects of such distressing and brutal actions on women, while simultaneously fostering robust community dialogue along with consistently ongoing support and resources, represents the very first crucial step towards fostering a culture of genuine tolerance, understanding, and resilience that is urgently needed across the entire societal landscape (Kaźmierczak, 2024). The overarching objective of innovative music productions, which have emerged in dynamic, fervent response to these significant and pressing issues, is to invoke critical engagement with traditional amaXhosa songs that have been warmly endorsed, passionately embraced, and wholeheartedly supported by the local community and its members. According to (McCarry et al, 2023) this vital engagement serves as a powerful vehicle through which stories can be shared, healing can begin, and a stronger foundation can be laid for future generations to stand upon why is it promoting a critical and intensive engagement with this essential genre so tremendously vital and important, and empowering this deeper understanding genuinely foster a more constructive and positive impact on women who are often devastatingly victimised by various forms of violence that permeate the society (Wayise et al, 2024). It is implicitly understood that not all women are distressingly and negatively affected by their exposure to the music genre in question. Some women simply do not connect with or understand it at all, while other women acknowledge that it offers complex cultural challenges that can illuminate and significantly deepen their understanding of the lived experiences they navigate every day, forcing them to confront and reckon with the harsh realities of their existence in (Boswall & Cowan, 2022). This multifaceted exploration not only sheds light on their experiences but also empowers women, giving them a voice and a crucial platform within a wider context where they often feel silenced and marginalised. In this multifaceted and ongoing exploration of rich sounds and intricate narratives, we may indeed discover vibrant pathways toward healing and empowerment that can resonate with profound strength to overcome the relentless tides of adversity and the myriad challenges they face in their daily struggles for dignity, safety, and a better life (Hill et al, 2025). By recognising the intersections of culture, history, and individual experiences, we not only pay homage to those who have suffered but also illuminate the shared collective journey toward justice and equality. Each step toward embracing understanding and compassion reflects a powerful commitment to transforming narratives surrounding gender-based violence, paving the way for a future imbued with hope, strength, and enduring solidarity amongst all members of society, transcending personal grievances to drive societal change. Ultimately, the endeavour to cultivate an environment where every individual feels empowered, truly valued, and inherently safe forms the bedrock of a future where the echoes of violence are replaced with those of healing, unity, and growth, nurturing a society that thrives in profound understanding and shared humanity, aiming for a brighter future for all. (Rikhotso et al., 2023)

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From a psychological perspective, environmental and societal cues are indirect contributors to shaping people's behaviour and attitudes (Fischer & Greitemeyer, 2006). Given music's ubiquity and its deeply ingrained nature within a culture, it is evident that it plays a pivotal role in nurturing societal norms and expectations. Music can act as a mediator, influencing perceptions of hazards and risks through its persuasive and inspirational qualities. Traditional songs can both reflect and shape a region's collective memory and cultural identity.

There is an abundance of traditional songs pervaded by violence and control prevalent in traditional societies. It is noted that most people are too deeply in a trance to be aware of the toxicity those songs have generated. Complaints about traditional songs can probably be traced back thousands of years, yet the roots of these complaints have remained unchanged more than ever. Considering these elements, this paper aims to dissect the traditional songs bequeathed to the people and to propose a possible method for cleansing them. This paper will first examine the visibility of traditional songs ingrained in society and their impact on psychosocial dynamics (Pointer, 2019). Then, through surveys and case studies, the paper will illuminate the connection between individuals and traditional songs, deepening understanding of how they function and what they achieve.

The study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on gender-based research by providing a detailed analysis of how traditional songs sung by men perpetuate harmful gender norms and behaviours in detail. As these songs shape cultural influence, the study highlights the significant role that traditional songs play in normalising GBV through their lyrics and themes. The research provides insight into how cultural expressions can perpetuate harmful gender norms. This delves into the root causes of GBV and contributes to the notion of giving proper attention when men sing on any platform, especially when it is getting dark and when they are drunk. Their songs will always carry an indirect potential to harm women physically and emotionally. The study aims to equip women of all ages with the knowledge of where they go.

Traditional songs have long played a significant role in society, both reflecting it and shaping perceptions. The following examines traditional songs that are popular among men and analyses the ways in which they explicitly and implicitly contribute to the perpetuation of gender-based violence. Here, the explicit ways in which the songs celebrate aggression or subjugate women are explored, and the lyrics and their real-world consequences are discussed. In society, beliefs about gender substantively correlate with the music they consume and are also included. To provide a more comprehensive analysis, an exploration of the unspoken ways in which other well-liked songs may subtly normalise violent behaviour is embarked upon. Moreover, the discussion also addresses the nature of the effect and possible ways to intervene or counteract these harmful representations, advocating for the critical consideration of the role of music in gender representation and adherence to respect and compassion (Boswall & Cowan, 2022).

The findings indicate a concerning conclusion: men's traditional songs often serve as conduits for negative emotions such as anger, resentment, and hatred. Traditional songs have a profound impact on listeners, shaping their worldviews and beliefs about gender. It is likely that music with a similar message will have a similar impact. There is consensus among scholars that, in addition to the spoken word, the atmosphere in which one is brought up has a profound effect on one's habits and beliefs about those who are considered "other" (Bikundo, 2023). However, when considering songs that perpetuate the unequal treatment of women, one must also look at one's own country and culture. Men, too, can fabricate, and so the many songs that the stars of their time used to tell girls about the moon and the cherry blossoms were born.

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