Is Female Empowerment Hindering Gender Equality?

- A Case Study of Uuguja Island of Zanzibar, Tanzania

Author: Emmy Ait Maalloum Åhrlin
Supervisor: Jonas Ewald
Examiner: Hanna Leonardsson
University: Linnaeus University
Term: Spring 2023
Subject: Peace and Development studies
Level: Bachelor
Abstract

The work for female empowerment is prominent on the Unguja island of Zanzibar. Governmental support and local and international organizations are investing in women to achieve gender equality. The government of Tanzania has added changes to the law to protect women and prevent gender-based violence, as well as strategic measures to assist the stakeholders of the Zanzibarian society. Simultaneously, the reports of gender-based violence (GBV) are increasing on the islands according to the Zanzibar Female Lawyer Association (ZAFELA). The study explores the measures taken by the government to eliminate violence against women with a focus on the role of the man in these structural social and legal changes. The study also shows the challenges that the added laws have faced in practice, and the balance between culture and legal system in a society, when a change is to take place.

The study has been conducted through a Minor Field Study of 10 weeks on Unguja, Zanzibar by using a qualitative method, with interviews and through observation during an internship for 15 weeks at the Social Welfare Office. The study has taken place within both governmental agencies and institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and through focus groups interviews with civil people to compare the answers and acknowledge the narratives of the local society. The interviews provided answers to the research question and beyond as well. In the analyses, the theory of masculinities, the theory of decolonial feminism and intersectionality are being applied in order to conceptualize these answers and to reach an understanding of the society, and the work against GBV. The study has enhanced the theory of masculinities, as well as it has supplemented the theory with concepts necessary to fit the context of the study, through a decolonial approach. The findings and analyses generate a discussion about whether it is possible to acknowledge the violence of men, and their accountability, while simultaneously see where the system fails in considering the male role as victims in a society challenged by post-colonialism.

Key words: Gender-based violence (GBV), Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), Women Empowermen, Critical Studies of Men and Masculinities (CSMM), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),
Acknowledgements

To highlight my appreciation for the assistance, support and participation in this minor field study is at place, before starting the introduction, for it is with immense gratitude that I write this essay. The information I have been given has been made possible due to the hospitality of the Zanzibarian community. A great thank you to my contact person, Hakimu Mussa for the assistance and never-ending support. I am grateful for my interviewers that has shared their professional and personal experiences of this difficult subject. I want to thank my supervisor, Jonas Ewald, for the academical advise, for believing in the process and for the support along the journey. Lastly, I want to give thanks to my friends and family for the practical assistance that have made the field study possible and for supporting me when times have been challenging.

The gratitude for my son, Esaias is beyond words. You are my biggest supporter and motivation in life.
# Table of Contents

1. **Introduction** ........................................................................................................... 15
   1.1 Relevance and Research Problem ....................................................................... 15
   1.2 Research gap ......................................................................................................... 16
   1.2 Objective & Research Questions ........................................................................ 17
   1.3 Disposition ............................................................................................................ 17

2. **Literature Review & Theoretical Framework** ....................................................... 18
   2.1 Feministic theories ............................................................................................... 18
   2.2 The Field of Men and Masculinities .................................................................. 19
   2.3 The Research on Intimate Partner Violence ....................................................... 20
   2.4 Theoretical Framework ....................................................................................... 21
   2.5 Emerging of Theories in the Aspect of IPV ......................................................... 22

3. **Methodological Framework** ................................................................................ 23
   3.1 An Abductive Qualitative Case Study ................................................................ 23
   3.2 Data selection ...................................................................................................... 24
   3.3 Individual Interviews ......................................................................................... 25
   3.4 Focus Group Interviews ..................................................................................... 26
   3.5 Observations ....................................................................................................... 26
   3.6 Presentation of interviewers ............................................................................... 27
      3.6.1 Stakeholders .................................................................................................. 27
   3.7 Analytical process and applying the theories. ..................................................... 28
   3.8 Limitations & Delimitations ............................................................................... 28
   3.9 Ethical considerations ....................................................................................... 30

4. **Findings** .............................................................................................................. 32
   4.1 General necessary background information about Unguja, Zanzibar ............... 32
   4.2 Gender Norms and its challenges ..................................................................... 33
   4.3 Cultural and Legal Perspectives on Sexual Violence ......................................... 34
   4.4 Cultural and Legal Perspectives on Non-Sexual Violence .................................. 35
   4.5 Governmental strategies to eliminate GBV ......................................................... 37
   4.5 Police and justice system in practice ................................................................. 39
   4.6 Solutions for men to not use violence ............................................................... 41
   4.7 Conclusion of findings ....................................................................................... 42

5. **Analysis** .............................................................................................................. 43
5.1 The application of Masculinity Theory on the Gender Roles on Uuguja Zanzibar........43
5.2 Decolonial Feminism and the Gender Roles on Uuguja Zanzibar ..........................45
5.3 The Actions Taken by the Government, and its Limitations.................................47
5.4 Solutions .............................................................................................................48
6.  Discussion & Conclusion .........................................................................................49
7.  Bibliography ............................................................................................................51
### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CSMM</td>
<td>Critical Studies on Men and Masculinities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-Based Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IPV</td>
<td>Intimate Partner Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPA-VAWC</td>
<td>The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar’s National Plan of Action to end Violence against Women and Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OSC</td>
<td>One Stop Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDG</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TDHS-MIS 2015-16</td>
<td>Tanzania Demographic Health Survey and Malaria Indicator Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>The United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAC</td>
<td>Violence Against Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VAW</td>
<td>Violence Against Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZAFELA</td>
<td>Zanzibar Female Lawyer Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction

1.1 Relevance and Research Problem

Gender equality is a fundamental human right, and a necessity for peaceful, sustainable development. Gender equality is the 5th of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Eliminating all forms of violence against women is a consistent target in the goal, and also throughout the other 16 goals to achieve sustainable development (United Nations, 2022). The definition of violence against women, according to the United Nations (UN) follows: "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." Gender based violence (GBV) is a global issue where 1 out of 3 women, around 736 million women experience violence in their lifetime, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), (2021). In Tanzania, 40% of all women aged 15-49 years women have experienced physical violence, and 17% have experienced sexual violence. In intimate relations, 44% of all women between 15-49 years have experienced sexual or physical violence, with the highest amount in rural areas. The Tanzanian and Zanzibarian government are acknowledging these high numbers and have taken measures to developed strategies to eliminate Gender Based Violence (GBV) (The World Bank, 2022).

The elimination of GBV is essential for national growth, poverty reduction, and for a safe and equal society without discriminations. The Government of Zanzibar is working closely with the UN in order to achieve the SDGs, with the development and implementation of policies and strategies to reach the goals. For the last years, the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar has brought forward strategic measures to reach the sixth goal of gender equality, and by that eliminate GBV (UNFPA, 2019). The National Plan of Action to end Violence against Women and Children 2017-2022 (NPA-VAWC) was brought forward as a framework to assist all parts working with cases involving GBV. This includes healthcare, social work, police, and schools (UNICEF; Government of Zanzibar, 2017) More than that, the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar proposed a law reform in 2018 that was taken into action in 2021 which paved way for stricter laws revolving GBV-cases (Penal Act, 2018).
The most common approach to gender issues, are to analyze the position of women, in order to measure the consequences of gender inequality, which can be established by looking at the SDG’s, reading through the articles of the United Nations (2015) or simply searching for gender equality on the internet, where often women empowerment is linked together with gender equality. Simultaneously, women empowerment is commonly used as a tool to increase gender equality and eliminate GBV, which is one of the prominent solutions to end violence against women, according to the NPA-VAWC, as well as measuring how well the SDGs are being achieved (United Nations, 2022).

On Zanzibar, the women empowerment movement and the strategic measures to eliminate the violence, has been prominent for the last ten years from governmental, non-governmental, and international agencies. Despite this, the violence is still reported to be increasing according to the Zanzibar Female Lawyers Association (ZAFELA); and there is still large critique for the inequality on Zanzibar. The UN wrote a report saying that Tanzania could do more, in order to reduce or eliminate the issue of GBV (The World Bank, 2022), which confirms the increased reported violence. This critique and its recommendation for further adjustments will be examined more throughout in this paper.

1.2 Research gap

However, this thesis aims to turn the focus in order to change the narratives and therefore also look at other solutions for ending GBV. In the literature review, previous research is acknowledged as well as the theoretical background to the chosen subject, although, there is a limitation of the studies conducted in the global South (Boonzaier et al., 2021, p. 1). This scarcity has formed the research problem of this thesis; and mainly on the recognition of men and their role in the process of achieving equality and ending GBV. Now, this can be seen as a provocative way of viewing this issue, partly when stating men as perpetrators, or whether to even invite men and masculinities into the discussion of their violence against women, due to the risk of women and girls being obscured in the debate (White, 2000). However, the authors of ‘Men Masculinities and Intimate Partner Violence’ opens the first chapter by explaining that it is necessary to acknowledge what masculinity has to do with violence, and what critical studies of men and masculinity (CSMM) can contribute to the studies of men’s violence against women (Gottzén et al., 2021, p. 1). This argument is highlighting the reason for this study to
be conducted; and will be further explored and analyzed in this study, in order to answer the research questions presented below.

1.2 Objective & Research Questions

The objective to this thesis is to understand the cultural and traditional norms of the man in the Zanzibarian society, in order to analyze their role, responsibility and capacities in relation to GBV and gender equality. This text argues that a more in-depth analysis of the role of the man is required in order to understand further efforts, in order to achieve gender equality. The following questions is answered in the study:

What are the cultural norms regarding GBV and IPV in Zanzibar?
What has the Zanzibarian Government done to prevent violence?
Is the empowerment of women enough to reach gender equality?

1.3 Disposition

This paper consists of six chapters, with divided sections. The first chapter, the introduction, has presented an overview of its content. The second part includes a literature review of the previous research that has been made on the subject, in order to get an understanding of the subject. The literature review is interlinked with the presentation of the theoretical framework that will be used when analyzing the data. The theory of Masculinities by Raewyn Connell will be explained as it is the main theory that will be used, followed by decolonial feminism and the theories relevance to this study. The third chapter describes the methodological framework that is used to collect the data. As the method being used is qualitative, this part also includes the presentation of the interviewers, a discussion of the sources, limitations and delimitations and ethical considerations the study is facing. The fourth chapter includes the findings and will be presented in a floating text that describes GBV through the different levels of the society, with quotes to clarify the arguments made. In the last chapter, the findings will be analyzed through the theoretical frameworks presented in chapter five. The analysis will connect the previous research, and facts that is demonstrated in the previous chapter. Lastly, important points from the findings and analysis are underlined and shortly discussed in the conclusion.
2. Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

The literature review places great focus on the theoretical background, to explain the importance to carry out this study. As mentioned above, it is this research gap that has led to the research questions. Therefore, the development of feminist theories is presented and how the different approaches view intimate partner violence (IPV). Further, intersectionality and postcolonial feminism are introduced which all leads to the presentation and explanation of the theories used in this study. Lastly, the colonial history and its impact on the postcolonial society of Zanzibar is briefly described, and why Zanzibar is such a unique location to conduct this study in, and how the theories are applicable.

2.1 Feministic theories

The most central understanding in feminist philosophy and its theories are the concept of sex vs gender. Sex is the biological categorization of a person, which often is female or male. Gender on the other hand is the social construction of the expectations and assumptions regarding the biological sexes, with traits of either feminine or masculine, depending on the ideas of what is appropriate and what is expected (Stone, 2007, pp. 1-84). The presumption of the genders is a product of society and culture which also means that the expectations are as dynamic as the context they are in (Connell, 2005, p. 76). The concept of genders was first conceptualized in the late 1960’s and early 1970’s and challenged the biological determinism; that the societal structure was based on the abilities of the biological sexes. Even though most known societies in the world are patriarchal and men holds a more privileged position, one cannot oppose to the fact that all gender roles look different; which would not be possible if the tasks are determent on biology as the physical sex cannot vary (Stone, 2007, pp. 30-32). Kate Millett, a leading feminist thinker and a founder of the radical feminist approach, gives the example of boys being more aggressive than girls, not as their biological behavior, but instead as a result of boys being allowed this behavior. Additionally, the social expectations of girls are to suppress their anger. Both suppressing the anger and becoming victims of the anger of men are causing harm to girls and women (Stone, 2007, p. 32).

Even though the feminists found the concept of gender roles to be an important tool to use when analyzing the society, it does not explain why the female gender tend to be subordinated
the male gender. The subordination is however where most interest lays for feminists, and how it has evolved. Michel Foucault has developed the theory of power, that many feminists find useful. The main argument is that institutions and relationships generate power-levels, as some being sub-ordinated and some remaining power through different exercises, within all social relationships. For example, in some relations knowledge is the power being used in cases of students and teachers or doctors and patience. Feminists argue that the modern institutions have created a hierarchy for women to be subordinated and men to be hegemonic, which is fueled by disciplinary power. As prisoners learn the hierarchy and norms, they will act accordingly, so will also women. Beauty is a disciplinary tool, used by the patriarchy in order to create standards where women must fit in, that inhabit women which generates self-hatred and subordination (Stone, 2007, pp. 57-67).

Moreover, in the 1970’s the feminist movements were largely divided into three wings: the liberal, socialist and radical feminist theory. Nevertheless, were these theories development in and for women in the western world. These approaches have been criticized for having a simplistic and exclusionary view on women, primarily by black women; as they imply that all women are subordinated to men, just because they are women. According to Black feminists, these approaches exclude the experiences and presuppositions which women of color must endure. Instead, the concept of intersectionality must be applied to all previous theories, as there are different definitions of femininity that are subordinated masculinity in different forms (Stone, 2007, pp. 144-154).

2.2 The Field of Men and Masculinities

The CSMM has been a sub-field within gender studies that emerged from the women’s liberation movements, although without specific research until the mid 1980’s. R.W Connell is a pioneer in the field as her concern about the scarcity of empirical facts on masculinities, led her to conduct her first male-focused study on gender practices (Connell, 2005). The first edition was published in 1995 and evolved during a time where essentialism was highly discussed within the feministic gender studies. The perspective of intersectionality and the different types of masculinities are embedded within the theory of masculinities, and R.W Connell argues the importance of acknowledging the different constructions of masculinities in plural (Connell, 2005). The concepts of ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ and the original
observations of Sigmund Freud, are verbally useful terms, although they are difficult to define. According to Connell, this is mainly due to gender itself. As the meaning of being a woman with completely or predominantly feminine elements is difficult to define (Connell, 2005, p. 3). Instead, Connell describes the concept of masculinity as not definable in terms of a norm of characteristics or behavior, but instead as one part of gender relations (Connell, 2005, pp. 70-74).

2.3 The Research on Intimate Partner Violence

According to the radical feminists, the violence is seen as central in men’s oppression and dominance of women. Although, the radical feminists base the studies on violent men on the experiences and consequences for women; and from the perspective of men the focus is on what men gain from using violence. By using violence, men control the woman domestically in terms of division of labor, sexual access and on a structural level by obtaining male dominance (Bergren et al., 2021, pp. 34-48). In the case of rape, the radical feminist writer Susan Brownmiller argues that rape is a ‘process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear’ ((Brownmiller, 1975, p. 15). To focus on the causes of men’s violence is according to the radical feminists minimizing the grave impacts it has on women, and instead portrays violent men as victims (Gottzén et al., 2021, p. 35). The study of masculinities grew out from a socialist view, by considering the different positions each gender is placed in. Connell (Masculinities, 2005, p. 77) acknowledges that generally men have more power than women, although gender roles are fluid in a time perspective and in different cultures across the globe.

However, the theories revolving men, masculinities and IPV all emerge from the global north, which excludes other social structures and possible marginalization. Further significant analyses on this are formulated in the chapter ‘Men from the South’ written by Floretta Boonzaier, Monique Huysamen and Taryn van Niekerk (2021, pp. 52-65). The authors underline the argument of Connell, that most of the world’s population lives in the global south. They claim the importance of expanding the theory of masculinities and IPV by adding the structures of post-colonial societies, capitalism and globalization that marginalizes some men in the global south. In this chapter, the case of South Africa is used example when describing the development of the social structure that emerged through colonization, apartheid and slavery. On Zanzibar, colorism is embedded in the society, which is commonly explained as
the daughter of racism (Tekie, 2020). Women bleaching their skin and looking for partners with lighter skin demonstrates a social order that affect women and men of darker color negatively. The authors of the chapter ‘Men from the South’, Floretta Boonzaier, Monique Huysamen and Taryn van Niekerk, underline the importance of continues research on the global south, with a feministic decolonial approach; as the racialization and shaping of the genders and sexualization must be considered when analyzing the power settings and its detainment of men’s violence against women (Gottzén et al., 2021, pp. 52-65).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that will be used is the Theory of Masculinities by Raewyn Connell, with emphasizes on the intersectionality approach; and decolonial feminism for a complementary purpose, with emphasis on the recognition of more than one kind of masculinities. According to Connell, the collective work towards gender equality can be embedded in the interplay between gender, race, and class. Connell describes masculinity as an umbrella concept with hegemony, subordination, complicity, and marginalization as categories highlighting the relations among masculinities (Connell, 2005, pp. 76-81). Hegemonic masculinity is accepted by a system supported by culture and institutional power, and “relates to cultural dominance in the society as a whole” (Connell, 2005:78). These conditions can be challenged by women and construct a new hegemony. Subordination defines where a particular man is positioned within the hegemony, where homosexual men are positioned at the bottom of the masculine hierarchy. Complicity, on the other hand, is a concept used to explain the man who does not act according to the norms to achieve hegemony by choice, even though they benefit from the hegemony structure. Marginalization depends on the conditions of the hegemonic masculinity in a specific setting, where the marginalization is institutionalized (Connell, 2005). Connell provides a framework with these concepts that are applicable when analyzing the role of the men being central in the interviews. As the position of the man will be analyzed, the possible consequences of their position and behavior can be further explained by Connell’s theory of masculinity.

Masculinity is not a system but a practice within a system. The change in the system is generated from inequality, whereas one group will lose dominance and one will gain. Men belonging to the privileged group has an interest to defend their dominance and to some extent
use violence to obtain it. However, this does not have to be direct violence, but could also be structural (Connell, 2005:81-83), which possible attitudes or behavior of the men might expose.

Even though the theory of masculinities is a thorough theory, with different masculinities considered, Connell (2005) underlines that most of the studies includes white men, who also holds a hierarchical position in the world. Therefore, a complementary theory is chosen as a tool to be able to analyze a society that instead is on the other side of the hierarchy of today’s world order. Sheriff (2001) describes the colonial impact on race and class in Zanzibar, with tensions leading up to the revolution in 1964 as a complex interrelation between ethnic groups and class. Meanwhile, the arguments of colonialism being a result of racism, and colorism a result of racism underlines the relevance of ethnicity in the social structure in Zanzibar. In the article, ‘Feminist Theory and the Global South’, Celia Roberts and Raewyn Connell (2016) states that the process of colonization itself was gender-structured and is a crucial aspect when analyzing the post-colonial societies and its gender-roles which many Southern feminists’ highlights. Therefore, the variations of masculinities in Zanzibar will include decolonial feminism and pervade the study, to reduce the risk of getting a westernized analyzes on the society.

2.5 Emerging of Theories in the Aspect of IPV

Connell concentrates on soft power (Gottzén, Bjornholt, & Boonzaier, 2021, p. 34), and not primary on violence or IPV. However, the theory of masculinities is frequently used in many studies on violent men. The book Men, Masculinities, and Intimate Partner Violence, brings together feminist theories with masculinity studies and IPV, as well as it includes chapters that consider the post-colonial aspects (Gottzén et al., 2021). This study will be analyzed by this emergence of these theories and approaches to address the specific gender roles of Zanzibar. At first, the framework of masculinities will be used in order to identify the masculinities on Zanzibar. Secondly, the structured action theory of Messerschmidt that describes IPV as a maintenance of a dominant role, if he lack that opportunity outside the home. This theory is as an extension from the pluralism of masculinities that Connell describes (Bergren et al., 2021, pp. 38-40). To these frameworks, the decolonial feminism is added to reach a greater understanding of the role of the man on Zanzibar. The purpose of this, is to understand the racist dominations and possible effects on gendered domination. Lastly in the discussion session, the outcome of the analyses will be presented, and possible solutions based
on the findings and theory. From this process, the study will not only contribute empirically but also generate theoretical contribution by identifying the weaknesses in the masculinity theory and how it can be improved to also include other cultures and societal structure than western.

This chapter has demonstrated the theoretical background of the study, and the connection between the theories of masculinities, intersectionality and decolonial feminism; and its relevance to the study being conducted on Zanzibar. The following chapter will introduce the methods of this study and how these theories will be applied.

### 3. Methodological Framework

The chosen methodological framework of this study will be presented in this chapter, and its relevance to the research questions. Presentation of participants are included, and emphasis is made to describe the validation of the study, by presenting the triangular method used, as well as the study’s delimitations, limitations and the ethical considerations. At last, the process of the analysis and how the theories are to be applied is described.

#### 3.1 An Abductive Qualitative Case Study

The thesis is being conducted through a qualitative and semi-structured method, in order to reach an understanding of the research questions more in-depth (Bryman, 2016: 374-601). To conduct an in-depth study is meaningful when researching a subject that is vulnerable to generalization of a society or culture, and with a long history of colonization (Boonzaier et al., 2021, pp. 52-62). Instead of just confirming what is, it is important to understand how violence is viewed, used and why. It is also of importance to let the people being affected by the violence in the context studied, and the people working to prevent it to be heard in the matter. The case study of Zanzibar consists of ten weeks work with semi-structured interviews, aiming to gain detailed information, followed by observations from field work during a 15-week internship at the Social Welfare Office (SWO). The purpose of this set-up is to be able to confirm the information from the interviews and see how it works in practice, which is further explained.
3.2 Data selection

In contemplation of the research criteria, the interviews are being collected with a triangular method which is divided into two parts of non-probability sampling and more specifically critical case sampling (Bryman, et al., 2021). The ambition for using this form of sampling is to get information from people with knowledge about the legislation and the work concerning GBV.

![Diagram showing data selection method](image1)

**Figure 1.**

![Diagram showing data collection in courts and other sectors](image2)

**Figure 2.**

The purpose of the first part, figure 1, is to get a general understanding of the legal system, and whereas the public persecutor and ZAFELA are being interviewed. These agents are commonly working opposite each other, and it is important to get both narratives. Furthermore, observations are made at Mwera and Vuga court during four sessions to confirm which cases that are most common, and the nature of the cases. The purpose of these observations is to
confirm the collected information from the interviews of the stakeholders of the law. The interviews in this part are held between the 1st of November to the 30th of December in 2022.

The second part, figure 2, represents the interviews of the stakeholders of the social workers. Interviews are held at the headquarters and at Makunduchi SWO, as well as the One Stop Centre (OSC) in Makunduchi and Stone Town. The information from the social workers is then being compared to the legal stakeholders in figure 1, and all information is confirmed through observations during the internship at the SWO. Lastly, group interviews are held together with the SWO where three villages are visited in order to discuss challenges and solutions with the communities. The observation and interviews of this part are being held between the 2nd of January to the 23rd of April. By dividing the interviews into these three sessions, the triangular approach generates more confidence and credibility in the answers. Furthermore, confirming the experience of stakeholders within the legal system, the social workers and NGO of female lawyers combined with larger groups within the community, the findings is comparable and can be analyzed (Bryman, 2016) through the chosen theories.

The process of selecting the interviewers is assisted by the local contact person Hakimu Mussa. Mr. Mussa has been working with volunteers, and international cooperation’s for over ten years in the field of development. Mr. Mussa is also originally from Zanzibar with a great local network and can direct me to informants of value to the study. The access to the courts were granted from the High Court of Zanzibar, and the access to the SWO and OSC was granted by the Ministry of Labor, Empowerment, Elders, Youth, Women and Children.

3.3 Individual Interviews

The interviews starts with general questions, in order to get an understanding of the individual, their background and occupation, in relation to the subject and to gain trust. Questions are then asked about gender, and the differences between boys and girls, and men and women on Zanzibar. The aim is to to get an understanding of how these roles are manifested in the society of Zanzibar, followed by questions to understand what happens when the social structures are changing. Further questions relate to the framework of NPA-VAWC, 2017-2022 and the reform of the Penal Act (The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2018), and the possible challenges these strategies are facing, followed by questions regarding the attitudes towards GBV in the society.
3.4 Focus Group Interviews

The focus group method is being used for two reasons. It is part of the triangular method to confirm and compare the information given by governmental agencies, as previously mentioned. Further, the focus groups provide data at multiple levels where the discussions of challenges also indicate social norms through interactions, group dynamics and where the discussion around GBV leads. Despite the preferable small number of participants in a focus group, as argued by multiple authors in Bryman’s Social Research Methods (Bryman et al., 2021, p. 457), the participants vary between 74 to 119 participants. The reason for this is first the choice of method to select the participants. The Sheha (village leader) calls the people for the meeting and everyone is allowed to join the meeting. This is a traditional practice and is commonly used on Zanzibar. To have an open invitation as this, is part of the research in order to see the thrive and interest in the social challenges and changes. Furthermore, it is the social welfare officer that holds the meeting, who is used to holding meetings with the community, and who knows the customs, which also reduces the tension between an outsider, and the community. It is in the SWO practice, as well as for the Sheha’s to have a direct dialogue with the people in form of meetings such as these. That also leads to the argument that people are less likely to speak in big groups. The Zanzibarian culture is community-based, and people are very concerned about their right to opinions and to be heard.

During the community meetings, the social welfare officer only asked five open questions. The individual sessions demanded a bit more structure, as there where specific information that had to be answered to be able to get a correct overview of, for example the legal system. Instead, during the focus group the aim was to see where the discussions would lead. By using less questions for the group interviews, more space is given to the participants to make sure that the focus is on their concerns.

3.5 Observations

The purpose with the observations is to create a top-down method that generates an understanding of the legal framework, its practitioners and how it looks like in the society. The observations are taking place in the courtroom, and further during the internship, during the focus group interviews and lastly through informal settings with people in the society. The practice of the observations is first informed to the people in these different settings, and a consent is given at each session before starting. However, the informal observations occur
naturally, within the everyday life, with the purpose of connecting dots and confirming information already formally given. The observations within the courtroom, as mentioned concerns the cases received and its nature. In the SOW, observations include listening to the challenges and what dialogues that are kept between colleagues, as well as which clients are visiting and for what reasons. In the everyday life, challenges within the society are often discussed, and the gender roles as part of the discussion, which is further discussed in the findings.

3.6 Presentation of interviewers

It is essential to present the participants, to understand the findings and their relevance to the thesis. The following session includes the title of the person being interviewed, his/her location and name.

3.6.1 Stakeholders

Interview 1 - The Public Persecutor based at Mwera Court, Mr. Mohamed

Interview 2 - Secretary Director of the Zanzibar Female Lawyer Association (ZAFELA), Mrs. Jamila

Interview 3 - Police Officer at the Gender Desk in Stone Town, Mr. Sajiki

Interview 4 - Director of Social Welfare on Zanzibar, Ministry of Labour, Empowerment, Elders, Women and Children, Mr. Abdulla

Interview 6 – Social Welfare Worker at the One Stop Center (OSC) in Makunduchi, Mrs. Amina

Interview 7 – Community Development, Gender and Children Officer, The Social Welfare Office of Makunduchi, Mr. Haji

3.6.2 Group interview
Three interview sessions are held through community meetings, together with the SOW, in the villages of Muyuni, Muungoni and Kitogani. The attendance of the meetings is as followed: Muyuni - 37 women and 37 men, Muungoni - 77 women and 42 men, Kitogani - 39 women and 42 men.

3.7 Analytical process and applying the theories.

The study ensues an abductive approach, with the theory being kept in mind throughout the collection of the data, in order to find the leading cause and reason to explain the findings. At the beginning of the study process, the idea was to apply the theory of masculinities. As the literature review emphasizes the theoretical background to the subject, an understanding of the theory’s possible explanation existed before the collection of the findings. However, when collecting the data, the interpretive framework does not match all the responses and observations, which inquires to return to the theory, and apply additional theoretical framework, for greater understanding. Intersectionality and decolonial feminist theory are then explored and applied when analyzing the data as well as it is an ontological tool embedded in the method in the interviews and observation. Meanwhile, in the analytical chapter, the findings are attempted to be explained through the theory of masculinities and additional explanations through the theory of decolonial feminism.

3.8 Limitations & Delimitations

First and foremost, the amount of time spent in the field has comparative advantages. The study would not have been possible to only conduct within a few weeks, without the comparison of the observations. It takes time to build up trust and receive generous information and gain knowledge through valid sources. The amount of time spent in the field gives validation to the findings, and the processes of the study. The personal experiences that I, as a researcher possesses are also important to acknowledge. My previous visits in Zanzibar in 2017, and my extended work with a Swedish and Zanzibarian organization has granted me contacts and has generated trust among the local community. Nevertheless, my experiences from working as a prison officer at the Swedish Prison and Probation Service grants me access to rooms such as the police, courtrooms, and prison that would not have been given as only a researcher. Before
and during the fieldwork, there is an awareness of the complexity of the issue and gives me a head start on which people are of importance on the subject, as well as which questions is of relevance and how to ask them.

Concurrently, there is an importance to stay open in the context and not let previous experiences shape the narratives in Zanzibar, and it becomes even more important to think about biasness. The purpose of conducting the thesis have been clarified before the interviews, while discussions around my text is taken after the interviews in order to prevent the person from changing their narratives. Clarifications are made before the interviews, that the answers will be written regardless my position as interviewer or person in authorities when concluding the internship. In terms of privacy, all participants are offered to be anonymous, although everyone has agreed to be public; and their first name is presented. The openness to this specific subject, may depend on the official work from the government to prevent GBV, the stigma surrounding the subjects are not equally applicable to public workers as it is in their profession to highlight these matters, comparing to private people.

Further possible biases to acknowledge are by the contact person and interpreter Mr. Hakimu Mussa. Mr. Mussa doesn’t hold any political or culturally hierarchical positions that could be threatening to the participants. Instead, it is the work in the volunteerism and tourist sector on a ground level, that has given him the right contacts for this study. The participants have not been granted any benefits for engaging in the study, but only been chosen, asked and they have accepted. Due to the high level of reported cases on Zanzibar, as mentioned, there could be biases from the governmental sector answering the questions of the system. However, as the findings present, the answers are interpreted as transparent in relation to their position to a large extent. Moreover, English is not the first language in Zanzibar, which has been considered during the study and the questions are therefore asked in different ways, to make sure that the point that the participant wants to clarify is understood. Mr. Mussa speaks fluent English and Swahili and has been present in all interviews. All interviews have been conducted in English except the focus groups, and all introductions are made in both Swahili and English. Me, as a researcher have basic skills in Swahili and the language skills are to the extent that the researcher understands what is being said in the translation of the introduction of each session to acknowledge any misunderstandings of the ethical considerations that will be further discussed.
The study is limited to the study of men, although the perspective of women suffering the consequences are not overlooked. Without undermining the suffering of women and children, the perspective of men in the work for gender equality is, as previously mentioned often unprioritized, and therefore will this study be delimited as this and instead give space for other research to highlight the perspective on men. Women are still included in the interviews as professionals, as well as in the focus group in order to understand their perspective on the gender norms. Delimitations are also made on account of the strict LGBTQ+ laws, and therefore this study will only include heterosexual relations, and people will be referred to as women and men, girls and boys.

3.9 Ethical considerations

The first part of the ethical considerations follows the feminist decolonial, and intersectional approach as previous mentioned, to consider the interviewer’s status has on the research. Initially, the possibility of conducting this study, is part of the post-colonial system as R.W Connell argues. Authors from the south, faces multiple challenges when attempting to get their own studies and theories published and read internationally, such as economic and translational (Roberts & Connell, 2016). This study has been conducted with economic support from scholarships provided in Sweden, and the Swedish Board of Student Finance (CSN) that grants study allowance for all students fitting the criteria, when conducting a thesis. This privilege does not exist in most parts of the world, and studies are instead dependent on financial assets. The study is also conducted by a white woman, in a country where colorism is embedded in the society which creates a position of power that gives access to rooms that others would not be granted, as it generates a power relation between the participant and researcher. At the same time, there can be advantages to be a stranger, outside the culture and society when a person is describing the challenges of the society and system. When considering this from a universalist stance, it would be difficult to argue that this thesis would be ethical accepted. However, argument for being an outsider is that there is a lower risk for personal experiences and perceptions (Bryman, et al., 2021), as well as questions can be asked by an outsider, that would be difficult or even dangerous for an insider to ask.

Further ethical considerations must be made regarding the appearance when entering rooms where there are many social rules, as the researcher is non-Muslim, and the study is in a Muslim
society. The customs are being discussed with the interpreter before each session to make sure that no boundaries are crossed. This is mainly due to respect, but also to give credibility to the research. If one cannot understand the customs, how will the person understand the social norms and the unique challenges of the society? Advantageously, my previous experience in Zanzibar generates an awareness of the choices of clothes, greetings and the different hierarchy to consider. Nevertheless, it is important to accept the cultural differences that will occur, and that the position of the researcher is only to observe and later analyze, but not to judge or change the customs.

Moreover, it is essential to acknowledge the tendency of violence becoming ‘property of other men’ when writing a case study of a southern country (Gottzén et al., 2021, p. 10) and to obfuscate the violence of white men (Boonzaier et al., 2021, p. 53) This risk should be considered when an outsider writes a thesis in a different context than the home country. GBV is a worldwide issue, and Zanzibar is not chosen as a case study due to higher levels of violence, but to study how GBV plays out in this context.

Furthermore, when viewing the ethical principles of conducting social research, there are four main areas that needs to be considered. To avoid harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy and deception is involved (Bryman et al., 2021, p. 112). The subject, as mentioned is not as controversial as it has been. In contrast to the previous experiences of Zanzibar for the researcher, where the subject could not be discussed or even acknowledge without risks or conflicts. The Zanzibarian government did not recognize the issue of GBV, as they do today. Therefore, to discuss GBV with governmental agencies does not generate harm to the participants, for it is seen as their duty to discuss it. The research is also not directed towards direct victims of this kind of violence which would put women at risk. In terms of informed consent, the custom in Zanzibar is for a guest to give a throughout introduction before any type of meeting or session in court. Zanzibar is also used to having guests attending. However, it is important that the translation here is clear. The court sessions have involved normal practice and have been open to the public. During these sessions, the introduction has included a clarification that the observation in during the court sessions are anonymous and will only be briefly analyst, with no details that can lead to the specific case.

This chapter has consisted of an in-depth presentation of the method used to obtain the answers to the study, and why. The triangulation method has been presented, followed by the
presentation of the participants. The ethical challenges are considered, and the delimitations and limitations of this study. Now it is time to present the findings.

4. Findings

In order to get an understanding of the context where the research questions are being discussed, this chapter opens with an introductive background of Unguja Island of Zanzibar. Further the information from the interviews is presented under each heading, that gives further explanations of the societal context with some quotes to underline the specific points made. These will be used specifically when applying the theories in the analytic chapter.

4.1 General necessary background information about Unguja, Zanzibar

The United Republic of Tanzania was formed in 1964 as a result of the Union of mainland Tanganyika and Zanzibar. Zanzibar is a union of multiple islands along the coast of Tanganyika. Zanzibar has a unique history of cultural influences from traders, and colonizers. The colonial history has left many marks on the island. One example is the value that is placed on the origin of a person. Colorism is embedded in the society, which is not only referred to as a white person or a Black person, but instead the general assumption is that lighter skin is seen as more beautiful and generates more power.

In the last 20 years, the tourism has increased considerably, and an estimated 27% of the GDP derives from tourism (The World Bank, 2022). With increased tourism, one can easily imagine an economic boost for the people as well. Even though the poverty line was dropped 9 percent; it was low comparing to the economic growth. There are mainly two reasons for this imbalance. Firstly, most of the tourism businesses is owned by foreigners (Anderson W. , 2013), and the salary of the people working are not proportional to the profits that the owners make. Secondly, there is a significant difference on the prices in Uuguja Zanzibar, compared to the mainland; and prices even differ between the villages depending on the density of tourism in the area. Thirdly, there are cultural and religious barriers for Zanzibari men and women that prevent them from working in hotels, restaurants and bars such as the way of dressing, or serving alcohol. Owners are therefore more likely to hire people from the mainland, or foreigners that
can adapt to their policies due to fewer challenges of their own culture. This makes the Zanzibari men and women marginalized on the market, and they miss out on the benefits from the biggest economic assets on the island. This is one reason for the poverty level still being very high which has been observed throughout this study and puts pressure on both women and men. However, it appears very different depending on the genders, which will be further explained.

4.2 Gender Norms and its challenges

The cultural norms are based on a patriarchal system, where men are required to be the main provider of the family. Women are instead responsible of the household, with everything from cooking, cleaning and taking care of their children. However, according to the interview with the Director of Social Welfare Office, the cases received at the SWO are dominantly where the fathers do not provide for their children, and the social workers are highlighting this pattern as prominent in the social and economic challenges of the society. At ZAFELA, the distribution of cases looks the same, as well as issues of abandonment of children. The Social Welfare Officers at the Makunduchi SWO confirms this reality when describing their most common clients are women that needs assistance regarding their economic situation as their husbands do not provide or leave the children. This was also confirmed through the observations at the SWO. This occurs both within married couples and divorced, and the father is obligated by law to provide for their children, but the mother is not if she does not have money. On Zanzibar, there are also men with multiple wives, and their economic assets are not considered when men are marrying more than one wife. The majority of women are not working, but are trying to engage in cooperations for women, to support each other, or smaller businesses. When the parents are divorced, it is common that the fathers care less about their children and women are left without support. The pressure on men to provide comes from their spouse, their family, their neighborhood, and the whole of society. With a high poverty level, the social workers are acknowledging this difficulty for the men to provide and a large financial weight rests on men’s shoulders. The government has no assistance for the mothers that are left without a provider for their children, even if the father is unable to get money. Instead, the SWO can only assist the parents in terms of communication, and to underline the importance of the father providing. This was also confirmed by Mrs. Jamila, the Director of ZAFELA, where cases of married women being deprived of economic and material resources, are most common as well.
Nevertheless, all interviewers acknowledge the high number of cases of GBV and IPV, with emphasis on the violence that goes unreported. These challenges will be further elaborated under the next heading.

4.3 Cultural and Legal Perspectives on Sexual Violence

When referring to the norms of today, all interviewers separate sexual violence and domestic violence, outside and within marriage. Therefore, sexual violence and non-sexual violence will be explained separately. In this section, the different dimensions of challenges regarding violence with sexual elements is elaborated, and the next heading focuses on non-sexual violations. This is made with the purpose to clarify the differences both culturally and legally.

Firstly, in terms of sexual violence, men are not considered possible victims of rape, but only perpetrators of sexual crimes. According to the Penal Act (The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2018), in paragraph 108; rape is considered ‘... an offence for a male person to rape a girl or a woman’. According to the police, social workers and the public persecutor being interviewed, most rape cases are young girls being under 18 which is the age of consent in Tanzania, according to the Children’s Act (The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2018). This is confirmed by the observations during the session in court, where most of the plaintiffs were girls under the age of 18. In practice, this means that all sexual interactions, with or without consent where the girl is under 18 are considered rape by the boy. The girl being underaged, will not be charged. These cases are handled by the special courts at Mwera, Yuga, where the observation have taken place, and Makonda.

As it is only the boys or men that can be sentenced for sexual activity under the age of consent, it creates an imbalance in terms of justice. As the Public Persecutor argues, that “If the girl wants to have sex, and the man doesn't want because of fear of the sentence, the girl will say: aren't you man enough to do this”. People are joking about the importance of showing the birth certificate, as it is the responsibility of boys to know the age, even if he himself is underage. According to all interviews, this law creates more difficulties than benefits, both in the case of the boys, as Mr. Mohamed states it “young boys' lives are being destroyed with long sentences without any work for prevention, or overviewsing this imbalance”, but also in all the criminal
acts that are being de-prioritized and stuck on a pile as the criminal cases of this nature on Uuguja are very high.

Secondly, wives are not considered being possible victims of rape within her marriage, but instead, the consent is considered being given at the day of the wedding. Paragraph 108 also underlines the requirement of the woman not being his wife, or being his wife who is lawfully separated from him without her consenting to it at the time of the sexual intercourse (Penal Act, 2018). To clarify, the sexual violence being reported are unmarried women or rape of girls under 18. This is a cultural assumption, as well as stated in the law, and is confirmed by the statements and practices of the interviewers. The public persecutor was asked why there is no law that protects women in their marriage in terms of sexual violations, the answer was given with an attend to be humoristic that the women of Zanzibar are “No problem, they don’t say no. But I know how you people are, and handle things but our women are different”.

As stated by Amina, married women being raped outside her marriage are rarely reporting. Ms. Amina had never received a case where the woman has been attacked and raped and underlines the stigma of a married woman being raped. In case of assault outside her marriage, there might be fear towards reporting as there is a risk that the husband doesn’t believe her and therefore she protects herself, the family and the husband by not reporting. Consequently, the public persecutor, and the social worker at the OSC in Makunduchi states that the second common cases are assault rape by a neighbor or family member, for unmarried women and girls. They also argue that it is more common that the perpetrator is not relative, and that most sexual violence happens outside the house. Worth mentioning again, is that rape is not reported by married women if the husband rapes them. The social workers, and the public persecutor agrees with the statement of ZAFELA, that it is getting more common that children are being abused.

4.4 Cultural and Legal Perspectives on Non-Sexual Violence.

In this section the violence towards women, are referred to as non-sexual violence due to the paragraph 108 (Penal Act, 2018). All the interviewers describe the previous assumption of a husband and a wife as the man being superior the woman, and therefore the husband had the right to beat his wife, which also has been seen as a necessity in the marriage to some extent. These attitudes are shifting, and the government of Zanzibar are taking actions in order to
change these norms, which is underlined by all interviewers; and will be further elaborated. Domestic violence within marriage with no sexual elements such as physical and mental abuse are punishable in court, but there are many incidents of this nature that is not reported, according to ZAFELA and the Public Persecutor. This information is supported by the Social Welfare Officers, that underlines the shortage of received cases of GBV at the SWO as well. Even though they know it exists as there is a high engagement in the community meetings, where the people bring the challenges up for discussion. The reasons for this are firstly, that according to the SWO, few reports due to the cultural challenges of the family being the main conflict resolution rather than only the police and court, which the public persecutor agrees upon. The island has strong cultural norms, where the family is highly prioritized. According to the interviews of all stakeholders, women usually do not press chargers, but instead, consult with their family members. This is a hinder for the practitioners of the law and the social workers where in this case, the cultural system is stronger than the law system. The common advice from the family is to be tolerant and not disclose what happens in the marriage. If the case is brought to the court, and the husband should serve in prison, you may see family separation rather than family union. Instead, they solve the issue in the best interest of the child but do not report it and in some cases separate.

The second reason is the SWO is a relatively new system, and few knows about its existence, and it is difficult to reach the people. This is partly due to the lack of economic resources, as the transport, internet and other necessities are paid for by the officers themselves, from their own pockets. The Social Welfare Office was supported economically the first years of establishing the agency, but it slowed down during Covid-19 and instead the work is partly volunteering from the Social Welfare Officers. Thirdly, ZAFELA and the SWO argues that the police system is corrupted, and there are some cases where the perpetrator pays the police off, or the family. The director explains:

“However, it is difficult to win due to the cases where bribes occur in court. Sometimes there is a sense that there is a bribe, without concrete reasons, although there is a feeling as there is evidence put forward and the person is still not persecuted. Sometimes the bribe is caught”.

Corruption was not brought up by the PP, or the police but with the social workers that confirms that sometimes cases are just not finished, for unknown reasons. The corruption within the
court, the police and hospital are one of the biggest challenges that Mrs. Jamila highlights. Lastly, there are also cases, the social welfare officers fill in, that there is a fear of reporting cases to the police due to superstition. If there is a person convicting a crime, such as rape, people are afraid to witness or report due to black magic, which also ZAFELA confirms.

4.5 Governmental strategies to eliminate GBV

On Zanzibar, the actions taken towards empowering women have been to enable schooling, increasing job opportunities, educating women in human rights and strengthening the laws and giving rights to own land and properties. However, women still do not have reproductive rights, rights to their body in their marriage, and there is no legal protection against discrimination within the agencies, to make sure their rights are obtained. The NPA-VAWC, 2017-2022 is one example of the actions taken by the Government of Zanzibar to prevent and respond to violence against women and children. The framework was developed in collaboration with UNICEF and includes values and practices for all governmental agencies. The reform of the Penal Act of 2018 was another attempt to strengthen the rights of women and children, and to change the attitudes towards GBV-cases, by first exchange the previous bill to prison sentences. According to Mrs. Jamila, convictions has increased compared to before. This can partly depend on the fact that more people are reporting now due to the awareness. Simultaneously, Mrs. Jamila explains that women are more empowered today and not dependent on their husbands to the same extent. Women know their rights to a larger extent, such as how to register their properties etc. The SWO and the OSC in Makunduchi, all argue for the importance of ending the cultural assumptions of violence against women and children; and refers to their prevention work. There is a general understanding, that women and men should be equal, in all agencies visited. However, there is also a general understanding that men and women are not equal when looking at the practices in the society; and there is still an underlying tone in statements about GBV, which is of importance for the analysis part.

During the observations in court, and through the focus groups where the issue of GBV and IPV was met, the violence could be justified depending on the reasons behind it. The cultural aspect of gender roles could be taken into consideration in the courtroom, as when Mr. Mohamed describes a case where the husband had beaten his wife, after he comes home from work and the food is not finished. His violence was triggered by his wife justification saying,
“go take the food and cook by yourself”. Mr. Mohamed continues: “Under this issue, should we consider, whether the husband beat his wife, or do we have to consider, why the husband beats his wife?” The interpretation of this statement during the interview is that it depends if the violence is more acceptable, as the woman hadn’t fulfilled her duties, and talked back to the husband disrespectfully. In the same discussion, Mr. Mohamed states that:

We men, when you start to stress us, we are very easy to assault. Specifically here, in this developing country. Most men are the ones looking for food for their wife and families. For these developing countries, it is very difficult to get enough, and there might create conflicts in the home when the husband comes home with nothing, as the wife will ask and create frustration to the husband, or the wife will even beat him.

In the focus groups, to obtain the gender roles were specifically highlighted as a solution to end the violence. If women acted according to her role, the husband would have no reason to beat her, and it was a general assumption that the violence could be justified depending on the circumstances. In terms of sexual abuse, the reasons for boys and men to violate the right of girls or women are not discussed, but the issue is rather discussed in terms of reasons for girls and women to be raped. This is argued by both men and women. The rape of a girl was explained from the Social Welfare Office of Stone Town as “the girl didn’t were underwear, and it resulted in her being raped”. Both men and women frequently used the argument that the way women dressed were a reason for women and girls to be raped, which was also seen as a part of the solution to the problem. Poverty was argued as a reason for GBV in the focus groups as well, and referred to the frustration and desperation that arises in the men when there is no possibility to provide for their family, which the woman expects and demands. This is a common thread in the answers from the individual interviews as well. When being asked whether a possible increase of violence can have anything to do with the increased women empowerment, Mrs. Amina answers:

There might be an agreement within the family if the woman have high income and the husband lower, that she works, and he stays home more. However, there are cases where the husband does not want to be under the woman. Men use violence for power. Men have more power, physically but there is also power in money. This could be a reason for the husband using violence, as a way of gaining back that power. “If I dont
have an income, maybe this woman will disrespect me” and therefore the husband wants to gain power again.

The public persecutor answers similarly and argues that, in terms of sexual violence, there is more greed, emotional impact but also power, based on the assumption that men are above women. The SWO agrees with poverty being one of the main reasons for violence, along with low education, and the high level of divorces on Zanzibar. Many problems within the families occurs when the parents’ divorce. This is discussed also at the interviews with the focus groups, where many women and men highlight the increasing numbers of divorces, and the lack of responsibilities for the children in connection with that. Women argues that there is a lack economic responsibility for men, but also in terms of emotional and physical support at home. Many men are staying out with friends instead of staying with the family or looking for work.

4.5 Police and justice system in practice

There are different layers of institutions on Zanzibar, both formal and informal that interplay. Sometimes the institutions mutually reinforce each other, and sometimes undermine each other. On Zanzibar, there are the Khadis’ Court that concerns marriage and family issues, including divorce. The Khadis’ Courts co-exist within the court system of Zanzibar and play an important role (Oba, 2019). However, in certain cases the Islamic law, sometimes goes against the state law as in the terms of marriage, as a girl can be married according to Islamic law at the age of 15, but according to the government, that is illegal. However, according to the social workers, this is sometimes used to not bring shame to the family if a girl has gotten pregnant when she is underaged. This is supported in the Penal Act of 2018, where the man can be charged of rape, if the woman or girl is under the age of eighteen years, unless the woman is his wife who is not lawfully separated from the man.

As the Children’s Act was presented in 2011, the first OSC opened on Zanzibar at the Mnazi Moja Hospital. Today, every district has a unit that offers specialized support to women and children surviving physical and sexual violence. The centers are staffed with both police, social workers and healthcare staff. At the OSC in Makunduchi that opened in 2016, the doctor, social worker and police officer described their work, and their challenges. The social workers are the first person that the survivor meets, in order to receive counseling; followed by the police
and then the doctor. The doctor examines the survivor, which includes tests at the lab. Lastly, the client goes back to the social welfare officers for receiving more counseling and to write a police form number 3(PF3), to start the investigation. The social workers will further assist the survivors, together with the staff at the SWO. In terms of the police, they see a huge benefit of having doctors and social workers in the same building, as they can assist the survivor directly with what they might need; and take DNA tests on an early stage. The police officers are assigned with specific units, and the Gender and Children’s desks work specifically on these cases. However, according to the officer being interviewed at the OSC in Stone Town, the staff working on these specific cases are not specifically chosen or trained in these matters, but instead they are randomly chosen to work at this specific unit.

The public persecutor Mr. Mohamed described the process from an incident occurring until a judgement is made. The incident is being reported, either directly to the police or through one of the OSC in the district of the victim; and the police start the investigation, which includes the arrest of the perpetrator. In all sexual offences, the cases in non-bailable. However, other GBV cases can be bailable, and the perpetrator can be out after 24 hours. After the investigation is finished, the public persecutor takes over, to check the statements of the witnesses and to see if there is enough evidence to persecute the perpetrator. If there is no evidence, the file will be closed without saving the file to the court. If the offender is of the age of 12, the file is also closed. If the perpetrator is the age of 12-14, the court must check the criminal capacity and investigate to what extent the perpetrator understood the consequences of his actions. The reason for the word choice of using ‘him’ as the perpetrator is due to the Penal Act of 2018, paragraph 108.

As previously mentioned, the most common cases handled by Zafela are cases where married women are deprived of economic and material resources. In 90% of these cases, Zafela wins. Other cases for Zafela are GBV-cases where a woman or child, or both are being violated in terms of sexual violence, harassment, etc. These cases are more challenging for the ZAFELA lawyers and the plaintiff, and there is a high risk of corruption as mentioned previously. Besides the work as direct lawyers, ZAFELA is working in cooperation with the government, where the government asks for recommendations for changing the law, proposals, etc. ZAFELA is also working together with the Social Welfare Department, in order to educate on the grass-root level, and spread awareness. ZAFELA has access to the morning radio, a station that many people listen to. The station informs people about the amount of people that has been convicted,
and how many people that have been raped. In this forum, ZAFELA has given information about how to protect oneself, and if necessary, how to “handle their rape”, such as not showering before going to hospital or change clothes due to the evidence disappearing. The work of ZAFELA is also acknowledged by the public persecutor and the social workers.

The reason for the dropped cases according to the public persecutor are either lack of evidence, or because of the cultural reasons, which is confirmed by all individual interviews. If the victim doesn't come to the hearing within the 3 months, the case must be dropped. When an issue of assault occurs within the family, the family member does not report it, but instead, they turn to the family. The biggest advice is to be tolerant and not disclose what happens in the marriage. If you take the case in front of the court, and the husband should serve in prison, you may see family separation rather than family union. Instead, the family solve the issue in the best interest of the child, and do not report it but perhaps instead separate. Family cases are very difficult, as the culture is stronger than the law, despite the case being reported to ZAFELA. These cases are however sometimes easier when they are divorced. Once again, the family and culture are dominating in the society of Uuguja island, as it is simultaneously increased numbers of separations, and a shortage in reports of IPV cases comparing to the high existing level that the agencies assume there is.

4.6 Solutions for men to not use violence

Both ZAFELA, the public persecutor and the social workers have the same thoughts regarding longer sentences being part of the solutions. There are longer, more harsh sentences, which helps society to be aware. However, Mrs Juma argues that we think that higher punishment can cure people or make people fear it. But still the cases has raised. Instead, the ZAFELA proposed and cooperates with the UNDP to work with counseling for the perpetrator. As the long sentences doesn't generate fear. Mr. Mohamed agrees that more focus needs to be placed on countering the violence, and to work with the people being convicted through counseling, as well as preventative strategies. Further proposals for solutions by the ZAFELA are to educate women, in how to “handle their rape”, to keep educating women in their rights and how to protect their children. The SWO and OSC agrees that education is an important solution, for girls and women to not be dependent, as well as to be educated regarding their rights.
All interviewees agree that only boys being perpetrators of rape, generates injustice in many cases and the law should therefore include girls equally. Ms. Amina argues that this law makes it difficult to know what exactly has happened, as if a sexual activity has taken place, the boy will be convicted, despite the boy being pushed to do it. It is not always the boy that wants, or the only one that wants but in fact they can be inlove or there can be consent from both sides which is not taken into consideration. Mr. Mohamed also argues that:

“Religious leaders must work hand in hand with the government in order to fear their gods. Longer sentences are not a good idea, but instead the man must first control his sexual desire, must marry and he must fear his god and his belief.”

This is also pleaded by the focus group interviewers. Marriage is seen as a solution for ending rape, as well as to keep his religious values. In the focus group, as previously mentioned, the reason as much as the solution is placed on the woman. By dressing modest, not showering their children naked outside, teaching their girls to be inside and for children to not talk with strangers is a solution to prevent rape of children. In terms of non-sexual violence, the solution is for the women and men to stay within their gender roles, and for each to do their part, which will not cause any conflicts.

Thirdly, suggestions from the public persecutor and the social welfare officers are to reconsider the age of consent, as young boys' lives are being destroyed with long sentences. To change the age of consent to 15 years, would favor both the legal system as well as for the teenagers that are sexually active, when suggesting the age of consent being 15 in Sweden. Finally, Mr. Mohamed states the importance of looking at the culture, as the culture has more power than the law. With this said, do not only look at it as bad, but also something good for the solution.

4.7 Conclusion of findings

Zanzibar is challenged by the economic situation, where most of the tourism sector goes into the pocket of foreigners, due to cultural hinder for Zanzibarian people to participate in the sector, but mainly due to financial opportunities for investment and benefits. Poverty is seen as the main cause of violence in the home. Violence towards the wife is however referred to as non-sexual violence due to the paragraph 108 of the Penal Act (The Revolutionary Government
of Zanzibar, 2018), stating that women cannot be considered victims of rape by their husbands. This is a cultural assumption as well. Instead, most of the sexual violence being reported to the courts and ZAFELA are cases of girls being under the age of consent, where all sexual activity is considered rape. The Penal Act (The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2018) declares boys as the only possible perpetrators in sexual violence. Non-sexual GBV on the other hand are according to the stakeholders higher than the reported cases can represent. IPV cases are instead handled by the families, and in order to protect the husbands and the families, the family advocates that the woman overlooks the violations, and the culture is in this aspect stronger than the legal system. Despite the work from the government such as the reforms of the Penal Act, the Children’s Act and the NPA-VAWC, there is an increase in reports of GBV. It is difficult, if not impossible to measure if it is the violence that has increased, or if it is only the reports that have increased. However, through the collected data, there are no indicators that shows that there is a reduction of violence, which will be the standpoint in following analyzes and it is therefore necessary to analyze the work that has been done that was supposed to reduce the violence.

5. Analysis

The analytic chapter will first go through the gender roles, and how they can be harmful to the issue of GBV by applying the theory of masculinities and the concept of hegemonic, subordination, complicity and marginalization. Further, the cultural challenges in relation to the laws will be analysed, including the gender roles of the society and the family structure through a decolonial feminist approach. The theories will be applied to the answers to generate an understanding of the gender roles in the society, in relation to violence. The analytical conclusion will be further evolved, when looking at the measures taken by the government, in comparison to the responses from the participants in the interviews. Suggested solutions will wrap up this chapter, by that has emerged through the final understanding of the processes of men in power, and men in less or no power and aiming to recognize and understand the racist dominations and possible effects on the gender roles.

5.1 The application of Masculinity Theory on the Gender Roles on Uuguja Zanzibar
The gender roles on Zanzibar are dominated by patriarchal norms, with men as the breadwinners and women as homemakers. The hegemonic masculinity being the formation and maintenance of the dominant position of men, which is instituted by the government, uphold by cultural practices and norms; as well as believed and practices by the individual (Connell, 2005). Hegemonic masculinity is the most desired and preferred position, and differ depending on the context, and changes over time (Messerschmidt, 1993). The role of the man, to support the family is prominent on Zanzibar, and one of the biggest challenges, as every interview argues that the most common cases are when women are deprived from men providing for them. Still, it is unclear if this is due to an unwillingness, or incapability to provide for the family. During the interviews with the focus groups there was an obvious frustration among the women, that their men are not being responsible in the household and are spending much more time outside the house.

According to James Messerschmidt’s structured action theory, the opportunities that men possess affects the man’s tendencies to violence. This theory is drawn upon the theory of masculinities, and claims that the lack of opportunities to obtain a hegemonic masculinity, violence, in this case, is being used as an opportunity instead (Messerschmidt, 1993). Poverty is the most frequent reason for GBV used by the interviewers, as it hinders many men to provide for their families. This causes an economic stress, but also a threat towards their masculine identity. (Copenhaver et al., 2000). Simultaneously, Connell describes violence as a component in the system of domination, which also illustrate the shortages in the hegemonic masculinities, for if there was an absolute domination and hierarchy, there wouldn’t be a need to use violence with the purpose to intimidate into subordination (Connell, 2005, p. 84).

In Zanzibar, the assumption that men are above women, are not outspoken, but are still prominent in the practices of Zanzibar. It facilitates a social ignorance or to some extent acceptance of IPV, depending on the behavior of the woman according to her role (Anderson & Umberson, 2001). Additionally, studies present the relation between men that uphold ideologies of traditional gender roles, and a greater tendency to use violence in intimate relationships, to uphold the expectations of what it is to be a man (Santana et al., 2006). Brownmiller (1975, p. 15), deems that rape is the process of spreading fear among all men to intimidate women which can also be seen as a way of keeping girls subordinated and within the traditions. By fearing men, women will follow the social norms, such as the way women dress modest, as the argument from the social worker speaking at the community meeting; that
not wearing underwear might cause the child to be raped. The Social Worker Amina, and the Public Persecutor Mohamed argues that violence is being used as a tool to obtain power, which goes in line with the strive towards hegemonic masculinity.

Moreover, subordination is often used in comparison between masculine and feminine, where women are considered subordinated to men. However, there is the category of subordination within masculine identities as well. Apart from the domination of heterosexual men over homosexual men, Connell also mentions that subordinated masculinity also includes characteristics that are less desirable and refers to feminine traits that are ridiculed and oppressed. In this study, the Penal Act of 2018, that states rape as only a crime against women, as a clear confirmation that men must not fall victim, and if they do, they are inferior and not even recognized.

Furthermore, there are not just straight throws between the highest and the lowest. There are men that do not use violence against their spouse. Instead, there are those men that are in ‘relationship of complicity with the hegemonic project’ (Connell, 2005, p. 79). This identity encompasses the men who find themselves in a compromising position towards their partner, their children and their society; and do not recognize themselves in raw domination. One clear example of this, are the men working at the SWO of Zanzibar, who have a contempt for the violence that they see in the society, carried out by other men. While not practicing the hegemonic masculinity standard, they still do possess the benefits of hegemonic masculinity in the society (Connell, 2005).

The fourth category, marginalization, in the framework leads to the analysis to the theory of decolonial feminism. Marginalization interplay with the masculinity in relation to other social and cultural structures in the society, such as class and race. Most writers argues that hegemonic masculinity is not applicable to black men, in contexts where they have been and still are subordinated to whiteness, as well as subordinated to the expectations of their own masculinities (Boonzaier, Huysamen, & van Nierkerk, 2021). The structure action theory is useful when analyzing this category and will be examined further in the next section.

5.2 Decolonial Feminism and the Gender Roles on Uuguja Zanzibar
Studies conducted in South Africa reach the conclusion that a crucial component to the violence of today, are the aftermath of the violent past of colonialization (Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). This is comparable with the colonialization, and the permeating slave trade that has taken place on the island, with the hierarchical structure based on ethnicity and color. The subordination of black men is embedded in the colorism; where light skin is considered being associated with money, status and beauty. Black men are being deprived of opportunities, which is also fueled by globalization and the increased division that tourism brings when white people come to the island with money to spend, at hotels owned by white people. From the structure action theory, their disadvantages are therefore both reflected through lack of job opportunities, as well as their cultural and societal demand to be the provider within the family, which requires an exercise of authority in the home to obtain their masculine role (Bergren, Gottzen, & Bornäis, 2021).

Nevertheless, Connell (2005, p. 81) argues the importance of not only viewing today’s social structures of gender as a construction of history, but also a producer of history. The role of the black man is a construction by the white man that have played a vital role in the process of colonization. This process involved not only racialization, but also sexualization of the black body. The black man was positioned as violent and sexually deviant, that needed to be civilized, while the black woman was portrayed as sexually licentious and accessible (Boonzaier et al., 2021 p. 53). These patterns are visible even in this study, referring to the answer from the public persecutor, when being asked about the absence of the law protecting women from sexual violence within the marriage; and the answer was that we women (referring to the researcher), are different and that Zanzibarian women won’t say no. Similar indications were given to the violence carried out by men; and that it is specifically easy to assault and make a man angry in a developing country. Furthermore, the solution that is suggested in the same interview tend to reinforce the colonial view, as “the men must learn how to control their sexual desires and fear their god”. These assumptions are important to analyze, especially as it reinforces negative stereotypes of the black man as an angry, violent man, and black women as inferior and without ascendancy in the matter of her own body. Mostly, by viewing the nature of colonialization and gender, we can understand the subordination that black men live in, and which they practice. Marginalized men are being analyzed through poverty and unemployment, that links to violent behavior. However, the trauma from past generations, and the sustaining oppressive systems, that keep black men and women marginalized, are often overlooked. Therefore, the decolonial feminism requires each research of the global south to include life history research.
in order to get the narratives of the people in each context, to prevent a one-size fits all description and solution, that overrides the multiplicity of African masculinities.

5.3 The Actions Taken by the Government, and its Limitations

Tanzania Gender Assessment written by the UN underlines the absence of legislation that explicitly addresses IPV. The definitions are not recognizing all types of violence, such as the definition according to the World Health Organization (2021). The lack of legislation that protects women from sexual violence within the marriage are instead a non-response that fuels a masculine domination over women within the marriage (Gottzén et al., 2021) and strengthens the assumption of the body of the black woman as recently mentioned (Boonzaier et al., 2021). This is a structural violation on the rights of the woman, according to the feminist approach (Gottzén et al., 2021), and feeds the assumption that men are superior and enables the hegemonic masculinity to dominate their wife and to obtain an ownership of the sexuality of their partner.

The definition of rape according to the Penal Act 2018, assumes that it is only girls or women that can be victims of rape. The stakeholders witness a backlash in justice in the cases of underaged sex, when boys are receiving long sentences, when being underaged themselves. Many boys are being sentenced to prison, for consensual sex with an underaged girl, but she will not face any legal consequences. As Mr. Mohamed argues, sometimes boys are pushed by girls to participate in sexual activities, as he would otherwise not be ‘man enough’, which threatens the hegemonic masculinity. Nevertheless, the fact that men cannot be victims of rape according to the law, fuels the assumption that men should not be in a subordinated position. In these aspects, the reform does not align with the SDGs to reach equality. Even though most of all sexual violence are perpetrated by men towards women, the legislation still creates a clear injustice as it doesn’t give a chance to investigate the causes, events and aftermath from the side of the boy or man. Thus, it is worth mentioning again are the different interests in the process of change, where women benefitting from this change, while men’s interest lays in the preservation of the traditional gender roles. However, in the case of changing the reform, men would also benefit from changing the law, although the risk of falling into the category of subordinated men, might hinder men to speak about this issue. Without having these aspects in consideration, it is difficult to make decision to radically change laws and institutional
frameworks, as the response can mean increased violence, to counteract the changes and obtain their domination (Connell, 2005, p. 82). Simultaneously, as Mr. Mohamed argues, the biggest challenge of IPV-cases, are when the culture view family as the main mediator and councilor, and the customs as legal frameworks, and the culture inhibits the power of the laws. If only the laws are changed, and not the attitudes and norms that determines how the laws will be interpreted and implemented a change will not occur.

Furthermore, gender roles changes over time and are outcomes of historical social structures and events. The movements to change the gender roles are fueled by the interests of the women, that strives to change their role in society and improve their situation. In a globalized world, with an increased emancipation of women, Zanzibar is participating in the process of strengthening women rights, as frequently mentioned. Simultaneously, men as a group won’t benefit from this change, but instead lose some of their benefits in the patriarchal structure and will therefore be defensive in the movement, and in their role as husbands (Connell, 2005, p. 82).

Nevertheless, Connell explains the underlying conflict between the family and the institutions, as the inequality of women and men are not solved simply by the civil society, but instead modern state structures must intervene (2005: p.85). According to this argument, it is important for the government to take actions, but as the interviewers argue, the reforms and strategies has been too one-sided and simple. It is a clear absence of focus on men, in terms of research and policy making. This argument is supported by R.W Connell that indicates the importance of not keeping men in the background, but to also include their perspectives, challenges and interests (Connell, 2005).

5.4 Solutions

According to the critique from the UN, and the stakeholders there are concrete measures that the government still needs to take. The UN underlines importance of including marital rape in the penal code. This is, however, not a solution that the stakeholders have shown specific interest in. Although, the inclusion of both sexes in the Penal code, (The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2018) to enable both sexes to be convicted of rape, are advocated by the stakeholders. Furthermore, the UN underlines the low funding of implantation and monitoring the framework, which is also observed at the SWO where the lack of funding results
in volunteering work to some extent by the officers. These are some examples of practical, direct changes that are being proposed and are together with other solutions direct measures (The World Bank, 2022). However, the stakeholders argue for more preventative measures, rather than only focusing on the legal framework.

Initially, it is important to understand the system and be aware of the practices and why, which will only be done when considered the culture and its past. The solutions must be adjusted to the specific context. The norm of masculinity that dominates in Zanzibar is narrow, as the value of the person lies in the ability to provide for their family, in a society with high poverty rate. Simultaneously, the patriarchal norms are benefitting men in terms of gendered dominance, while most are being subordinated in terms of class and race. The statements, that the strategies created by the government are according to the stakeholders to simplistic when only focusing on women as victims, goes in line with the feminist and intersectional theory, arguing that inclusion of boys and men in the prevention of violence is crucial to reduce violence (Gottzén et al., 2021, p. 11). According to the structure action theory, the lack of opportunities results in violence as a tool to obtain the masculine norms, one can argue that it is the masculine norms that should be considered. The purpose of these arguments is not to overlook the importance of women’s self-determination and independence, but instead to transfer the responsibility to end toxic masculinity traits to men. Gender roles can be changed by social process, although it must lay on all socialization agencies within the society (Connell, 2005, p. 23). All stakeholders argue for prevention work, in order to reduce GBV. Simultaneously, the stakeholders disagree with longer sentences as a solution. According to Taryn van Niekerk (2021), it is essential that prevention programs in the Global South are carried out through a decolonial approach, that is sensitive to the marginalization of the men participating. Without understanding the position of the Black man in relation to GBV, as both being subordinated and to subordinate, resistance towards a pro-feminist masculinity might be generated. Mr. Mohamed argues the strong traditional system as something to also consider using when changing norms, where programs can be suggested to the leaders.

6. Discussion & Conclusion

Is women empowerment hindering gender equality? In the context of Zanzibar, the short answer is yes. The argument behind this will be further elaborated when concluding the study
in this section. Initially, the problematization surrounding a one-sided focus on women’s independence in the context will be explained. Secondly, the consequences of these specific measures will be highlighted, and contrasted with the alternative, which would be to increase the participation of men in the matter and focus also on the men’s role in the solution rather than the consequences of their actions, that affect women.

The women empowerment on Zanzibar, is crucial for the development of the society and for women. However, the actions taken by the government does not necessarily creates the independence that she needs, such as reproductive rights and rights within her marriage. The women are responsible for the house shores and their children. The empowerment of women is turning the focus to women, to help themselves and to do more. There is a risk that the responsibility lays within the women, and women only. One example of this phenomena are the women in Sweden, who suffers from working two jobs. The strive to work as much as men, getting education and working harder than men to achieve the same levels at work. Meanwhile, the household still requires the same number of working hours. While women are working more outside the house, men are not working more at home. Does it matter if we empower women professionally, when the men won’t be home with the children, and split equality on the job in the home?

Simultaneously, violence against women and children still occurs in families where the mother works or has an education, even if the economic vulnerability of the woman is not as great. So, the empowerment of women cannot be a single solution, as the issues regarding girls and women becomes women issues; and this is harmful in many ways. The actions must be taken to prevent violence and to include men. The traditional image of the man is challenged by the empowerment of women, and it is therefore important to widen the perspective of men, as also caregivers, an important role model for the children as kind and loving. This would broaden the meaning of being a man, especially in times when it is challenging to be the only provider. Meanwhile, by working to change the assumption of the Black man, a healing process of the generational trauma from the colonial past, would strengthening the society and create new narratives. A strive to change gender roles must also implicate an inclusion of both genders in the Penal Act in terms of rape, as it is today not only unfair and problematic as previously described, but it sends a signal that men cannot risk being seen as subordinated, as rape is seen as a crime against women. Likewise, it proves the subordination women possesses, and
removes the self-determination of the woman and makes her passive in the cases of sex under 18 but above 15, where the boy in the same age can be convicted.

There was an aim, to conduct the study on Prisons, although priorities were made to first get an overview of the system, the gender roles on Zanzibar and in order to understand the context of GBV. However, this is a possible further study in order to get the voices of men that has used violence, and to analyze the causes and reasons behind the violence from the narrative of the individual. The perspective from the religious leaders is another example of a further study that was excluded due to limitations in this study.

This study has enhanced the theory of masculinities, as well as it has supplemented the theory with concepts necessary to fit the context of the study, through a decolonial approach. The findings and analyses generate a discussion about whether it is possible to acknowledge the violence of men, and their accountability, and simultaneously see where society fails in considering the male role as victims of themselves and the necessity to include men in strive to reach gender equality, and eliminate violence against women.

7. Bibliography


**Unpublished sources:**