

# Male clergy violence against their spouses in the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique – A new theory of Praxis

By

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## DECLARATION

I, **Felicidade Naúme Chirinda**, I declare to be the author of a  
Thesis on:

**Male Clergy Violence against Their Spouses in the  
Presbyterian Church of Mozambique – A New Theory of  
Praxis.**

I also declare that all quotations cited in this study were  
acknowledged through the citation of their authors, books, year  
and places of publication, as well as their publishers.

Signed

Date

Supervisor

Date

## **DEDICATION**

In affectionate memory

Of

**DOMINGOS MANUEL**

1940 – 2000

And

**REV. DR. SIMÃO CHAMANGO**

1935- 2005

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**“HANDLE KWAKU YESU, ANDRINANTAMU”.**

## ACRONYMS

<b>AACC</b>	All Africa Conference of Churches
<b>AIDS</b>	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
<b>CCM</b>	Christian Council of Mozambique
<b>EPCSA</b>	Evangelical Presbyterian Church in South Africa
<b>NGO's</b>	Non Governmental Organizations
<b>NT</b>	New Testament
<b>OT</b>	Old Testament
<b>PCM</b>	Presbyterian Church of Mozambique
<b>PSTD</b>	Post Traumatic Stress Disorders
<b>VAW</b>	Violence against Women
<b>WARC</b>	World Alliance of Reformed Churches
<b>WCC</b>	World Conference of Churches
<b>YEFROU</b>	Dutch acronym meaning woman married to clergy
<b>YWCA</b>	Young Women Christian Association

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

Women around the world have been denouncing gender injustice as a tool that merit critical analyzes and that hinders peace and justice.

Therefore, the silence of the Church on the issue of Violence against Women is identified and challenged in the present study throughout the face of clergy' wives in the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique.

### About the study

The research is aimed at raising awareness that women and specially clergy' wives in the PCM are living under violence and abuse perpetrated by their ministers and husbands, as Poling says,

“The very people whom they thought they could trust” (1999: ix).

The research is done by exploring the following key questions:

- What causes the Church to be silent regarding male clergy violence?
- Why is it that the Church never addresses the problem of violence and abuse by clergy in church and at home?
- Violence and abuse among clergy' homes is solved by transferring the male clergy family to another church. Is this process a better solution for solving the family and church problem? Or is it a holistic approach to healing the congregation?
- Why are clergy' wives and the Christian community silent about violence happening in their midst?
- Which Pastoral Care model is needed to address and challenge this issue?

### The findings

The research revealed existence of, among others:

- Physical, psychological, spiritual, economical and sexual violence;
- Deceive, betrayal, discrimination and stigma;
- Lack of: Vision, education, formation, information, salary and houses;
- Weak notions of sin



- Complacent silence
- Biased notions of discipleship.

The challenges are:

- To speak out; to challenge the Christian, cultural and traditional teachings that are harmful to women; Empower women; provide care; and to transform the patriarchal structures and systems of oppression.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

VAW is recognized to be a threat to life in all its aspects. Global and sector based efforts are needed in order to end it.

Therefore, the Church is urged to work in a coordinated fashion with all sectors and stakeholders and to build partnerships as to be able to meet the objectives.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1. INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. Mission Statement

The silence of the church to the traumatic experience of male clergy violence against their spouses (WARC, 2004:131) in Africa is of a great concern especially in reference to the Mozambican Christian community and society. This is a serious concern to the author.

The author is also aware that many women had in the past used other strategies and ways in order to protect themselves against these injustices as Njoroge says,

“I encountered African women who had courageously resisted forces of patriarchy in African religion and cultures while others rejected colonial powers and western religious imperialism” (Phiri; Govinden and Nadar 2002:39).

This thesis is, to some extent recognition of the work done by these wonderful women. Some of them are known as for example **Loice Xintomana** who, as Butselaar says, was the first woman evangelist in the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique (PCM), to be put to silence by a missionary in 1887 only for being a woman (1988:100). Others, according to Oduyoye,

“Appear unannounced as footnotes and appendices to the men’s stories” (Phiri, Govinden and Nadar 2002: xi).

The issue is complex but the author intends carrying out this heavy responsibility with the hope of opening a new page in women' history particularly within the church in Mozambique.

There is a general concern that the Church is not doing enough on issues of justice and peace. Expressing her feelings on the issue, Bisnauth in WARC newsletter, has this to say,

“Churches are still slow to address gender injustices and are often oblivious to many forms of violence against women (VAW) within the communities they serve” (2006:1).

According to the above, VAW is one area which exposes human hypocrisy and injustice in the Church. Hence, it is still a dangerous area as expressed by Pickup,

“VAW is a difficult and dangerous area in which to work. Located as it is, in the majority of cases, within the family or household, it has been regarded as a private and domestic issue, inhabiting terrain where development agencies have feared to tread” (2001: xi).

The above quotation shows that VAW controls the way agencies determine the scope of the work they can do with women in a particular place or country.

While many people make pious statements about the miserable plight of women victims of violence and abuse, so much the phenomenon continues to spread. Pickup affirms that,

“Women working in interventions that address forms of VAW are directly at particular risk of violent reprisals from men” (2001:37).

The above quotation is true as these women are generally and usually seen as the disturbance of men’s ‘security’.

The thesis will attempt to encourage women in the PCM who suffer under domestic violence and abuse to create a safe space where they can break the silence and take action on key issues that affect their lives. This will make them to enjoy fullness of life God created them for, as recorded by Herman when she says,

“The creation of a privileged space made it possible for women to overcome the barriers of denial, secrecy and shame that prevented them from naming their injuries” (1992: 28)

Generally, the Church has women’s groups. However, these groups are failing to empower other because, in most of the cases, their leaders do not have the required skills and, they act under men’s guidance.

In this chapter, therefore, the author will bring an introductory background in which traumatic experiences of women of faith within the society and church in the Mozambican context will be shared. Culture and its implication to the phenomenon will also be highlighted.

Secondly, the author will present the problem statement, the aims of the study and the research gap.

Thirdly, the author will defend the need of addressing this issue under the discipline of Practical theology and finally, a story of abuse will be shared.

## **1.2. Background to the Study**

It was early in the morning when the author was injured with a weapon at her home. The news shattered and traumatized many of the authors' family members and friends. Suddenly everything had changed for her and for the entire family. Physical violence in its monstrous side had touched her body, her life and her spirit and affected not only her family but friends, community and the church as a whole.

While she was recovering from this violent act, many women, men, and children approached her and the family to comfort her. The purpose of their visit was not only to praise the Lord for her being saved, but also and especially to share with her their own burdens and struggles they experienced on the daily basis.

Their stories related brutalities and atrocities perpetuated by both men and women of different ages in our country, Mozambique. These were about issues on spiritual and psychological abuse, complicated conjugal relationships, rape, physical and sexual abuse at homes, churches, places of work, and in other places. They were about ecclesial violence, injustices and misogynous attacks. They were a revelation of traumatic experiences, pain, humiliation and oppression in the traditional and African Christian context and society.

These stories heard in a moment of pain and vulnerability that the author was experiencing, forced her to question what God's purpose in maintaining her alive is?

She begun to realize that her knowledge about violence in the church was very limited. She understood that the church's teaching was denying liberation to people. In addition, people are shown a distorted image of God, as Bonhoeffer says,

“Many people come to church with genuine desire to hear what we have to say, yet they are always going back home with the uncomfortable feeling that we are making it too difficult for them to come to Jesus” (1954:30)

The author agrees with Bonhoeffer because many people share their discontentment about the way the church interpret or deal with some issues, making them unable to understand their specific role.

As already stated, many people who went to visit the author shared with her, their own stories of pain, violence and abuse in the Church. Are all these cries not a call to action? Yes, it is time to stand up and act. With a bit of shame, the author recognized that she is in a privileged position to speak out. She feels that for her to fail to speak would be a treachery and a betrayal to a God who created these women who are being abused. It would be incompetence and permission of perpetuation of violence and abuse if the author keeps quiet. All who showed her confidence would fade away.

Secondly, the author feels that she has the moral obligation to contribute in creating a better present and a different future, for people living with these traumatic experiences. Moreover, she is a member of the Circle of African Women Theologians who are concerned and interested in responding to situations of violence and abuse, especially those affecting women and children in Africa.



### **1.2.1. The Women's Traumatic Experiences**

The author begins this research well aware of the complex nature and background of VAW in Africa and particularly in the Mozambican society including the Church. Violence, in many of the cases, causes trauma thus, inviting the author to go deeper on the issue of psychological trauma. According to Herman,

“To study psychological trauma is to come face to face both with human vulnerability in the natural world and with the capacity for evil in human nature. To study psychological trauma means bearing witness to horrible events” (1992: 7)

That affirmation is a clear indication that to deal with traumatic experiences is to come to a threshold of a new life.

### **1.2.2. Definition of Trauma**

The seventh edition Oxford Dictionary defines trauma as,

“A mental condition caused by severe shock, especially when the harmful effects last for a long time; an unpleasant experience that makes you feel upset and/or anxious” (2005: 1575).

That definition makes it clear that the traumatic event may change the personal behavior because it affects the mental conditions.

McCann and Pearlman definition explains better the situation. They say that an experience is traumatic when it is,

“Sudden, unexpected or non-normative; exceeds the individual’s perceived ability to meet its demands, and disrupts the individual’s frame of reference and other central psychological needs and related schemas” (1990:10).

These definitions are helpful because they open the doors of understanding and of concern with the traumatized people and their environment. In my home language, Ronga, people say that **“Manyana angasvone hikusa ahluleka kumita lesvi svimuhumeleliki”** literally meaning **“somebody is not well because is unable to swallow what happened”** This includes a wide range of traumatic events that can characterize individual or collective experience.

In some African cultures women are expected and supposed to ‘swallow’ everything without complaining, especially bad events that happen to them. They are even expected to keep them secret. Ronga language idiom has this saying: **‘Axihlungwa xipfalela xihundla xamuti’** which means **‘the house’ceiling hides the family’ secrets’**. In matters of domestic violence, Clergy’ wives are the most victims. They suffer from many kinds of abuse and violence such as verbal, physical, psychological, sexual, and economical. They are humiliated and alienated. Their issue is not seen as a matter of justice. They are not expected to express their feelings publicly and, what is worse, they do not have access to pastoral care facilities.

Herman shares strategies usually taken by violence perpetrators or women’s partners in order to prevent them from looking for help. She says,

“In order to escape accountability for his crimes, the perpetrator does everything in his power to promote forgetting. Secrecy and silence are the perpetrator’s first line

of defense. If secrecy fails, the perpetrator attacks the credibility of his victim. If he cannot silence her absolutely, he tries array of arguments, from the most blatant denial to the most sophisticated and elegant rationalization. After every atrocity one can expect to hear the same predictable apologies: it never happened; the victim lies; the victim exaggerates; the victim brought it upon herself; and in any case it is time to forget the past and move on. The more powerful the perpetrator, the greater is his prerogative to name and define reality, and more completely his arguments prevail” (1992: 8)

The above confirms that the society is led by patriarchal structures of violence where women are seen and treated as objects. The author question is:

How can a powerless, abused and isolated clergy’ wife look for pastoral counseling? It is clear that she will burn inside but keep quiet. According to Neuger,

“Pastors on the whole, have not been very useful to women and children who have experienced abuse in their families” (2001:96).

And Herman ads,

“Without a supportive social environment, the bystander usually succumbs to the temptation to look the other way” (1992: 8).

The above are warnings that usually communities do not believe women’s stories about sexual abuse by clergy. Men refuse the abuse because of their dignity and not because they do not know what they did. It is therefore necessary to journey with people in justice as a way to bring healing and peace.

There is concern that violence and abuse in the Church must be challenged beginning by women themselves as Hinga says,

“I argue that women should take up the pastoral challenge themselves and become as it were, pastors unto themselves as well as pastors of the church itself, by pointing out where the church errs and fails in its mission of liberation of the downtrodden and the creation of a just and free society” (2005 : 138).

The above challenge is especially addressed to women because they can make a huge and positive contribution on the issue of domestic violence.

The author agrees with Hinga because is not easy to challenge and introduce changes in the church if women are not themselves conscientious about their worth and value before others and before God. According to Wimberly,

“It is fundamental to understand what it means ‘to be me’ in a particular place and time” (2003:15).

The above is a challenge to African care givers who have to help people to find identity even in the midst of huge pain.

### **1.3. Important Facts about Mozambique**

Mozambique is one of the Southern African countries. It is situated at the East and has a coastline of two thousands and eighth hundred kilometers. In its North, West and South parts it shares a land border of about four thousand and three hundred and thirty kilometers with Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. The total population exceeds eighteen million inhabitants.

The official language is Portuguese. It co-exists with various national languages of Africans' Bantu origin.

Mozambique reached its independence from the Portuguese colonial regime in 1975 after a ten years blood-bath war. The independence was threatened and followed by another blood-bath war that took sixteen years. Many people grow up in a situation of extreme violence, insecurity, poverty and related consequences.

The poverty that our country is concerned with is not out there in the air; it is the experience of concrete people in our villages, towns and cities: men and women, the youth and the children. According to Martinho Neves' Thesis on a survey about VAW in Mozambique,

“The illiteracy rate is 72, 2% of which 85% are women. The major threat to development is the spread of the HIV&AIDS pandemic with a prevalence of 16.2%” (2004: 17).

### **1.3.1. Violence in Mozambique**

Violence against women is one of the monstrous sides facing and challenging the Mozambican society and the Church. According to Neves survey,

“26, 5% of the interviewed said they had been physically injured. Most of them (79, 3%) regarded the act as a very serious and 59, 5% considered that their life had been in danger” (2004: 25)

Although statistics are sharing tragedies like the above, there is hope because many efforts are being made to change that situation. For instance the Mozambican Constitution in its thirty Article states that,

“Men and woman are equal before the law and in all aspects of political, economical, social and cultural life” (2004:19).

The above article says nothing concerning violence but, that aspect is covered by the fourth article which says,

“All citizens have right to life and to physical and moral integrity. Nobody can be subjected to torture or cruel and dehumanized treatments”. (2004: 20).

Like in many other countries, equality is constitutionally affirmed in Mozambique but in practice, women suffer a lot without protection.

In the survey already mentioned there is a quotation of the former President, Joaquim Chissano which says,

“VAW is a violation to human rights and an obstacle to social harmony” (2004:10)

The above is a call to care givers and other stakeholders in Mozambique that they must work together to make Human Rights respected and to build social harmony.

The experience has shown that between willingness and reality there is usually a gap. Thus, “the Mozambican government has established measures to prevent and eliminate VAW expressed in the Women’s Advancement

Plan of Action. That Plan of Action calls for the carrying out of surveys and studies” (2004:10).

The author believes that only hard work biding different sectors of the Mozambican society can make big contribution and difference in the struggle against violence and abuse.

The gap between willingness and reality, and between the fundamental right and existing social practices, is also a concern for reformed churches. Lienemann-Perrin in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) document affirms that,

“While in political life the principle of equality is enshrined in constitutional law, inequality continues to be the criterion for living together in the home. Women are most affected by this inequality because now as ever the ‘home’ is the center of their life” (2004: 82).

Affirmations above help us to realize that VAW is one of the global fundamental problems that arise again and again. Violence is practiced in order to maintain woman subordination and oppression.

Herman suggests that men are naturally violent. To deal with their natural essence of violence, they create structures in which they can express and use it. She says,

“The subordinate condition of women is maintained and enforced by the hidden violence of men” (1992: 32).

The above is sustained by the fact that the majority of the aggressors are male partners, husbands or chiefs of the victim as stated by Neves survey,

“Most acts of violence are perpetrated by current intimate partners, that is, husbands or partners” (2004: 38)

The relevance of the above findings urges the author to affirm that doing research on VAW in the Mozambican society and Church is a priority.

South African Church’ leaders gathering on 2006 October issued a statement saying,

“We must act now or we may regret it for the decades to come”

The above declaration is prophetic because violence and crime are the major threats to life in present days. The Church cannot be silent when God’s people are dying.

The necessity of addressing VAW in our countries is highly sustained by Pickup when she says,

“It is only in the last decade that VAW has emerged from the shadows to be seen in the full light of day as the fundamental human rights abuse it constitutes”(2001: xiii).

The author is the opinion that care givers have the duty to challenge systems that fail to show concern for the marginalized of our society, because did not choose to be in that position.



## 1.4. Violence in the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique

### 1.4.1. Brief History of the PCM

A church that was later known by the designation of PCM since its “LUMUKO” (breast-feeding stop) from the Swiss Mission in 1948 was born at the ends of ninety century (1880). During that period, according to the ‘jungle law’ as usually said in Mozambique, the western colonial power was submitting the country to slavery and exploration. Butselaar describes that church in this way,

“During that critique period a church was being born in Mozambique, a small church, which was the fruit of black missionary’s zeal and white European mission effort; a small African church which was able to keep its independence, its autonomy, its culture in relation to the colonizer, while all other institutions were collapsing. During the all colonial period, that church was a symbol of human dignity and divine love that goes beyond racial barriers, proclaiming salvation to everyone inside and outside the country” (1988:1).

Through the description above, the reader can have an impression that everything in this church is perfect. There are, however, for the absent-minded spectator, some hidden aspects that later influenced and negatively affected that church’s image.

Tracing our heritage from that period, we realize that black missionaries, men and women, were not always in agreement with white missionaries’ procedures. Matters like hierarchy’ structures, evangelism’ strategy, salary’ definition, residences ‘quality and attribution and job discrimination were motives for big discussions (1988: 93-117).

### **1.4.2. Women's Activities and Marginalization**

Another big problem that almost isolated Paul Berthoud, the first Swiss missionary to be sent to the PCM by the Mission' Council of Lausanne, was his attitude toward women. When he arrived in Mozambique in 1887, he found that three women, namely Loice Xintomana, Ruth Holene and Marta Magowana, were church leaders and prophetesses of the small church in Ricatla. These women were responsible for the organization, reception, Bible studies, literacy classes and guidance for the new members who joined the church. (1988: 67-74).

Although the good work done by these women, the missionary decided to stop them saying,

“The women's conversion is nothing more than nervous crises. In addition, they are preaching more than men” (Butselaar 1998: 98-99; Harries 2007: 89).

Attitudes like the above destroy women's self-worth and value; weakness the Church' image and preaching and reinforce cultural negative believe that women are inferior to men.

Berthoud was supposed to develop and empower these women but, instead, he denied them. Maybe these women were developing activities that were beyond the commonly agreed limits for a woman. According to Letty Russell,

“Women have been denied access to the education and self-development” (1974: 29)

It is important to mind that the missionary' spouses did not have relevant activities directly linked to the worship service.

According to Neuger,

“If women speak their true feelings and thoughts and these should go against their gender training, they will either not be believed or they will be dismissed” (2001: 76)

Women need to learn to identify God’s image on them. This will help them to refuse being marginalized.

Lienmann-Perin shares experiences of marginalization of women during the missionary movement period. She says,

“A widespread consensus in the doctrine of mission was that women were to play no part in public preaching, and this was mostly justified on the basis that the duties of women were to keep silent and be subordinate. In the same way, women’s conducting independent Bible reading and developing their own theological ideas was taboo” (2004: 85)

The above examples show that women are subject to violence and abuse because of their sex which is not, according to the Scriptures, the will of God. (Gen 1: 26 ff)

According to Pickup the institutionalization of VAW is deliberate. She says,

“VAW is necessary in order to maintain the institutions of patriarchy: that is, the structures, beliefs and practices that maintain male dominance over women” (2001: xiv).

Do the above statements mean that from the missionary perspectives women were not competent to represent the Church? If that was the case, their conceptions were wrong when challenged by the models of the Kingdom of God thought by Jesus. There, men and women are seen as brothers and sisters in service to each other.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus expressed that fraternity by sending Mary Magdalene to announce his resurrection to the fearing and fleeing apostles,

“Go to my brethren and say to them...” (20: 17).

Jesus’ work was free from discrimination and oppression of women.

### **1.4.3. Ricatla Is Traumatized**

The suspension of women’s activities was followed by other changes that traumatized the community of Ricatla. The result was a big diminution of its members. According to Herman,

“Traumatic events call into question basic human relationships. They breach the attachments of family, friendship, love, and community.”(1992:51)

The Christian community of Ricatla was very much attached to Loice and her work. It hardly accepted her withdrawal. The crisis was installed.

According to Butselaar, many changes happened; transferences of church workers occurred what continued to affect the small church. For a while, the worship attendance was reduced to five people,

“The missionary, his wife and three disabled women: a blind, a leprous and a mentally disturbed”. (1998: 110).

The above might have been a very traumatic experience for the missionary, his family and even for the Church in Switzerland.

Once again, Herman helps us to understand the devastating effects of trauma when she says,

“Trauma includes being taken by surprise, trapped, or exposed to the point of exhaustion” (1992: 34)

All the situations explained above show no concern about women. Whatever they do, it is very hard to be recognized, especially by their male colleagues. African women have been denouncing experiences like the above as Oduyoye puts it,

“Women have founded religious associations and initiated church communities; they have created ministries to make churches effective. All this has been achieved in the midst of cultural constraints and societal and religious prejudice against women” (2002: xi.)

The above shows that no model in the Church was available for women in the missionary work. The situation prevails in current days.

For the author, Christianity is the guiltiest about women oppression and rejection because Christ was against it. According to Bisnauth,

“Women dream of having a share in the church’s responsibility in the public spheres in order to carry out mission to the full and not to be limited to missionary tasks among women and children” (2004: 85).

The women's rejection has as result, the proliferation of chronic posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in the Church and society. It is thus, fundamental to provide access to trauma debriefing or trauma defusing. The quest has to be seen as important and took seriously. Avoidance or postpone to better opportunity may be dangerous.

Care givers are called to care for all affected in a particular community. This is very important in Africa where people live in communion. According to Gerkin,

“Both the victim and members of the victim's family will need gentle understanding support and encouragement as they go the crisis of coming to grips with the alteration of relationships” (1997: 168)

Africans are bound by relationships that have to be reinforced by the gospel.

#### **1.4.4. The need of Healing Traumatic Experiences**

There is a concern that traumatic experiences are majoritary resolved by healing rituals (Du Toit 2002:39; Rogers 2002:67) and healing relationships (Poling 1999: xiii; Herman 1992:133). These scholars help us to understand that the traumatized person needs “to belong” and needs “to be loved and cared for”. Those are the first steps to healing process that our churches are called to respect and to implement.

The PCM developed other strategies in order to include women in its ministry. Such are young adult women who are prepared to teach young girls in Sunday schools and in catechism classes. They also guide those girls on how to become good wives, good mothers and citizens. Others are

professionally prepared to work in private and public settings. Presently the church has female pastors.

The author realizes, however, that very few is being done in order to empower clergy' wives. That group had and continues to be marginalized, excluded, oppressed and refused the rights all human beings aspire to achieve. The community and especially the clergy are guilt of that behavior. The author thinks that we are dealing with a gross injustice that must be roundly condemned and urgently corrected.

### **1.5. Culture as a Tool for Oppression**

The seventh edition Oxford Dictionary defines culture as,

“Customs beliefs, art, and way of life and social organization of a particular country or group” (2005: 357).

The above definition makes it clear that culture is dynamic. It can be challenged. One of the major stumbling blocs in the war against VAW is culture. Culture is very often used to justify VAW. This is so because cultural norms are generally oppressive, especially to women, children and girls. Pickup puts it in the following way,

“The term culture encompasses a huge variety of gross violations of women's bodies and minds. (2001: 78).

Traditional and Christian cultures that teach women to be submissive are harmful, and need to be challenged and changed.

Culture is a phenomenon that needs permanent analysis both politically and theologically. According to Oduyoye,

“There are two sides to treating culture as a principle for hermeneutics. Taking culture as a tool with which to understand and interpret ones reality, and specifically the Bible, allows one to take one’s experience seriously and to connect it with other realities. Culture is a broad concept, which always needs fine tuning and analysis” (2001:12-13)

Culture need to be carefully analyzed to enable the Church to grow and to be effective.

Feminists are in agreement that culture has been used to justify the misuse of power, violence and abuse over women as Oduyoye puts it,

“African women have identified culture as a favorite tool for domination” (2001:12)

The Church, in its role of justice’ seeking, has the biggest responsibility to study the particular culture as to be able to help people in their difficulties.

Culture has to be defined as one of the subjects that need permanent analyzes. According to Kanyoro,

“There has been little mature analysis of or dialogue on culture in ecumenical circles. Rather, culture is a euphemism used to explain biases, justifications that might otherwise be challenged and foster diversity at the expense of unity” (1995:19).

If the Church wants to preach a Gospel that is Good News for all, then it must study culture and challenge its harmful teachings.



The issue of culture and women's oppression in the church is, at the same time, theological and ecclesiological. This is a concern for many theologians. For example Kanyoro expresses it in the following ways,

“We discovered that we are heavily attached to our traditions and cultures and that we must name these as subjects of analysis and critique within the field of theology” (2002:35)

The Church, as the body of Christ, is called and challenged to permanent transformation.

Crawford, quoting Sara Chakko in her report on ‘the life and work of Women in the Church’ says,

“The subject of women in the church should be the concern of the church as a whole: the church as a body of Christ consists of men and women, created as responsible persons, together to glorify God and to do his will<sup>1</sup>” (2001:14)

The author feels that transformation in the church cannot be only ‘the women's participation’ but has to include their being recognized equal rights and opportunities. Women proved having talents and being serious as community leaders in various levels. It is time for them to be recognized as God's image representatives and to be elected as Church leaders.

According to the above passages, missionary behavior, culture and their connections to the Christian tradition were used to oppress women.

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<sup>1</sup> The report was presented at the inaugurating assembly of the World Council of Churches held in Amsterdam in 1948

### **1.5.1. The need of Critical Analyze of Tradition and Culture**

There is an agreement that if women's reality in church and society is to happen, it is necessary to identify and name the enemies. Pickup calls our attention to the fact that we generally employ terms that hide monstrosities. She says,

“There are several problems with the use of terms like ‘harmful traditional practice’. They are catch-all terms and can be used both for gross violations of women's bodies and minds and more minor issues. Secondly, they may underpin assumptions that these practices are accepted by all those who live within the culture, or imply that all cultures in which a particular form of violence will attach the same significance to it” (2001: 79).

Women need, therefore, to be empowered in order to critically analyze the use of terms that are harmful for them. Their limitation may be a result of their low education, oppression, discrimination and bondage of fear.

As a way to show that not every women are comfortable with violence and abuse mostly used to justify culture or vice versa, the author intends at investigating that phenomenon, particularly in the church in Mozambique.

According to Pickup if violence against women is unchallenged, new forms of it may be developed. She says,

“If unequal economic, political, and social relations between women and men go unchallenged, old forms of violence against women will simply mutate into new forms” (2001: 79)

Missionaries may not have skills to empower women and the next generations did very little to improve the situation. As a result new forms of violence, oppression and exclusion have emerged and continue to affect and damage the body of Christ. Secondly, Clergymen are connected to the violence and abuse that characterize the church.

The general concern expressed by the authors cited in this work show that the Church is not responding accordingly to its teaching. Violence and abuse of women will only stop if the Church chooses to seriously deal with its sources and thus, eliminating them.

### **1.5.2. Women Fighting Women**

Some women may have assumed the patriarchal system of oppression as a way of getting rid of other women. According to Letty Russell,

“Women’ elites in every society have shared the socio advantages of their class and, participated in the oppression of other classes” (1974: 29)

Russell statement is true as demonstrated in many workshops in the church and other gatherings where young women have been reporting cases of violence over them practiced by their biological and in law mothers, sisters in law, and even by women’s leaders.

In their researches, Neves and Pickup point out that,

“Violence of women towards women is one of the areas to be researched”  
(2004:41; 2001:107)

The knowledge will help to challenge that phenomenon because it has been placing women in shameful contradiction.

According to Pickup and Fiorenza, women who abuse other women have, in same period of their lives, also been abused. She says,

“It should be recognized that many female perpetrators of VAW have been abused in the same way themselves” (2001: 107; 1993:243)

The author’s opinion is that while violence and abuse prevail among women, all efforts of a better world will be comprised. The women’s progress toward equality, solidarity and unity is threatened by their incapacity of mutual support.

Analyzing the results of the ‘Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women’, Aruna shares her concerns that,

“We assume that women and group of women who do not think or act like ourselves are a threat and discord to our community. We are divided as women and we need to face up to this” (2001:3)

The above is a call that women have to be advised and understand that, ‘war against each other’ can be used as a weapon to perpetuate oppression and abuse over them. Division and mutual destruction cannot help in the fight against VAW.

Pickup’s suggestion is to challenge that women particular behavior. (2001:107). Oduyoye, however, is of the opinion that there are other problems linked to violence that prevent progress. Such problems may be linked to the fears of losing acquired public or private status. She says,

“There are African women and men who see any changes in women’s participation and questioning of their legal and familial status as a treat to stability” (2001: 14)

Discussions above are a clear demonstration that women are suffering and that their cries have to be heard. The Bible teaches us that God hears and delivers his people from their sorrows as stated in the following biblical passage,

“I have surely seen the oppression of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters, for I know their sorrows. So I have come down to deliver them” (Ex.3.7:8)

God uses people to deliver others from unjust structures. Therefore, care givers are called to do their work privileging intimacy with God.

### **1.6. What the Church Should Do**

The Church as a moral and caring community has to come to grips with the war against women. The reader needs to be reminded that VAW is crime. Women who experience violence and abuse normally remain silent and stigmatized because of fear of the attacker and lack of support from the church and society. (Phiri, Hadad and Masenya: 2003; Neuger and Pickup: 2001; Poling: 1999; Herman: 1992).

The Church, the Government and other civil society organizations, must individually and jointly contribute to the improvement of people’s quality of life. Neves expressed the same feelings when he wrote that,

“Lack of knowledge (and/or inexistence) of laws or institutions that can provide support to women, also contributes to the prevalence of violence. Efforts therefore need to be made to promote support services for women who are victims of violence, so that they know where to seek assistance” (2004: 39).

The Church is expected to be a place where healing occurs. It has to work hard in order to reverse the bad image that might have developed in present days. More, it should play a valuable role in promoting healthy behavior since it is concerned with wholeness.

Recognized scholars are of the opinion that,

“The pastor is called to a better care” (Waruta and Kinoti 2005; Wimberly 2004; Gerkin 1997).

Yet, it is evident that there is a gap between theory and practice. Policies backing the Church become a necessity if the gap is to be filled. According to Hinga, a woman theologian,

“There is a need for the Church itself to extract the equally big motes in its eyes if the way forward and a genuine liberation of women from contexts of terror is to be achieved”(2005: 138).

It is further a necessity because the war before us requires a multi-disciplinary approach and inter-sector action. This needs policy direction and ethical option in the light of the gospel. (See Pick-Up 2001)

Letty Russell’ article in WCC Ecumenical review points out that,

“Although women love the church deeply and are the majority of the members in most congregations, there are many women in all parts of the world for whom the church is not a safe place” (2001:48)

Since traditional prejudices, religion and cultural factors play catalytic roles in the spread and maintenance of VAW, the churches may even have to

confront cultural gurus within the Mozambican society and Church in order to create awareness of the harm they are causing to women.

The concept of transformation must be viewed from holistic point of view because people tend to interpret their woes as only coming from the devil.

According to Nwaura,

“The Church in its role as shepherd of God’s flock must address herself to this situation by alleviating suffering and enabling the realization of God’s Kingdom” (2005:85).

The realization of the Kingdom of God will enable women to enjoy life.

Development in Mozambique cannot occur if lives of thousands people continue to face violence, abuse and trauma related effects. Mozambique’s future development including the realization of the MDG goals will be determined by the degree in which women are kept safe from VAW.

Freedom and equal rights for all Mozambicans was a dream of Eduardo Mondlane, the architect of Mozambicans’ unity<sup>2</sup>. (1969:181)

The Church obligation for good pastoral care calls to creative imagination in order to develop structures by which VAW victims can be integrated. Wimberly calls this process conversation. He says,

“The meaning – building process comes about through conversations between individuals, between individuals and groups, and between groups” (2003: 15)

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<sup>2</sup> The new Moçambique in the book ‘The struggle for Moçambique’ by Eduardo Mondlane

Thus, they can play their full roles as participants rather than staying banished on the fringes. The need for more and better pastoral care for women is terribly acute.

The researcher, after her own experience of violence, had found many victims of violence and abuse. Telling their stories was a process full of tears, sorrows, denial and prayers. What was important was the respectful listening process, the acknowledgement of the presence of the Holy Spirit of God which was shown by believing the person story and by working together to find solutions. This allows her to define herself as a living human document whose experience can make a huge contribution to the society and Church willingness to transformation from Pastoral Care.

In relation to that affirmation, Lartey shares an interesting quotation of Clinebell. He says,

“Pastoral care and Counseling involve the utilization by persons in ministry of one-to-one or small group relationships to enable healing empowerment and growth to take place within individuals and their relationships” (1984:25-26).

This quotation is helpful because it shows the importance of contexts in which the process of healing is most likely to happen.

## **1.7. Problem Statement**

The concern over violence against women as a threat to life is very serious these days. Maake Masango affirms this when he says,



“The main problem we are facing globally is the issue of violence and abuse of women in different relationships. Thus, the call for a community, Church and therapeutic response” (2006:6).

The issue of gender violence needs to be worked again and again. However, the general feeling is that violence against women receives little attention from society.

What is more worrying is that this behavior is also practiced in the Church. The Church is silent about it as mentioned in the statement of the women’s pre-council of the WARC’ 24<sup>th</sup> General Council in Accra, Ghana that says,

“What remains particularly painful is that the Church is not a safe place for women. Stories of clergy sexual abuse continue to go unchallenged” (2004:133; 2001:48).

The above observation had made the Church not to be a place of safety but a place where women are destroyed.

Time has come to engage men and women in a cooperation that can bore fruits of a new and partaking Church and society. WARC document affirms that,

“Men need to be educated and prepared for their crucial role in this partnership” (2006:1)

The author aims at understanding what the PCM and its community feelings and points of view about VAW are by addressing **Male Clergy violence against their Spouses**. The problem is addressed by raising questions listed here below:

- What makes the Church to be silent regarding male clergy violence?
- Why is it that the church never addresses the problem of abuse by clergy in church and at home?
- Violence and abuse among clergy homes is solved by transferring the male clergy family to another church. Is this process a better solution for solving the family and church problem? Or is it a holistic approach to healing the congregation?
- Why are clergy' wives and the Christian community silent about violence happening in their midst?
- Which Pastoral Care model is needed for healing and transformation? Or which theory of praxis is needed to address and challenge this issue?

### **1.8. Aim and Objective of the Study**

The aim of this study as Rosemary Mbogo<sup>3</sup> shares is to raise awareness that,

*“Womanhood is at risk and need protection” (2007: 1-15).*

The author notes that the society is responsible because women are experiencing all sorts of abusive situations, being raped by their own husbands especially in marriage. According to Neuger, rape is,

*“Any activity where sexual activity is forced or coerced upon another and where usually some part of the victim’s body is used for the sexual gratification of the perpetrator” (2001: 110)*

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<sup>3</sup> In 2007 Mars’ African Christian Pulse

It is granted that nothing that is achieved by the use of force can be appreciated.

Herman, in her turn, defines rape as being,

*“A method of political control, enforcing the subordination of women through terror” (1992: 30)*

Herman definition is better because terror has many faces and it is practiced in order to make women powerless, fearful, self blaming, forced to cooperate and to keep silent.

Men of the cloth are also guilty of the same offence while the Church remains silent, failing to protect the very women who gave birth, preserved and nurtured humanity until adulthood. Poling shares a comment of a woman victim of clergy sexual abuse who described her experience in this way,

*“The Church, while it has revoked his credentials, has never offered a word of comfort or support to me.” (1999: 17)*

Instead, the Church will transfer the minister to another parish, and the damage continues in the churches where the clergy is transferred. About that behavior of the Church, Poling has this to say,

*“We would start off in each new place with high hopes. But it wasn’t long before Todd identified the women who might be receptive to his charm, his good looks, his disarming ways, and his feigned sincerity. Soon he would again be enmeshed in the lives of the women he pastured.” (1999: 3)*

The aim of this study is to empower women against these violent acts. According to Herman,

“To hold traumatic reality in consciousness requires a social context that affirms and protects the victim and that joins victim and witness in a common alliance” (1992: 9).

Similar affirmations have previously been affirmed. Their power lay in the necessity of global action they evoke, resulting from common understanding and willingness to address and change the current situation.

The study is also aimed at challenging the Church to be in the forefront in fighting against violence and abuse of women.

In short, the aim of this study can be summarized as follows:

- To raise awareness on violence against women, particularly the one experienced in the Church by clergy’ wives.
- To challenge the too-much silence of the Church in addressing issues of domestic violence that happens amongst its members, particularly in families of its workers, and clergy.
- To empower women against these violent acts. Here, women are to be encouraged to break the silence and to take action against it if caught up in such abusive situations.

- To raise the issue of the necessity of joint partnership with men in addressing this barbaric behavior of violence against women.
- To develop a pastoral care model needed for healing of those affected by violence against women and for transformation of the church and society. And lastly,

To encourage the Church leadership to engage with governments in order to legislate sexual violence policy that provides for stiff punishment for those offenders who perpetuate violence against women.

### **1.9. Why is the Study Placed under Practical Theology Discipline?**

The servant hood of Christ entails suffering. It is therefore evident as expressed in the New Testament writings that the martyr of the church will entail for individuals and for the community, the way of the cross. Therefore the church is called to share the suffering of all by advocacy and care for the poor needy and marginalized, as Ortega puts it,

“The ministry of the church, being the community of persons who commit themselves to follow Jesus, is life-centered, service-oriented by statures and accidents of gender (1995:51).

The church does this by critically analyzing and exposing unjust structures and by working for their transformation. Jesus ministry was based on challenging not only priests’ behavior but also unjust structures. (Mt 23: 13-19)

Mwaura states that pastoral care in the Church should be holistic. She has this to say,

“Speaking out is not enough. The Church ought to function as an insider working from within the systems and not merely as a ‘voice crying in the wildernesses. The instability of social systems leads to instability in individuals, especially when they are made passive or helpless in the face of what they regard as mysterious forces responsible for their economic hardship, mental and physical instability, poverty and other aspects of personal and social suffering; it does this by its work of compassion and mercy, as it is called to reconcile broken relationships. The Church in its role as shepherd of God’ flock must address herself to this situation by alleviating suffering and enabling the realization of God’s Kingdom” (2005: 85).

Therefore the church is called to be God’s instrument in the eradication of enmity, the reconciliation of human division and hatred, which is the main source of human suffering. Nwaura goes on by affirming that,

“The pastoral work of the Church is thus to be seen in terms of healing, guiding, sustaining and reconciling the people of God” (2005:86).

Together with all people of goodwill, the church is also called to care for the integrity of creation, and to participate in God’s healing of broken relationship between human and human, and between humanity and creation.

### **1.10. Research Gap**

Violence against women has been one of the most researched topics in the past years in Mozambique. The media (radio, television and newspapers) has been reporting results of such findings. Accordingly, the society is very

often requested to change its behavior. It can be noted that a small percentage of the society is sensitive to these appeals.

According to Neves, the Mozambican government is showing its commitment by preparing a law that will help to stop violence against women. That commitment is expressed in the Women's Advancement Plan of Action that suggest measures to prevent and eliminate VAW (2004:10)

Nothing, however, has been researched in terms of clergy violence and abuse in Mozambique as well as in South Africa. This is the gap the author intends to fill with this research.

Finally, it is the author's view that researching on this topic might contribute to knowledge and improvement of the people of Mozambique's quality of life and, also contribute to pastoral care givers, especially ministers who abuse their families.

### **1.11.A Case Study on Domestic Violence**

Flora (not real name) 82 years old, was born in a non-Christian family. However, her parents decided to send her to school, which was unusual in those days. At school she did well and her teacher decided to marry her with one of his students.

As was the norm and culture at that time, she was not consulted. After marriage the couple was sent to work in the capital city, today called Maputo. Flora's husband was a pastor. Instead of that privilege, her life was not different from other women in the community. She wanted to do different things from those she was obliged to. For instance, she wanted to study theology but, her husband always used those moments to remind her

that she was a woman and that her place was at home, he further said that the community was not ready for women's leadership.

The situation changed for worse when she was elected to lead the women's committee. She felt she was not sufficiently prepared for that position. Nevertheless she did the best she could. Her work was well appreciated by the Community and society. That appreciation provoked jealousy from her husband who began to find endless arguments to prevent her to go ahead.

The women's activities Flora was leading were not paid. In other words, it was taken as voluntary job. To sustain the family she was forced to do seasonal work in the agriculture settings.

Her husband rarely had time for the family. With horror she came to know that he was sexually involved with some women in the church. These women used to have arguments and to insult each other. Her tentative plans to stop that behavior resulted in physical, psychological and spiritual aggressions from her husband. He accused her from pretending to change him. She was publicly humiliated and called ignorant and a donkey.

At home food was rare, which was another form of abuse because he did not buy enough food. Children were mistreated and beaten. As a result they were not progressing at school. About this, Russell says,

*“Domination of women by men is an ancient and persistent form of the subjection of one human being to a permanent status of inferiority because of sex” (1974:29)*

As this conflict grew, the Church had to act, so, the solution found by the Church was to transfer the minister's family to another parish. The issue of



violence and abuse was not solved. The story repeated itself in these new places.

Flora's health began to deteriorate. Fear, anger, guilt and shame took control over her. She began to have mental problems which finally resulted as disorders.

Glaz and Moessner analyzing the intra-psychoic reality of shame say,

“Shame thrives in the control, denial and secrecy of dysfunctional families. Shame is an inner sense of being completely diminished or insufficient as a person. (1991: 112).

Flora wanted to disappear but, as it was not possible, the inferiority feelings and shame took control of her to the point to lose self control and reasoning.

It was at that time that the Christian community took action. She was sent to hospital .She also found help from other pastor's wives. That approach was very important for her and helped to a certain extent.

However, the abuse prevailed their entire ministry' life. During all those years Flora was never approached by the church leadership or helped to solve this problem.

The reader will realize how abuse and violence take place at home and in the church especially by leaders and ministers of the Church.

## 1.12. Preliminary Conclusion

This research is an attempt by the author; a female theologian who is concerned about the stories of women suffering from domestic violence in their homes and Church especially from Clergy men. This chapter introduced the reader to the Topic of the research study. The use violence and abuse over clergy' wives by their husbands is the issue in discussion. Poling has this to say,

“Stories of women who have been and are being sexually abused and exploited by their Christian ministers, the very people they thought they could trust. (1999: ix)

The traumatic experiences of these women show that clergy men are guilty and need to be called to accountability. In the other hand, clergy' wives need to be empowered in order to be able to challenge the prevailing situation as Poling states,

“The consistent silence of these women to respond and act to the perpetrators, indicates only how each woman struggled to preserve herself and, at times, her sanity in the midst of the misconduct of her minister and the lack of support from her church”. (1999: ix).

The research will attempt to help these women by encouraging them to speak out, to break the silence and to take action through support groups that will finally challenge the Church.

It is the author view that breaking of the silence will invite other people to put a face to these realities so that they gain motivation to act. Such motivations will empower the victims to dare and envision transformation yielding to a more abundant life.

The historical background is therefore important for the reader in order to enable him/her to understand the situation and also to invite him/her to collaborate towards transformation and healing in the Christian and social societies in Mozambique.

In this Chapter, the author also shared experiences of women who are married to clergy. Their stories share pain of abuse, violence and mistreatment by clergy, while the Church is not addressing the issue of violence and abuse experienced by women.

In Chapter two, the author will be dealing with the methodology which will critically analyze the socio-cultural and religious aspects that are harmful and oppressive to women in order to challenge them and bring transformation and healing to all involved.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2. METHODOLOGY

#### 2.1. Term Definition

The Oxford Dictionary defines Methodology as being a set of methods and principles used to perform a particular activity (: 926)

In this regard, the author is called to share the methodology she intends to use in this chapter with the aim at bringing into light the painful experiences of clergy' wives in the PCM. It will consist at critically analyzing the socio-cultural and religious aspects and structures that are male oriented, harmful and oppressive to women. Oduyoye is the opinion that,

“Cultural hermeneutics is the African women’s way of taking seriously the issues of continuity and change. The pain of the depth of exclusion and victimization is placed before the plumb-line of the Good News of Jesus Christ which begins with the invitation to change, which will put people on the same course as that of the values in God’s Great Economy” (2001: 14).

The author agrees with Oduyoye that contextual critique can be helpful to bring changes and healing if placed before the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The reader must be reminded that the Kingdom of God is inclusive. The inclusiveness of the Kingdom of God challenges our socio – cultural – religious and economic systems that are male oriented and reminds us that it will not come if some are excluded in the basileia (assembly). The understanding of causes and consequences brought by those systems and

their multi - related consequences, require a systematic and contextual analyzes in order to create an environment of justice, hope and reconciliation.

The methodology to be used also aims at challenging the increasing violence against women in order to come to a common sense of understanding of women's conditions in the family, church and society. In order to do this, the methodology has to liberate the author first as to be able to help others.

The author is a wounded one by systematically being refused to further her studies by male clergy who lead the church. In that long, hurting and shameful process, she understood that the problem was her sex. Many times she faced questions like this: Who do you think you are? Tell us the name of the man who stands on your side to support you. It comes clear that a woman can 'succeed' only if she accepts and obeys blindly to perform the roles attributed to her by her male colleagues. The author sees this as being an intractable and stubborn violence and abuse of women and also as an insult to God who created both female and male in His own image. Secondly, these men are denying the capacities of women because they know that the recognition of their competence will lead to the recognition of their rights. Thirdly, the non recognition helps them to maintain these women under control in all activities they do. Fourthly, women who accept being abused, develop a sense of superiority over other women and cooperate with the system to perpetuate the abuse and violence; finally they unite their conspiracy to terrorize their opponents.

There is a common feeling that new structures do not get established without growing pains. (see Fokkelien Van Dijk Hemmes 1994)

By using Gerkin shepherding model in pastoral care ministry and Fiorenza situation critical exegesis models, the author will liberate herself and develop skills that will help her to empower other women and transform mentalities. The liberation will come by listening to other's stories and not to her damaged emotions. Other scholars' theological reflections, ethics and spirituality will be shared. All experiences will be analyzed not only from western thinking but also from an African – Christian perspective because Africans care for people. This will be done by identifying and naming the enemies with the aim to challenge and transform the bad behavior.

Women in the PCM need to be taught how to identify their enemies and how to name them in order to challenge them.

The combination of both qualitative and quantitative approaches will be used.

The qualitative approach will mainly focus on the literature review. The Bible will be the main source. The importance of using the Bible remains in its inclusiveness, justice and forgiveness teachings and unlimited God's love towards humanity and creation. According to Wimberly,

“Being a person of worth and value means being embraced by God's love despite our faults and human limitations” (2003: 10).

Redemption and grace are God's gifts to the humanity. All those who receive God's grace are transformed.

The use of the Bible is also justified for being the sole source of knowledge about God and His leadership to his people. Gerkin puts it in this way,

“Our most reliable source regarding the beginnings of pastoral care is the Bible.”

He goes on by affirming this concept,

“Yahweh required the assignment of leadership roles to certain individuals. Our earliest pastoral ancestors are to be found among the leaders of the ancient people of Israel. From very early in recorded biblical history the custom was established of designating three classes of such leaders: the priests, the prophets and the wise men and women, who offered counsel of all sorts concerning issues of the good and life and personal conduct” (1997: 23)

Gerkin' concept means that male clergy abuse and violence against their spouses in the PCM needs to be challenged and placed before the Holy Scriptures in order to question their attitudes and leadership. The will is to see changes occurring and to open a new page in communication between male clergy and their spouses through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Oduyoye, in her turn, affirms that,

*“A deep love of the Bible enables African women to draw out the transforming message to eradicate the injustices of a culture that still refuses full dignity to women. She also affirms that Biblical stories and events have been preserved as evidence that human life is in the hands of God and that God accompanies God's*

*people through history, putting on them the obligation that they live to God's glory" (2001: 8; 22).*

The author believes that the Bible teachings enable people to restore broken relationships in the household.

The quantitative approach will be helpful in bringing into light and providing information about the real situation of women in the PCM who are experiencing abuse and violence. It will also be helpful in estimating and calculating the prevalence of that abuse and violence as well as bringing elements to define the contexts in which violence and abuse mainly occurs.

The quantitative approach will be extremely important because it will show direction to the definition of the new theory of praxes that the author aims at developing.

### **2.1.1. What the Church is Expected to Do**

The methodology will be helpful in exposing how injustices, oppression, abuse, and inequalities that continue to affect women have to be challenged. The expectation is that the Church should be vocal in addressing this issue. This is what God urges his people to do when he says to Ezekiel,

*"If I pronounce sentence of death on a person because he (she) is wicked and you do not speak out to dissuade him (her) from his (her) ways, that person will die because of his (her) sin, but I shall hold you answerable for his (her) death. However, if you have warned him (her) to give up his (her) ways, and he (she) persists in them, he (she) will die because of his (her) sins, but you will have saved yourself (33:8-9).*



The above quotation clearly challenges the Church. It cannot remain in comfortable silence when humanity is in danger.

The Church, being a community of love, is also known as a community of people of God. God's people are therefore expected to take action and to move towards abundant life when caught up in threatening situations. WCC in his documents about the Nature and the Mission of the Church states,

“The covenant between God and his people entailed many things like the Torah, the land including the call to act with justice and to speak the truth” (2005:19).

The author is the opinion that to challenge male clergy violence and abuse in the Church is to act in order to bring justice and to help people to speak the truth when being pressed to lie or to remain silent.

The Church should be vocal because it is not only the community of love but it is also the body of Christ. The apostle Paul affirmed this in his letter to the Ephesians when he wrote,

“Once you were far off, but now in union with Christ Jesus you have been brought near through the shedding of Christ's blood. For he is himself our peace. Gentiles and Jews, he has made the two one, and in his own body of flesh and blood has broken down barriers of enmity which separated them” (2: 13-14)

The body of Christ has the miraculous design to bind those who were enemies and separated. The Church, being the body of Christ, is expected to promote forgiveness and reconciliation.

Description of Church' duty without mentioning and understanding its nature and visibility is an incomplete work.

The nature of the Church is expressed as “community and fellowship” of those who gather together to break the bread and to pray. (Acts 2: 42).

It is therefore important for this community to address problems faced by women who are abused. Visibility and participation are important steps to be privileged in a community because that event opens doors for all who are vulnerable and calls for inclusiveness. WCC document summarizes the above by saying,

“the visibility of the church is expressed in receiving and sharing tangible signs of love, participating in each other’s joys and sorrows and working together for justice and peace” (2005: 24).

The church is also called and empowered to share the suffering of all by advocacy and care for the needy and marginalized. This entails critically analyzing and exposing unjust structures, and working for their transformation.

The Church is called to heal and reconcile broken human relationships and to be God’s instrument in the reconciliation of human division and hatred. (2Cor. 5:18-21) As a result of the above, the Church needs to seek justice in order to bring peace between people who are in conflict.

## **2.2. Research Methodology**

As already stated, the research methodology to be used will be both Qualitative and Quantitative.

To obtain reliable and comparable data, cross-sectional surveys were done. Four structured questionnaires addressed to specific groups were raised to explore the magnitude of the problem. The groups mentioned are:

- Women's group leaders
- Minister's wives
- Ministers and key individuals like health providers and police. (See appendix A for questions)

It is therefore important to note that the questions were done in Portuguese and in Ronga / Tsonga. Portuguese is the official language in Mozambique. Ronga and Tsonga are the languages widely spoken in the Southern part of the country hence, they are recommended for better results.

The findings were to be presented and analyzed with numbers of people interviewed. They were extremely important for the definition of the Pastoral Care Model needed to address and to overcome violence in the Christian community within the Mozambican context.

### **2.2.1. The Theoretical argument for employing two Methodologies**

The author is working with traumatic experiences and stories of abuse by male clergy on their wives. Until recently the author's knowledge about traumatic experiences and clergy's abuse was very limited. Fatality, however, made her to come to know about them. Thus, she can affirm that each experience is unique and must be valorized. Because of that, these women have to share their stories, which would be impossible if she could only use available literature about VAW.

Questionnaires will be helpful in showing ways of empowering women or victims of abuse, for the definition of Pastoral Care Model and for the definition of future proceedings with the government and other activists of human rights. Gerkin shares experiences on how to become a pastoral leader of a Christian community. He says,

“To be the pastoral leader of a Christian community means to engender in persons, both individually and as a community, a mood and habit of inquiry, most particularly inquiry into the ultimate meaning of their actions and the actions of others upon them. To care deeply for persons is to inquire with them, search with them, question with them about what the events of their lives mean at the deepest level. It also means to inquire with them into the ways in which their questions have been presented in the past and how those questions have been answered, most particularly with the people of the Bible” (1997:125)

Clergy’ wives in the PCM showed the truth of these words by sharing their stories and by beginning to empower each other in order to challenge the status quo.

The successes of this research or project will depend, however, on the possibilities of bringing male clergy together, who are the abusers, in this dynamic process of transformation. These will be possible if male clergy and their spouses collaborate towards transformation and healing. Men who are against violence over women can make a huge difference in that struggle. Pickup asserts that,

“There is an important role for men who reject violent aspects of masculinity to work in solidarity with women against violence” (2001: 20).

This process, when handled by men who are against violence, will help educate other men in such a way that the Church will deal with the problem.

The final product of this research will be available to the University of Pretoria, The Presbyterian Church of Mozambique, The United Seminary of Ricatla, and the Government of Mozambique. These four institutions will continue the challenge on the issue of male clergy abuse through materials produced by this research.

There are still many other areas to be researched but, the author's purpose is to investigate Clergy' Violence and abuse against their Spouses in the PCM, and leave other topics for other researchers.

### **2.3. Research Model**

The present research is about male clergy violence and abuse against their spouses that highlights women in their struggles for full recognition as human beings, as valuable members in society and of the body of Christ.

The author chooses Elisabeth S. Fiorenza and Charles V. Gerkin models as the most suitable in finding solution to the plight of women.

In her book **Discipleship of Equals**, Fiorenza uses a methodology of situation critical exegesis of society, culture and religion, as a way to challenge the Church' patriarchal structures that keep women down. In the patriarchal Church women are oppressed and seen as sinful, inferior, and having a secondary status. She says,

“The women's liberation demands restructuring of societal institutions and a redefinition of cultural images and roles of women and men, if women are to

become autonomous human persons and achieve economic and political equality”  
(1993:56-57)

Restructuring will not come alone. It is necessary to work hard; to develop sensibilities and strategies and to act with a clear vision and purpose. She also affirms that,

“Theology and church have to be liberated and humanized if they are to serve people and not to oppress them” (1993:63).

The author agrees with Fiorenza because experience has shown that the Bible has been used to legitimate oppression, the Apartheid regime in South Africa being a good example.

The phenomenon is wide spread, and the Church is silent, which must be strongly condemned.

Gerkin, in his book **An Introduction to Pastoral Care**, develops a model of a pastor or a leader as that of a caring shepherd who provides everything to the flock; who leads confidently, who protects, corrects and comforts. Accordingly, that method can empower both ministers and congregants with special skills towards transformation and healing those who are abused.

He shares an interesting concept of shepherding. He says,

“Care in the Christian sense always involves both care of the community and care of persons involved in any situation with which the pastor is confronted. It involves the pastor both as a leader of a community of faith and as symbolic representative of the Christian tradition in personal relationships” (1997: 115).

This method is needed when working with victims of abuse.

Gerkin begin by advising us that to develop a ministry of pastoral care takes time. He says,

“We need to carry with us the balance that our Old Testament Israelite ancestors struggled to achieve among the functions of pastoral leaders as priests, as prophets, and as the wise guides of the people” (1997: 79).

That advice is helpful as it puts clearly that we are developing a process of listening, learning, transformation and healing that needs commitment of all involved and needs understanding, confidence, patience and confidence in God.

Fiorenza’s methodology will challenge the author to do an historical critical exegesis of women’s reality as a way to reconstruct their oppressed world.

Both Fiorenza and Gerkin are concerned with the abusive situation that many people face within the patriarchal church. Both propose ways of dealing with that oppressive and dehumanizing conditions created by human limitations and hypocrisy.

Liberation and reconciliation are methods that will challenge the author as pastoral care giver to deal with the issue of violence, abuse and oppression within the Church and society in Mozambique.

The author is of similar opinion with Fiorenza that Christianity in Africa must be analyzed, liberated and contextualized as to be in accordance with Jesus’ teachings of inclusiveness, justice, love, peace and freedom for all.

Fiorenza will be helpful in educating men to stop violence, especially among clergy in the Church, as she affirms,

“Hierarchical male structures and the pronouncements of the male hierarchy are no longer uncritically identified with the will of God or with the Christian community” (1993: 146).

Feminists have been developing literature that is helpful in criticizing male structures both in the Church and society.

The author is aware that this process will succeed only with God guidance and support as Oduyoye puts it,

“We believe that God has the power to enable us to overcome the difficulties that we meet in life and that the ultimate outcome of all belongs to God” (2001:44)

### **2.3.1. Biblical Hermeneutics of African and Christian Traditions**

The women situation of violence and abuse, rape, oppression and so forth practiced by male ministers over them, is very well expressed by Jesus words in Matthew 23 as testified by that citation,

“You are like tombs covered with whitewash, they look fine on the outside, but inside they are full of dead bones and corruption” (Mat.23: 27)

Jesus rebukes scribes and Pharisees for all the wrongs they do. In other verses He calls them blinds, fools, and hypocrites. In most of the situations, male ministers in the PCM do not have required moral standards. This can be testified by their instigation that leads women to believe that they suffer because they are bad. This may be the explanation



of their tendency to pray and to search constantly for redemption. According to Oduyoye,

“Women have focused attention on Jesus of Nazareth as restorer of harmony and the model of the human as God intended. Women’s Christology centers on goodness, salvation, liberation and the acts that redeem, transform or reconstruct. Their religion is a quest for freedom and blessedness” (2001: 32).

Women do the above because they have conscience that male clergy do not want to deal with the issue of violence and abuse over them. Instead, they use pronouncements as a way to avoid the problem.

Fiorenza is the opinion that in cases where women suffer violence and authoritarian action of the clergy, it is necessary to critically ‘name’ the theological definitions and institutional issues at the heart of the conflict between patriarchal church and women-church. She puts it in this way,

“Only if we break through the theological mystifications and religious legitimating of patriarchal authority and power will women be able to reclaim our dignity, authority and power as ecclesial subjects” (1993:244)

The above quotations when followed and acted upon, will help in addressing the issue faced by women.

Male structures of the Church are denying women to fully participate in the assembly ‘basileia’. In that practice there is a clear dichotomy between male and female. Fiorenza states,

“Structures of domination should not be tolerated in the discipleship – community of Jesus. Instead, those who would be great or first among the disciples must be servants/slaves of all.” (1993: 221)

Practically this means that relationships among Christians should not be based on sex or social status as she writes,

“Christians are called brothers and sisters; as adopted children they are co-hear with Christ” (1993: 221)

As a result, men who belong to Christian faith are challenged to relate to women in a better way.

This is what Paul means in chapter eighth of his letter to the Romans when he says that those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. Nobody receives from God a spirit of bondage that cause and maintain fear. (Rom 8:14-17). Accordingly Fiorenza affirms,

“As members of the new family, as siblings, Christians eat common meals together and greet each other with a holy kiss” (1993:221)

The problem of women participation, subordination and recognition of their rights and status in church by male ministers is not, however, resolved by eating or greeting.

The patriarchal and social relationships continue to oppress women within the household of God. Fiorenza criticizes this behavior by saying,

“The Christian movement is based solemnly on conversion, which does not continue the national, racial, or social status prerogatives derived from the patriarchal household. In baptism converts enter into a new kinship relationship with people coming from very different religious, cultural and social backgrounds and patriarchal relationships. These former status differences are not to determine the social and religious structures of the new community” (1993: 222)

The above statement touches the heart of our conversion in Jesus Christ. In the new Covenant we are all one, meaning no divisions based on our feelings and judgments among God's children.

### **2.3.2. The Dilemma of serving two Kingdoms**

If the above is true, what then is happening in the Church? Why is the Church' leadership distorting God's image? According to Mugambi the problem lies on the presence of two Kingdoms in the Church. He says,

“In human society relationships are far from perfect. He places the problem in which he calls kingdoms. The Kingdom of God and the Kingdoms of Men” (1989:74-85)

Therefore, the violation of women distorts the image of God not only in women who are abused, but also in men who abuse them. In other words, those who insist in the practice of violence and abuse over women may be promoting Kingdoms of Men. Hence, they might have lost dignity and grace of God. According to Mugambi,

“The superior men tend to assume absolute power over those who are inferior. The inflated superiority of all those mortals, with impunity at the human level, behaves towards their inferior ranks as if they were almighty, immortal and unlimited in any way. However, only God is immortal and infinite in every way” (1989:77)

In the light of the gospel, those who accepted to belong to the new family ‘Church or basileia) are urged to behave differently. In the new family there is no room for discrimination. According to Saint Paul,

“There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female; for you are all one person in Christ Jesus”(Gal. 3: 28)

The author believes that that theology can mainly contribute, challenge and help ministers and congregants in their way for the search of worth, value, and dignity given to each other by God. The main reason for belonging to Christ is to be one. Therefore, we cannot in any way be forced to accept the patriarchal Church and its structures of oppression. Rather, it is an encouraging aspect that helps and gives us hope to go ahead.

Fiorenza puts it in the following way,

“The new kinship of equal discipleship has no room for ‘fathers.’ Insofar as this new family has no room for ‘fathers’, it implicitly rejects their patriarchal power and status, and claims that in its midst all patriarchal structures of domination and subordination are abolished. The Jesus movements demand a radical break with them” (1993:220)

Therefore, clergy men who abuse their spouses are behaving out of step with the Christian faith.

### **2.3.3. Women and Men are equal before God**

According to Jesus’ teaching in Luke 4, the power of the Holy Spirit is liberating. (4. 16: 22)

That affirmation leads to the conclusion that salvation is for all. The individual person has only the obligation to take steps that are not marginal to the actions and teachings of Jesus, the Christ.

Mugambi develops his points of view and affirms,

“Human ‘kings’ are liberated from their lofty attitudes and conduct which dehumanize them as they dehumanize their inferiors, and those who are barred from exercising their freedom are elevated to realize their fully dignity as human beings and as children of God. Therefore, no man or woman has any reason to boast to another” (1989:78).

According to the above, in the new family and relationships, respect and equality are a must. This equality is expressed in servant hood. Individual status is recognized by the new roles as servants/ slaves. This means that leaders are those who care for others. They became servants and serve others. Fiorenza interpretation of the above is,

“The kinship relationship in the discipleship of equals does not admit of any ‘father’ because it is sustained by the gracious goodness of God whom alone the disciples of Jesus call ‘father’” (1993: 221).

According to the above quotation, God is the Father who cares for the whole humanity.

The real question the author is aiming at responding is:

“How can I, as a female clergy, become competent trauma counseling and help seeker to other women who have been abused by their male ministers and husbands, who regarded them as non beings?”

#### **2.3.4. The African women model of the Church**

Women within the Church are in need of healing. Some are developing rituals that lead towards healing and reconciliation and can better fulfill their humanity. The author is looking for a model which may be the most suitable for women in Mozambique and may bring healing and

reconciliation. The following experience that the author intends to share may be one of the models that the church can develop.

### **2.3.5. On Being Church**

The author grew up in different parishes as she is a pastor's family daughter. The best image of the church she has seen and continually comes to her memory is that of members of the Church gathering together with the local community around a big fire studying the Bible, praying, singing, telling stories and dancing.

It was a powerful way of community empowering, freedom and relationships building. It was also a powerful way of being at God's work and mission. Many conversions happened in these moments. Women were the best story' tellers. These moments can be compared with those described in Acts 2: 42-47.

Letty Russell describes those moments in this way,

“The Holy Spirit is poured out on people of different nations, gender, ages, social classes without distinction” (2001: 52).

When people gather together to fulfill God's agenda, the Holy Spirit is always present guiding their decisions and work.

The above means that women have to find healing by gathering together, telling their stories without fearing gossips, rejection or to be made objects of ridicule.

Dynamics of present days, however, may also call for new creativities. Women have to ask themselves what kind of the Church God has called

them to be. According to Aruna, fundamental questions have to be asked. She says,

“What it means to be called by God to live in and for the world; what forms of spirituality would nurture the life of the church as community; how the ministry of the whole church can be renewed to better equip the church for faithfulness in its task of witness and service in the world” (2001:2)

Mozambican women have to constantly ask questions and reflect on issues that affect them, their loved ones the church and community. This will enable them to know the sources of the harm, to challenge them and to take action. Pollard calls this process, positive deconstruction. According to him,

“Positive deconstruction helps people to take apart what they believe in order to look carefully to believe and analyze it. The process is positive because the deconstruction is done in a positive way, in order to replace it with something better” (1997: 41)

The above is true as people need to be taught how to think more, how to challenge the way someone think.

Women in the PCM need to be helped on how they can introspect believe they have internalized as to be able to challenge them. To be successful in their quest, these women have to be united. Ronga language has many expressions that call for unity like ‘**alitiho drinwe adrinusi hove**’ expression that may not have corresponding word in English but which means that ‘**union is strength**’, or ‘**Anyandra yatihunyi ayitrhoviwi**’ which means “**a bundle of sticks cannot be broken**”, These expressions result from experience and help to understand that no one is self sufficient. To be effective in this

world, we need each other. The same is also true if we want to build the Kingdom of God, knowing that each one has his/her particular duty to perform. Accordingly, Gerkin is helpful in reminding the reader to learn from the good work of our ancestor's. He says,

“Our methods of reconciliation must now more nearly follow the manner of listening, invitation to consider, and clarification of commitments” (1997: 81)

In the statement above, there is no room for oppression because all will be involved in open conversation in order to avoid dictatorship. If male clergy in the PCM are open to transformation, examples cited above can strongly help them to overcome violence and abuse of women which will approach them to the kingdom of God. According to Oduyoye women need,

“New myths, new metaphors, new language if the aim is to calm the troubled waters of the relations between women and men or to make the troubled waters become a source of healing for the unhealthy relations foisted by patriarch and androcentrism” (2001:44).

To view and receive every body as they are as Christ did is what lead women to look for all possible ways that can restore and heal relationships. This is not an easy task. Christians are called to suffer and stand with God in the struggle against sin and injustices in present days. This is the praxis that the author aims at bringing in order to alleviate the suffering of women and to proclaim God's liberation upon them.



### **2.3.6. Preliminary Conclusion**

In this chapter the author shared the methodology of Fiorenza and Gerkin that she is using in the present study in order to address the issue of violence and abuse of women in the Church.

Fiorenza proposed a method which results in an historical – critical exegesis as a way of reconstructing the world of oppressed women. Her analysis challenges the way men behave. Commonly women are regarded as invisible, sinful inferior, non-being and secondary to men. Gerkin, in the other hand, proposed a method of shepherding care in which he highlights the process of respectful listening, understanding and conversation that can lead to transformation and healing.

Both Fiorenza and Gerkin are dealing with the issue of oppression, humiliation and degradation of human beings within rigid patriarchal structures.

These models helped the author to challenge the generally achieved and accepted cultural norms that are harmful to women. They also helped the interpretation of the Holy Scriptures as they are done by patriarchal' structures of oppression and abuse. The goal was to engage participants and subjects towards cultural and Christian transformation of tradition.

The final product was to bring African women model of the Church as is most suitable to them, especially the model that addresses the problem faced by women.

The next Chapter will concentrate on clergy abuse and violence over their wives. It will also highlight its prevalence in the Church and society,

particularly its violent results. Advises on how clergyman, their spouses and the community as a whole have to behave in order to avoid pain and suffering, will be shared.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3. The Church's Patriarchal Roots of Violence

#### 3.1. Case Study on Violence and Abuse

“Monica (not real name) was a young women aged 27 with a dream to become a strong leader. To achieve her goals and after having completed secondary school, she involved herself in other trainings within different groups in her Church, also in English, leadership courses and computer skills. Having seen an advertisement saying that the WCC had a one year internship program for young women who wanted to develop their abilities on leadership, she immediately applied through her local church.

Three weeks later she was asked to go to meet her Church leader. She was welcomed and showed the importance of her course and the good work she was expected to do. She was grateful and stood up to go home when; her boss told her that something was missing. What is missing? She naively asked her pastor. ‘Oh, you are an intelligent woman, surely you now it very well’.

This was the beginning of a long and painful story that destroyed Monica’s dreams and life.”

Scenarios above are common place in many churches. Many women experience psychological aggression, sexual harassment, violence and abuse from their ministers. The community knows about it but keeps silent, as Neuger puts it,

“The church has not wanted to participate in the kind of upheaval that it would cause to actively advocate on behalf of victims, especially since it is often the perpetrators who have the power and the authority within local churches.”(2001: 95)

In this chapter the author's goal is to deal with the issue of violence and abuse of women by male clergy. She will explore the literature available and connect it with the real experiences of women, especially clergy' wives in the PCM. She will then articulate her own thinking about violence and abuse and illustrate its destructive effects at various levels. This will enable the reader to understand the phenomenon and to take action in order to end it up.

### **3.2. Clergy Abuse**

Clergy are not common persons. They owe their identity from Christ himself. The Oxford Dictionary calls them,

“The body of people for religious duties in the Christian Church” (2005: 263)

Definitions above give them a highly respectable status, because they are set apart.

Being ministers of the Christian Church, clergy serve in the building up of the community and have a ministry of pastoral care. They have the responsibility to strengthen the communion in faith, life and witness of the whole people of God. According to WCC statement on the nature and mission of the church,

“The chief responsibility of the ordained ministry is to assemble and build up the Body of Christ by proclaiming and teaching the Word of God, by celebrating baptism and Eucharist and by guiding the life of the community in its worship, its mission and its service” (2005:51)

According to the statement above, those who abuse others do not have room in the ordained ministry.

Clergy' formation and ordination takes longtime to be decided upon. This is so because there is a need to know the candidate' life, attitudes and character

well. Unfortunately, this scrutiny process does not guarantee the accountability of the minister. Clergy are guilty for destroying the community of believers they serve. That destruction has many faces and this is what we call abuse.

Clergy are supposed to be holy people. There is, however, a concern that some clergy are abusive. This abuse starts from home, abusing the spouse and children; in community, abusing congregants and leadership by abusing power.

Neuger shares her experience of violence and abuse by saying,

“I heard a news story on television, a story that is not uncommon on the evening news. A twelve-year old girl had told her parents that her pastor had been forcing her to have sex with him for the past two months. She finally broke through the fear and pressures for silence and told her parents” (2001: 94)

Silence among those who are abused is common. There is agreement that people who abuse others use silence as a process of intimidation,

“Keeping the secret protects the offending pastor and isolates the congregant, which makes it difficult for her to sort out what is going on and to ask for help” (Neuger and Pickup 2001; Poling 1999; Herman 1992).

Attitudes like the above destroy the Church as members see the clergy as hypocrites and corrupt.

Silence is also linked to the security and image of the abused woman. According to Neuger in the episode of child abuse shared above,

“The reporter interviewed five members of the pastor’s congregation. Each one supported the pastor without a word of care or concern for the child” (2001: 94)

The only problem faced by the child was that no one believed her. Hence, they remain silent.

When victims of abuse remain silent, the abuser feels untouched and continues with the abuse. Ramsay shares an interesting and shameful story of incest. She says,

“Chris’s father told her, ‘this is our special secret’. If you tell your mother, it will hurt her very much” (Glaz 1991: 111).

Obviously Chris maintained the secret in order not to hurt her mother and the sexual abuse continued. This same process is used by clergy men, who will say to their victims ‘don’t let congregation know, it will be a shame, and people will not believe you’.

The majority of women believes in such people and allows the abuse to continue. It is important, however, to note that these women’s life is in danger. According to Neuger,

“The Church has participated in many ways in this process of silencing victims of intimate violence. It has used theological justifications, particularly the sanctity of the family, to justify its silencing of domestic abuse victims. (2001: 95)

Some of the clergy have encouraged wives not to share this incident; it will bring shame to the Church. Obviously women, who have been taught to believe that they are bad and sinner, tend to feel guilty, ashamed and blame themselves for the violence. It is therefore important to empower women in the PCM to support each other on issues like violence and abuse, as to be able to challenge the abusers.

Clergy abuse is therefore violence, crime and a range of bad behavior that affects the victims negatively. This chapter will discuss these bad behaviors and their consequences especially among clergy's wives in the PCM. According to Neuger,

“It is important to look at some of the issues in the Church that get in the way of being able to help make abused women both visible and believable” (2001:95).

For the author the above can be achieved by critically analyzing our attitudes and beliefs in the light of God's teaching, justice and grace.

### **3.2.1. Background of Clergy Abuse**

Many people feel numb and powerless in the face of massive misuse of power, violence and abuse by clergyman. Every form of clergy' power and abuse is tempted to constitute itself as absolute, without accountability to those affected.

The excuses generally used to justify oppression against women are cultural and gender issues of subordination. For us to be able to understand clergy abuse, it is necessary to bring a brief description on how culture defines gender roles and at what extent that definition has and continues to affect relationships among men and women. We should analyze gender and culture because they are extremely linked as Njoroge says,

“Gender analyzes and cultural hermeneutics must go hand-in-hand” (2002:50)

### **3.2.2. Clergy Abuse, Culture, and Gender**

According to the seventh edition of Oxford Dictionary definition,

“Culture is a wide range of customs, beliefs, art, and way of life and social organization of a particular country or group” (2005: 357).

According to the definition above, people are free to set up norms, to proclaim, use and defend them as their culture. Unfortunately, many of the proclaimed and accorded norms are oppressive to women. This is what Oduyoye means when she says,

“African women have identified culture as a favorite tool for domination” (2001:12).

The above is true because in most African cultures, women are supposed to obey blindly and without questioning the assigned roles to them.

Therefore, Ministers, clergy wives and community in Mozambique must be taught that ‘ignoring harmful facts with the aim to protect the transgressors’ it is not a solution. Problems should be faced and dealt accordingly.

Some scholars defend the necessity to study culture in order to understand African Theology as Ruether says,

“Sub-Saharan Africa was Christianized as an integral part of European colonialism. The African populations still retain their historical indigenous languages and cultures, even if their relation to these cultures is disoriented through Western Christianizing. Thus the question of the relation between Christianity and indigenous culture is central one” (1998:254)



Example above can be highlighted by Scriptural passages in Ephesians that are used in order to enhance domination and gender roles of wives:

“Wives, submit to your own husbands” (5: 22).

Women, who generally do not know how to use and interpret Biblical passages, feel powerless in face of such passages.

Gender is widely defined by roles determination. Gender roles are socially, historically and culturally determined and constructed. Gender is thus, independent of sex. The good news is that those roles can be challenged and changed thus, eliminating the inferiority complex and subordination of women.

### **3.3. Theological anthropology of clergy’ abuse**

#### **3.3.1. Before the Reformation period**

Since Christianity began, the so-called Church’ Fathers were interested in understanding the different roles of women and men in the church. According to Ruether,

“They were interested to know if women were created equal or subordinate in God’s original intention for creation” (1998:1).

Discussions about gender and sex roles of men and women consumed good time of the leadership of the Church in prejudice of justice, peace and reconciliation.

The reader must be reminded that before Reformation celibacy of clergy was the norm in the Christian Church. Reformation, however, divided the Church. Protestantism defended the end of celibacy of ordained ministry.

One of the reasons was to protect clergy from scandalous behavior as Ruether puts it,

“Clerical marriage also ended the scandalous hypocrisy in which bishops officially condemned but tacitly allowed clerical concubinage, while collecting fees on the illegitimate children of these unions” (1998: 113).

Changes cited above did not, however, stop clergy’ sexual abuse of congregants and their spouses. Examples can be found in women’s testimonies like the following shared by Poling,

“Todd’s first full-fledged affair was with a church school teacher while I was pregnant with our first child. I don’t know how I survived the grief of that betrayal, but I did” (1999: 3).

Many clergy’ wives live in abusive relationships. They remain silent but keep praying God to help, change and renew their husbands’ behavior.

According to Ruether, many paradigms were sought by some early Christians to justify the dissolution of gender hierarchy in redemption by Hellenistic Jewish. She says,

“The Gen. 1:27b text defines humanity as created ‘male and female’ and thus seen as a second stage of creation; others, were of the opinion that pre-gendered unity happens when the baptized are incorporated into a redeemed humanity in Christ. However, Saint Paul rejected that theology and insisted “marriage and traditional gender relations are to continue in the Christian community even after baptism” (1998:2)

In early Christianity like in present days, men were more interested in defending their self image and public place in detriment of God's agenda to the humanity.

Jesus worked tirelessly to show that God's Kingdom cannot be seen in terms of sex or gender roles. For example he admonished his disciples to look at women as equals,

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘you shall not commit adultery’. But, I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Mat 5: 27-28)

The above example teaches us that Jesus was, since the beginning of His Mission, busy with challenging and changing the existing culture.

The sanctity of marriage may be one of the weapons used by clergy in order to maintain dysfunctional partners together. According to Neuger,

“In a recent study, researchers found that clergy effectiveness is consistently low and they speculated that this was probably due to clergy endorsement of traditional teachings concerning the sanctity of marriage” (2001: 96)

Survivors of clergy' violence and abuse are questioning the church's teaching about women's roles in marriage as Poling puts it,

“I began to question the church's teaching about marriage and about women's role in marriage. The so called ‘how come’ questions. For instance ‘how come this relationship is my sole responsibility? How come I have to submit to someone who so thoroughly despises me? How come Todd's infidelities are attributed to me?’

Somewhere deep inside I knew there was more to life than being a doormat for an abusive man, even if he was a man of the cloth” (1999: 4).

That woman may have survived because of her capacity of violence and abuse questioning. Women need, therefore, to be helped to critically question their intimate partners’ behavior and attitudes.

Saint Augustine, in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, brought some changes to the existing theology. For instance he accepted equality of women and men’s souls but continued to reinforce the subordinate condition of women as Ruether shares it,

“Woman’s soul possesses the same potential for redemption as that of man but, male and female bodies, sex and reproduction did not come about through the fall but were part of God’s original design for creation. Thus, subordination of women to men as husband and wife in marriage and reproduction was intended by God from the beginning” (1998:4)

It is interesting to note that the discussion about equality of women and men compounds a significant part of theology development in successive generations of Christian faith. Church’ Fathers spent quality time discussing women’s place and their status in the Church and society in spite of looking to understand God’s will.

For the author, one of the reasons might have been the discovery that women were faithful, disciplined, and very close to God. Men were unable, however, to believe that God accepted these women as redeemed. For that reason they wanted to constantly remind them that in spite of their good behavior, they were sinners so as to continue the oppression.

### **3.3.2. After the Reformation period**

During and after the reformation period, the discussion about women's place in the household continued to occupy and to consume church leader's time. According to Ruether,

“Agrippa argued further that the domination of men over women is neither God's original design for creation nor punishment for female priority on sin, but rather reflects the propensity of men injustice and tyranny” (1998: 5- 6)

Agrippa's argumentation puts it clear that Church' leaders knew very well what their assignment was. However, their maleness and will were superior to Christ' teachings.

Again, Ruether has this to say,

“Christ had reaffirmed equality between men and women but, it was prevented by tyrannical men who have denied women education and participation in cultural and political life and socialized women to accept this situation by training them from childhood to be submissive” (1998: 6).

If men were guided by faith in obedience to the Holy Spirit of God, it was time for them to reflect seriously on that issue. Instead, Church leadership continued it's tortuous, and dangerous 'comfortable believe' that women are inferior creatures. These men feared and were not willing to risk new experiences with God.

The discussion about women and men' roles in the church and society cannot end without bringing Luther and Calvin into it.

These two important figures of Reformation have a say on this issue. Both of them agree that women are inferior creatures and must be ruled by their husbands. They only differ in the way they define the subordinate status.

Luther says,

“When the present historical era of sin and fall is overcome, women will be translated into heaven, where they will share equally in immortal life. But here and now, redemption does not change their lesser status and the basic purpose for being that they were given in creation, nor does it change their more severe disabilities and exclusion from public life that are God’s punishment of them in the fall” (1998:122).

The author question is: What did Christ’ death and resurrection mean for these reformatories?

Calvin, on the other hand, defines gender roles in the following way,

“Woman will be saved equally with man and share equally in eternal life, according to God’s grace renewing her inner equality in the image of God but, this in no way suspends those laws of creation by which woman is subject to the man as long as the temporal order of creation continues” (1998: 126).

For these Reformatories, redemption for women only happens in eschatology. Both Luther and Calvin were survivors of abuse. As already stated in this study, people who abuse others had been also abused sometime in their life. Maybe this is the reason that made them to have a wrong view of God, and to be captive of fear of facing the truth.

The Church' leaders discussions and point of view stated above, have been driving the Church into hell. They may not be attentive to the Scriptures that present God interceding for those who are oppressed and sending them free. (Exodus 3: 17)

### **3.4. Why are women marginalized?**

An attentive reading of both Christian and secular' History shows that women were neglected. Good education was men's privilege. Consequently they did not have the same access to resources as men and their stories were, to a large extent, left out of the recording of human story (Dreyer 2005). To make things worse, both Christian and traditional cultures use double messages that reinforce their captivity.

According to Neuger, women have traditionally been kept in a double – bind situation by double messages from church and culture such as being sad that,

“they are only valuable because of their nurturing and relational capacities; independence or autonomy; at the same time that they are told to have power to destroy lives of men and children and so forth” (2001: 45-46)

Messages like the above make it difficult for a woman to struggle for freedom, to feel healthy and competent.

Traditional patriarchal relations that mandate wives to obey their husbands and to be silent are weapons used by clergy in order to control and oppress women to date. According to Ruether,

“The domination of men over women is in no way God’s original plan for creation or the fruit of female sin but rather reflects the propensity to domination that was and continues to be the primary expression of sin. All forms of human injustice and violence- subordination of women, the enslavement of blacks to white, and war- flow from this basic sinful tendency to domination of some over others” (1998:7)

The author agrees with Ruether because the use of domination, division and discrimination to better reign is widely disseminated. The difference is that women are now more educated and are somehow united against that war. According to Kapuma,

“Women today are conscious of what is happening to them and would like to see change occur” (2002:350)

The above is true as some women are confronting the Church and clergy who are protected by the very structures that oppress them.

Ruether shares an important gathering that brought women together. She writes,

“By the late 1970s, Women theologians began to challenge male theologians about sexism and gender in the Church. They were from Asia, Africa and Latin America. They said” We have to decide for ourselves what feminist theology means for us. It



is not for First World women to tell us how to do it, nor is it for Third World men to tell us it is not our issue” (1998:242)

Since that moment women theologian in Africa never stopped to investigate and to write about problems affecting them as women and as members of the broken body of Christ. The work they have been doing is increasing both in quantity and quality and it is a good and useful source for those who want to challenge clergy’ violence and abuse.

Women in the PCM being part of the African and world women’s movement against VAW, need to affirm their position by actively participating in the struggle for freedom, recognition of their rights, and full participation in private and Church’ events and leadership positions.

### **3.5. Clergy’ wives**

This chapter cannot be complete without mentioning the very ones who inspired the author to research this topic, such as women married to clergy or clergy’ wives.

Clergy’ wives, cheerfully called ‘**yefrou**’ in the PCM, are women married to ministers. The designation ‘yefrou’ one, who is married to clergy, is a heritage from the missionary movement. The missionary wives were called ‘yefrou’ and, as the actual clergy’ wives continue to perform the same roles and activities; they are seen as their substitutes in all aspects.

In their Christian roles, clergy’ wives had blessed and continue to bless the church with their beautiful work among the people they serve. Kapuma has this to say,

“The immense contributions that women have made as educators, caregivers and in their endless sharing of their human and financial resources cannot pass without recognition” (2002:349)

Indeed, many people had become Christians because of the role performed by clergy’ wives in their lifetime. They guided, helped and interceded for these women with deeds and prayer.

### **3.5.1. Clergy’ wives and poverty**

In spite of the above, clergy’ wives are women equal to other women. Exception is that, in the Church and society, they are expected to behave differently and even to have no particular feelings. Maybe they are also supposed to be holy and to relate their sorrows and pain directly to God. Hence, they are required to remain silent in the midst of abuse. It is a must to say that clergy’ wives in the PCM do not have facilities to further their studies and although they work hard, their work is unpaid. According to Neuger,

*“Women are the poorest of the poor” (2001: 18)*

The above can be testified by the fact that clergy’ wives generally do all of the domestic work and lead women’s groups at churches. Both are unpaid labors.

In the two thousand PCM annual Synod, they presented a motion to ask for a humble payment of their work. The proposal was almost to be refused because many voices argued that they did not have qualifications to support their request, hence, they were paid through their husband’s salaries. Examples above show no concern with women.

### **3.5.2. Clergy' wives and self-worth**

As human beings with all necessities and weaknesses, clergy' wives have developed a wrong view of who they are in Christ. Feelings of inferiority, meaninglessness, inadequacy, low self-esteem and fear, have paralyzed their potentialities and sabotaged their Christian service. Once again Poling helps us with that story,

“I was under a minister's spell. The consequence of being controlled by someone else is that you have no goals or inner direction. Secrecy and an unethical man consumed the energy I needed for maturity. (1999: 68)

According to the above quotation, women are prevented to grow, to have goals and to fully enjoy their humaneness. Care givers are therefore invited to identify the roots of violence that cause distress and prevent women from being happy in the society as a whole in order to challenge and change them.

### **3.6. Violence**

The Oxford Dictionary defines violence as,

- A violent behavior that is intended to hurt or kill somebody;
- Intimidation by threat of unlawful exercise of physical force and energy.

(2005: 1642)

Definitions above show a wide range of violent behaviors on which people can be trapped.

The author's duty, however, is to discuss intimate violence among clergy' families.

Intimate violence is the kind of violence that occurs among people who are in a loving relationship. According to Neuger;

“Nowhere are the issues of women’s loss of voice, language and credibility as clear as they are in the dynamics of domestic or intimate violence. We are troubled by the unpredictability of street crime and we worry about being its victim. Yet, for women, the worry is not on the street – it’s in our homes” (2001: 93)

Violence occurs within marriages, the very places where people should enjoy love.

Normally, loving relationships happen in a ‘household’ or family. The family is, therefore, the place where people, especially women and children, dream to live in security. The reality is, however, different. According to Garma,

“Pastoral care providers must recognize the reality that the most violent group to which women and children belong is the family” (1991:127).

The recognition may turn attention to family what, in one hand, can help women who are being abused but, in other hand, can exacerbate the furor of the abusers. Therefore, pastoral care providers must develop their action with diplomacy.

Like other women in church and society, clergy’ wives suffer violence, oppression and abuse from their husbands, as Fortune shares,

“The very people whom they thought they could trust (1999: ix).

The above can be testified by the case study shared by the author in chapter one. The issue of clergy' wives violence and abuse from their husbands must be considered as being a priority if changes are to occur in our churches. Statistics show that women are the poor of the poorer. Acts described above are known as violence. According to Kapuma,

“Violence is an act intended to undermine a woman’s humanity, personality and dignity” (2002:350)

The author, being a woman, feels directly touched by the above and decides to act, help and to show solidarity as Kapuma says,

“Violence is one of major concerns because it retards women’s progress and participation in Church and society. It is time that the Church began to expose all the incidences of violence so that people know exactly what it is all about” (2002:351)

The myth says that violence only happens to bad or immoral women. What a mistake! What can we then say about clergy’ abuse against their wives? In the other hand how can an educated minister be so incompetent on issues of intimate relationships?

### **3.6.1. Mozambican ways of dealing with Violence**

In Chapter one, the author shared some aspects of violence happening within the Mozambican society. These aspects refer only to domestic violence which is the issue of the present study. It is important, however, to remind the reader that Mozambique is a product of a long and blood-bath war of violence between freedom fighters and Portuguese rulers. The actors of that war are still alive. What is worse is that they are passing to the young generation their bad experiences. Violence associated to crime are today’s

the headings of the news on Radio, newspapers and television. Women are the recipients and the most victims of these acts.

Because of the new forms of abuse and violence that occur in Mozambique, there have been different responses to them. One of the ways the population had found is ‘**linchamento**’ which means ‘**lynching**’ as a way of solving the problem. The response begets violence too.

This way of solving problems is strongly condemned. Nevertheless it still occurs.

The Christian community, led by the Christian Council of Churches (CCM) and partners is developing strategies and spreading biblical messages that call for different behavior. The message says: ‘*Chose life*’ and was taken from Deuteronomy 30: 19. This message is not only preached in churches but it is spread and made available in Medias and other ways of publicity. For the author this is a way of showing concern of the grave situation of violence in Mozambique, a call to action and a challenge to leaders in general, care givers and government.

The problem of domestic or intimate violence is not, however, covered nor mentioned by the action above. The author is of the opinion that, if there is will, the Christian community in Mozambique can join hands in the struggle against intimate violence.

### **3.7. Silence and Stigma**

Among other definitions silence is considered to be,

“A complete lack of noise or sound or to make somebody stop expressing opinions that are opposed to yours. (Oxford Dictionary 2005: 1367)

Many scholars' research has shown that women who suffer under domestic violence are urged to keep silent by both intimate partners and Church. These have led many people to mental disorders because, according to Herman,

“Atrocities refuse to be buried” (1992: 1)

The present study is a testimony of the above. The silence imposed to victims of abuse leads to shame and stigma. According to Glaz and Moessner,

“To live with shame is to feel alienated and defeated, never quite good enough to belong. And secretly we feel we are to blame. The deficiency lies within us alone. Shame is without parallel a sickness of the soul!” (1991: 109).

If shame is a sickness of the soul then, it needs to be healed. The healing, however, takes very long to happen. During the period that separates the disease and the treatment, the victim experiences multiple damages like anger, terror, betrayal and rage. Glaz has this to say,

“The process of recovery for women molested as children is lifelong struggle, but healing is possible. A key element in this process is the experience of rebuilding the interpersonal bridge broken by the trauma and its shame. (1991: 115)

The reader can realize how many succumb before healing comes. Again, according to Glaz and Moessner,

“Shame thrives in the control, denial, and secrecy of dysfunctional families. Shame is an inner sense of being completely diminished or insufficient as a person. It is the self judging the self. Shame is more primitive and punitive than guilt” (1991: 112)

For the author, to deal with shame is to enter a world of confusion and conflicts provoked by human ability to destroy another human being. This is reinforced by the facts that people who live with shame feel they are bad as Glaz says:

“With shame the sense is not ‘I have acted badly’ but ‘I am bad.’” (1991:112)

To live in shame means that the victim is experiencing abandonment, isolation, relationships are no safer. In the story shared in chapter one, shame took control of Flora when her family was constantly transferred from one parish to another because of her husband misconduct. She felt somehow responsible for her husband’ infidelities and, as consequence, her health began to deteriorate.

Shame also leads to question God. Why is God allowing this to happen? How can you love God if you do not know what love is? Glaz says,

“The power of shame to undermine the victim’s sense of self, her capacity to love and accept herself, and her capacity for genuinely giving and receiving love seriously, erodes her capacity for religious belief and a healthy spirituality” (1991: 113)



Women married to clergy who are struggling with their husband's abuse and violence; have to be helped in order not to develop shameful feelings that can destroy their self-worth and value before humanity and before God.

### **3.8. Preliminary conclusion**

The Chapter attempted at tracing the routes of clergy abuse and violence since the beginning of the Church. Church' Fathers were the special guests sharing their views about women's place in private and public lives. The Reformation and pos Reformation periods were also invited to share their points of view. It came clear that the issue of violence against women is cultural and can be challenged and changed. What is needed is perseverance.

Apart that, literature review on the issue of violence and abuse of women in the Church was highlighted in order to challenge those who are the perpetrators and to call the victims to refuse to be silent. The Bible was the infallible source.

Chapter four will deal with the realities of violence and abuse faced by clergy' wives in the PCM. This will be done by sharing their stories of pain, mistreatment and humiliation in the Christian homes and Church.

The reader will realize how the plight of women in Church present an awful and sad picture that need to be challenged and changed.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. STORIES OF ABUSE

#### 4.1. She is just a woman

It can not be easy to understand the stories of abuse of women by clergyman in churches without having a glance on how their life is in the society as a whole is lived. Women in Mozambique grew up hearing that ‘wansati ihuku ya kukhomela vayeni’, a Ronga saying literally meaning ‘a woman is a chicken to feed visitors’. Those who create and feed chickens know that a chicken belongs to any cock that live in and out of the chicken coop. As a result they are controlled by the cock.

The above popular saying means that a woman’s body belongs to everyone. Hence, the patriarchal system of domination, oppression, violence and abuse of women is well tolerated by the society. Women are thus prevented of being independent individuals, and as a result they are not able to have self steam. According to Neuger,

“Woman’s body is the sexual object featured in advertisements and pornography”  
(2001: 45)

The above two designations of women’s bodies, are good examples testifying the widespread conspiracy about women.

Until recently, when in presence of issues that demanded action, women in the PCM who were willing to share their vision, were prevented by being told that they are women and, therefore, could not share their stories without permission. Women who accept that they are only women may believe in an

image of woman created by culture and an image of God created by men for themselves. According to Fiorenza,

“In the service of patriarchy educated men, consciously or not, have allocated to women all the qualities they do not value in themselves, like:

‘Men are intellectual, assertive, logical, active, strong, born leaders, competent, while women are emotional, intuitive, passive, gossipy, submissive, self-sacrificing, silly, etc’.”(1993:264-265)

In such society, a woman is not expected to study, to work outside home, to participate in decision making discussions, to be a leader, in short, to do meaningful things that make her participate with man in society.

The letter to I timothy reinforce the women’s secondary status in creation, primacy in sin and belief that she should keep quiet (2:11-15). These Scriptures as cited above are not Good News to women because they subject them to a secondary position.

Isabel Phiri shares a story of a woman who was called into Ministry at twenty seven and was only ordained at seventy three. She says,

“The issue of ordination becomes controversial when a person is denied access to that ministry on the basis of gender. This was the case with Victory. Even after her ordination the Church continued to discriminate her by not paying her, due to her age.”(2002: 135)

Examples above show that in both traditional and Christian cultures, men are men and women are women. When happens that a woman struggles to be somebody, she is called a man and she has to know that she will be isolated

and hated by men as well as other women because they believe in culture that suppress her.

Clergy' wives also come from such background. Very often they are taught that to be a minister's wife means to labor without being paid as Phiri writes, "Victory learnt from her mother what it means to be a minister's wife. You become unpaid labor for the church. (2002: 136)

Interviews conducted by the author showed that the above is a reality in many of our churches. Not only clergy' wives are not paid but also other women who are working hard succeed to have salary that correspond to the kind of the job and qualifications they have.

The reality is that, whether in marriage, work places and in the Church, women are generally seen and treated as objects or propriety. This is what destroy and make them cry to the Lord for help.

In this Chapter, interviews will be conducted with both women and men in the PCM in order to enable them to share their stories of pain, humiliation, oppression, violence and abuse.

The author believes that these stories and experiences will touch and challenge other women as they listen to them. As the process of listening develops, the sense of belonging will unite and urge them to struggle together, to break the silence and to take action. They will do this only when they begin to question behaviors, beliefs and systems that perpetuate abuse and violence.

They will discover that silence is one of the ways of collaborating with the oppressive system. The new reality will help them to stand up in order to change the negative behavior. The goal is to develop a theory of praxis that can empower women and men so as to be able to challenge and transform the prevailing situation.

#### **4.2. Alleviating our people's distresses**

“We saw them in the act, but we could not hold the man; he was too strong for us, he opened the door and got clean away. We seized the woman and asked who the young man was, but she would not tell us. Because they were elders of the people and judges, the assembly believed them and condemned her to death” (Daniel and Susanna Apocrypha 150: 39-41)

Women in the PCM have experienced and suffered injustices and lies from the powerful like the ones mentioned in the biblical passage above. Attitudes like these affect people and the whole body of Christ in our churches.

In bringing women's stories, the author aims at vindicating their innocence by removing the fear of disclosing the abuse and violence inflicted on them by male clergy. Women have to be empowered in such a way that will enable them to analyze and ask questions concerning the situation they experience in their daily lives.

Care givers are thus, called to stay on the side of the oppressed so as to free them from fear and encourage them, taking the first steps towards breaking

the silence. This process is believed to be a half way to healing as Dreyer, Vos and Muller, say,

*“The most important way of dealing with suffering is telling the story” (2005: 22)*

Women and men in the PCM will, therefore, share their stories as being the first step in developing an atmosphere of trust which will make the healing process a reality. Doing research on male clergy violence against their spouses in the PCM will reveal the hidden face of violence that forces many people to live in a shameful silence and inequalities of relationships in the household.

#### **4.2.1. The reality of Violence and Abuse**

The first thing the author did in order to enter to the reality of violence and abuse of clergy’ wives in the PCM were to structure the questionnaires Questions to different people and groups were asked. The researcher found the process to be helpful as they have different interpretation depending on where the person stands. (See appendix A for questions asked)

Secondly, the researcher opted for personal interviews but, as the process developed, she found it helpful to interview groups in order to clarify some concepts that came up as well. During the process it became clear that the questionnaires were only a guide to women who are violated by men.

Because of this, issues that were not included in the questionnaire were discussed. The reality reached during the interviews urged the author to

include other people belonging to other churches. Their participation helps to affirm that,

“The issue of male clergy violence and abuse against their spouses is real, widespread and needs an intervention”.

During the process, other areas which require our attention were identified.

Thirdly, the author assured the respondents that their names will not be mentioned in the study as a way of protecting them and to respect ethics principles. Finally, after each stage, the author drew a table highlighting the differences and relevance of the answers given.

#### **4.2.2. The characteristics of respondents**

Four groups of potential respondents were identified in order to deal with the issue of clergy’ wives abuse and violence by their husbands. These groups are:

- Lay’ women in the Church
- Clergy’ wives
- Male and female Clergy
- Health providers and the police

The total number of people who were interviewed was sixteen, categorized in the following ways:

- (i) Individual interviews

These included:

- Two lay women,
- Three clergy’ wives,

- Two male and one female minister
  - One medical doctor and one police representing the police and other stakeholders.
  - One clergy' wife, one lay woman and one male minister belonging to other Christian churches within the country.
- (ii) Collective interviews
- Group of three clergy' wives.

Interviews were conducted between the end of June and August 2007.

Most of the interviews were done twice but, one of the clergy' wives was interviewed three times as, she become very emotional and could not continue during the first and second interviews. The initiative to continue with the interviews always came from her side.

The interviews always took two to three hours and ended with a prayer followed by a coup of tea in an atmosphere of liberation and hope.

The ages of those interviewed were between thirty seven and seventy six years of age. Their academic standard was low as only two had entered secondary level education.

Two thirds of the total of women interviewed (ten women interviewed excluding the medical doctor) had enough ego resources and psychological schemas to pullout of the oppressive situation. The other third part was constituted by women who showed having typical post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The author understood that it was necessary to pay more



attention to these women. She decided to accompany them by inviting them to a weekly' talk encounters. They begin by singing, and then they comment on whatever it comes to mind. The experience is still in process but, what is encouraging, is the fact that other women joined the group.

All the women interviewed indicated having experienced two or more kinds of violence and abuse in their life time.

Their first attitudes and answers showed a belief in a system that influenced them to remain silent. However, after clarification of the issues, they were ready to collaborate in addressing it. With those who were reluctant, the author had to be very attentive and worked hard in order to separate problems and persons, in order to be able to help them disclose their intimate situations.

In order to share these stories in this thesis, the author opted of choosing one of the most relevant story told in each group of the interviewed people. Other stories were inserted in the summary of the questionnaire' table responses.

At each stage, the author begins by introducing the topic in general terms, for instance, by bringing examples of Mozambican women daily experiences of violence. Then, ask them to connect with these experiences, what allowed them to share their stories.

### 4.3. The Findings

#### 4.3.1. Women’s enemies

In this section women and men will tell their stories. According to Methuen,

“The process of telling ones’ own story is central to defining and holding onto identity is recognized by all therapies which are based upon the client’s story” (2000: 53).

The following are, therefore, stories heard in the interviews carried out by the author.

**TABLE 1** Analyzes question number one which was the same for all groups.

**Mozambique has a New Family Law published in August 2004 whose article one number two says:**

**The family constitutes the privileged space in which the personality of its members are created, developed and consolidated and where the dialogue and mutual support have to be cultivated.**

**Which is your response to this?**

<b>Response of Lay women</b>	For them, the New Family Law is a good starting point in finding solutions that can minimize harm especially to women and children but, there are aspects which were not covered.
<b>Clergy’ wives</b>	They heard about it but they do not know what it is about.
<b>Ministers</b>	Some know about it, other had only heard of it. Those who knew found it controversial in some aspects and were willing to better understand it as to be able to make a good analyzes.
<b>Medical doctor</b>	Welcomes it but needs to be ameliorated
<b>Police</b>	Good effort but it does not cover all aspects that affect family’ relationships.

Retina (not real name) is one of the lay women who were interviewed. Retina is a coordinate of women's group in five congregations. To the questions directed to that group she related the following Nhembeti' story:

### **Nyembeti' story**

Nyembeti, (not real name) forty six, is a clergy' wife who served in my parish for six years. She was a very quiet woman but, soon, I realized that she was suffering from violence and abuse a lot. For instance, she had problems with her teeth. I volunteered to accompany her to the hospital. Before we left she took time to come to my place in order to share her story thus saying,

'The problems I have with my teeth are a result of a lot of beating from my pastor, who is my husband. He beats me but I don't know why. He comes home late and already angry. He accuses me of not being able to understand the kind of job and responsibility he has. Sometimes he beats me, and at times he ignores me for months. I thought It would be better for you to get this from me. Please don't allow the person in hospital to ask me questions because I do not want to share it with other people'.

From that day I came to understand that Nyembeti and her husband' relationship was full of violence and abuse. Apart of being beaten she didn't have money to provide food and other basic needs to their children. This was the beginning of sharing and disclosing pain in her life.

To help solve the situation, I told her to go to my market - stall to pick what she needed free of charge. One day we were told that our minister was moved to another parish. We did not even have time to say good bye to their

family. Later, we came to know that our pastor was sexually involved with a young girl in our Parish.

The second incident will help us to understand what women married to clergy go through.

In order to better understand what is happening with clergy' wives within their marriage and the church, the author took time to dialogue with Retina (not real name) the one who told the author the above story. She continued,

“Pastors are abusing their wives including other women. For instance they are destroying other women's dreams and life. Some of these women enjoy the situation but others are coerced and forced to keep silent through threats of violence, especially if they would share the story with someone. They collaborate because they fear to be dismissed. Those who enjoy the situation buy cloths for the minister and sometimes put the minister's wife in ridicule situation. For example, they use to say that, if you are not able to take care of your husband we will do it better. In such situations the minister's wife remains silent because she believes she is protecting her husband, his job and position and their marriage.

Nyembeti's beating was aimed at preventing her from seeing that her husband was having affairs with young women's in the church.

As Christians' members of congregation, we are sometimes able to see what is happening. But how can we intervene in our leaders problems? There is no room for us to help because we are regarded as lay people. The only thing we try to do is to sensitize these women to whom the pastor has affairs with, but as I already mentioned before, they are proud of being loved and enjoy having sex with the pastor. To them is a point of being viewed as important.

The church' leadership is wrong in transferring the minister's family to another parish because they do not solve the problem caused by the minister; actually they participate in high abusing other women. The minister has to be called to account for his deed because he had misused God's flock'. If he persists, he had to be denounced, suspended and if necessary, expelled from ministry.

The Church has the responsibility of caring for these women. Maybe clergy' wives themselves have to choose those who can play the role of counseling among them. They also need training and why not knowledge that can allow them to work and get paid. Very often they are embarrassed because they do not know what to do. The community needs to be educated as well in these issues of abuse and violence. For instance it has to be taught to respect their leaders by constantly showing the danger of occulting situations that end up in violence in churches and family's discredit and destruction".

The following story by Dorothy summarizes clergy' wives responses to the questions asked.

### **Dorothy' story**

Dorothy, (not real name) seventy six, is a wife of clergy who participated in the interview and shared the following story,

"I grew up in the church and I was a member of the Church' choir. I got married at the age of twenty two. Soon there after, I realized that the man was not dedicated to prayer and worship use as I was. I asked him to pray with me each morning but he told me that it is not a good practice because a prayer has to be done with purpose. So, I used to pray alone. From our marriage were born two boys and three girls. My husband told me latter that he decided to marry me because of my beautiful voice. I realized latter that he also loved other women who had beautiful voices. This was the beginning of a situation that almost destroyed our lives and relationship.

He began going out frequently in the evenings. He used to say that he was writing a book and needed quite place to do so. Sometimes he would come back home smelling alcohol and once with the shirt inside out. As we had already developed a suspicion climate, I only told him to look to his shirt. He became choleric and told me that I was supposed to be sleeping. He then jumped to our bed and forced me to have sex. He did it brutally, slept over me and he began to snore. I had to push him and I went to take a shower as I was feeling dirty. Since that day things grew from bad to worse.

He expected me to obey him and to do his will without me questioning. He did not allow me to have a say in sex matters. Once, I took courage to ask him if his father or elder brothers taught him what sex was about and he said no.

One day he decided to leave home. But before leaving, he did everything to make me feel guilty by the deterioration of our relationships in our marriage. When the church' leadership realized what was happening, they suspended him. All the time he was out of the home, no one in the church' leadership showed concern over me. My parents and brothers provided food, money and other necessities for me and for our children. Without qualifications that could allow me to work, I accepted an offer to sell fruits in the local market. The interaction with different people helped me a lot to understand other women's reality. I decided to go back to school in the evenings. I did well, passed and I found a job. With the money I earned, I built a house where we are staying at the present moment.

After ten years my husband decided to come back home. I could see that he was destroyed and needed to be understood. I welcomed him back because he is the father of my children and also to have some one by my side. However, the way he treats me did not change. For instance, he forbids me to join women's fellowship, to contribute financially to the work of the church. I took courage to tell him that my faith to God is my private affair and that he has no rights to prevent me from doing what I want in the Church. In spite of this character, he was welcomed in the

Church and was given work in an office until his retirement. The Church always protects its own clergy.

What made me to fail when the situation deteriorated was lack of support and counseling. I prayed a lot but, it did not work for me because I needed him and he was not available. This made me to accumulate a grudge against him and with the passing of time, I started hating sex. When I approached one of the ministers' wives whom I thought could help, she urged me to remain in the relationship saying this was the destiny of all women. She also told me not to question the presence of women in my husband's office no matter how much time they spend there: **'that is the biggest secret pastors' wives have to hide'**; pray, and God will help you, she added. This response confused me. She added on Ephesians 5 'wives obey your husbands'.

My advice to you is to better prepare young people (girls and boys) for marriage, to enter it with conscience. They also have to know how to proceed and whom to trust when difficulties arise and in case of abuse and violence.

Clergy' wives need to be empowered as people and, as well as clergy' wives. They need to be able to help their husbands and to deal with other women's difficulties in their marriages. Women who seek our counseling do it in order to resolve their faith problems generally linked to demons. I believe that women can form groups for mutual counseling and support but, this call for confidence and trust among them. Our husbands have secrets with the community and we just stay isolated in the corner. The main problem is that, people will not believe when we share what they do.

These women go to the male clergy for counseling because they are told that they are the ones working in the church. When they work with those women in the office, they ask us to prepare tea for them. Those women feel more important and do everything to show to you that they are important. That behavior makes our

husbands to be vulnerable and to despise their spouses. The Church is very bad for single or independent women. For instance, if women are powerful and do not want to be involved with men, they are called lesbians. They are stigmatized and discriminated against. Generally they end up in a different congregation as a way of avoiding to be called lesbians. The Church has to stop treating women as objects. Transferring pastors from one place to another is very wrong way of solving abuse. They need to be helped because they are human beings prone to fail. They also need a better ministerial formation. They have to be well paid as well as their wives and have good houses and atmosphere that will uplift their image”.

**TABLE 2 Clergy’ wives enemies**

<b>Violence and abuse over them from their husbands</b>	<b>Physical violence</b> most characterized by battering. <b>Psychological violence</b> characterized by insults, humiliations in public sphere and a high sense of inadequacy. <b>Spiritual violence</b> by being prevented to undertake significant roles in the church and by being told that are sinners who need to repent. <b>Economical violence</b> by not being paid or given money for personal needs and to rule the household. <b>Sexual violence</b> by being refused sex, violated, raped and by the infidelity and abandonment from their husbands.
<b>Violence and abuse over them from other women</b>	They are deceived, betrayed, made fun of, discriminated and stigmatized
<b>Violence and abuse over them from the community</b>	Not recognized as workers of the church, discrimination
<b>Their advices to all</b>	Be recognized as being partners of their husbands in the household and in the work of God. Being given better education, formation,



	salary and houses
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### **Antonio's story**

Antonio, (not real name) 62, is a Church leader. He tells his story in the first person,

I grew up in a rural area and was the fourth's son of my parents. We lived near a church which allowed me to be in contact with its teachings at an early age. At home no one was interested with the church and nobody cared for what I was doing. When I was seventeen I told my parents that I wanted to be baptized. This was the beginning of my calling to the Ministry of God's Word. With the help and support of Swiss missionaries I enrolled in various responsibilities before I was sent to study Theology. Within the second year of my studies I was advised and told to get married. As I was shy, the elder's chose a girl for me and from that marriage three boys were born.

In the first parish we served, we faced many challenges. The first challenge was to deal with women who were always ready to help especially with domestic affairs. My wife was embarrassed but at the same time she did not want to send them away, as she feared to hurt them. Later, we came to realize that we should have acted strongly against these women's presence in our house. They wanted to show that were better informed and skilled than my wife. This made us to suffer a lot emotionally. I did not know what to do. One day I asked for advice from a colleague. He laughed and told me that the Church leadership had sent me to that place in order to test me because many pastors fail there. I was terrified and I asked to be transferred. That experience helps me to affirm that there are women who like to see pastors down for failing and take advantage of that situation maybe with the support of churches leadership.

The second challenge came with the transference to another congregation. We were supposed to be moved and leave our sons unattended to parental, other adults in family or in Church responsibility. The Church takes a pastor as one who does not

have to be attached to his children. How can we be good shepherds of other's sons if ours are abandoned and in disgrace?

During all my life as a minister I went through many temptations, and some times I failed. My failures were due to my deficient training to the ministry and lack of updating workshops. What helped me is my wife' support, confidence and prayers. I have colleagues who are destroyed because their spouses talk a lot for example, by proclaiming that their husbands are unfaithful.

When ministers fail they have to be transferred because they have lost credibility in that parish. As a way of reestablishing peace they are transferred to another place. However, they need to be called to accountability. The biggest problem lies with our church members who do not tell us the truth. The notion of sin they have is very weak for example, when we came to know what really happed it is always very late. The pastor can scandalize the family and the church and at that time the communities remain silent because they do not take it as a sin. With the transference of the clergy the sin is also transferred. The remedy is to deal with the issue and the nature of the sin and not to hide the offender.

Clergy' wives need to be informed and educated as responsible members of the community by the Church. They have to be good friends and counselors of their husbands. Many clergy' households are destroyed by clergy' wives themselves who go out proclaiming that their husbands have concubines. Sometimes the pastor has nothing to do with these women but, his wife is not honest and destroys him.

They have also to be advised against cultural taboos which prevent them from having healthy sexual relationships. Their Christian faith has to be solid. Their empowerments have to be done by other women with recognized capacity and character. They have also to be taught how to care for their children and to be trained in other scientific domains.

Pastors and their spouses need to be loved, cared for and to be well trained. As leaders, it hurts us a lot when one of us fails.

Clergy have to leave in good houses, have transport and be sure to be paid once retired.

**TABLE 3 Highlights problems of male clergy**

<b>To be successful in the ministry they need</b>	Calling, education; good ministerial formation; updating workshops; good, gifted and honest wives
<b>The general problems of the communities they serve</b>	Lack of notions of sin and the shameful and complacent silence
<b>Difficulties of Church' leadership</b>	Lack of vision; acts and decisions driven by hate and discrimination; biased notions of discipleship
<b>Problems faced by male clergy</b>	To deal with areas not covered by the curriculum; To deal with women's exhibitions to the pastor
<b>What the Church should do</b>	Educate and empower women, men and youth with solid Christian bases and other areas of formation and training. See sexual education of boys and girls as one of the priorities. Guaranty worker's payment when retired

The interviews were also done to health providers. Teresa, (not real name) a medical doctor to whom the author interviewed, sad that,

“Women generally do not disclose the aggression”. This is also affirmed by Ellsberg and Heise and Masango, (2005:26; 2006: 6).

They use to say that they were attacked in the streets very soon in the morning while going or coming back from work. When we show the incongruence of their

declarations and we help them to be aware of their situation in the absence of their husbands, they agree that were battered by their husbands or partners.

In such cases they share incredible stories of abuse and violence that they are victims. That beating, rape and intimidation are always used by man to perpetuate the abuse and to force them to stay in the relationship. The fears to loose children, economy constraint, to be ridiculed and condemned by the society are the main causes that prevent them to speak out and leave the violent partner. The other problem is that no one will believe them. She added that the most common cases of sexual abuse are infringed to children aged five to nine years old.

Mothers take their children to the doctor suffering from sexual transmitted diseases, (leucorrhoea, and ardor when urinating) but they never disclose who the perpetrator is. They only do it if the perpetrator is a stranger. We came to know that the authors are their fathers, uncles, brothers or other relatives in the psychotherapy consultation. There, doctors chat with the traumatized children, show them a mix of drawings to ask which kind of thing hurt them. When they see a penis drawing they became afraid and cry saying 'it is like my fathers' toy'. Only that time we know who the abuser was.

These are men who belong to the medium or superior status in the society. HIV positive people believe that when having sex with a virgin they will be healed. As a result of the above, the abuse continues with small children. Rural men only do it when stimulated by witch doctors with the aim to become rich.

Makita, the police who provided me the information, said the following,

“We have few cases of violence and abuse of women reported to the police. Women always defend the aggressor if is a husband or partner. They fear to be driven out of the house and even to be killed. They also have a belief that family matters are not to be revealed to strangers. They prefer to report to family members or to the traditional and religious leaders.

When they report the aggression, the offender is unknown or is a former partner. Generally women do not know their rights and, when they accept having been attacked, they believe it was their fault. The abuse is perpetuated by the lack of clear definitions of women's rights. The society does not see sexual abuse within the marriage as crime. Women who seek our help rarely link the sexual violation with the contamination of HIV”.

She ended the interview by reminding the author that there is a serious work to be done to young people by the Church and women's associations.

#### **4.3.2. Preliminary Conclusion**

Chapter four was dedicated to stories of violence and abuse over clergy' wives in the PCM.

The interview highlighted that both traditional and Christian cultures contribute to holding back the process of change that women can undertake. Inequalities between men and women are reinforced by literary interpretation of Holy Scriptures that affirm secondary status of women and their primacy on sin, driving men to be favored in decision's taking while women have to wait for ever.

Despite the above, significant changes and behaviors are becoming a reality. Women are no more passive victims of the patriarchal system of oppression. Dorothy' story is a typical example on how women can challenge an abusive relationship and church, can further their education, gain individual independence and self-esteem.

Chapter five will theologically analyze the revelations and behaviors disclosed in the above stories. Pastoral care that will lead to healing and transformation will be the focus.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### 5. THEOLOGICAL TEACHING ON PASTORAL CARE

*“We have become a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and derision to those who are around us. How long Lord?” (Ps 79: 4- 5a)*

The above Scriptures’ passage is a cry of the oppressed, marginalized, rejected, traumatized and victims of abuse and violence. It is a cry of those whose lives were destroyed by the power of the powerful or by the power of evil. It is a cry that calls for understanding, protection, forgiveness, love, guidance, counseling and care. It is also a prayer, because the pain caused by other is directed to God, calling for His intervention but, at the same time, questioning His justice and love.

The book of Psalms and Job, are both full of questions on the issue of suffering. That is a clear indication that suffering has been part of human life through the ages. People are therefore supposed to learn how to leave and survive in the midst of suffering. This needs courage. Paul Tillich calls it the courage to be,

“The courage to be is the ethical act in which **people** affirm **their** own being in spite of those elements of **their** existence which conflict with **their** essential self-affirmation ” (1965: 3) (The bold is the author’ emphasis)

The above means that people, who refuse to “die” or to disappear in the midst of humiliation and exclusion, are courageous.

Clergy' wives in the PCM need courage that can help them to affirm their being and self-esteem in the midst of discouragement, oppression, violence and abuse.

This chapter will focus on Pastoral Care which is the task of care givers to the individual person and communities. The aim is to understand the capacity of evil in human life and relationships towards developing a new theory of praxis which will liberate and empower the oppressed women.

According to Means,

“Caregivers cannot do this work without being willing to listen and be instructed by those who seek help from them” (2000: 103).

Such work has to be done in partnership with other stakeholders because it is a quest for justice, meaning that the church should be able to lobby accordingly.

Mozambicans in the PCM, especially those engaged in pastoral care and counseling, need to develop skills that will make them accepted by those who are struggling with evil. The PCM has, therefore, to work hard in order to reestablish confidence and harmony between clergy and their wives; between church leadership and the community and vice-versa.

According to Gerkin, care givers are privileged because they journey with people in their distresses and joys, moreover, they can give support and touch in the right moment. This is what Gerkin has to say in this regard,

“The arena of pastoral work is multifaceted and full of surprises, unexpected problems, and opportunities for profound insight into the human situation. It is arena within which the pastor is privileged to be with people where they live and



breathe, succeed and fail, relate intimately and experience alienation. It is the down – to – earth world of human living” (1997: 11)

Care givers are therefore challenged to do their work in such a way that will liberate and enable both ‘the care giver and the help seeker’, to develop a healthy relationship that will lead to healing and transformation to the society. Gerkin’s statement challenges clergy to work with the oppressed by becoming a voice of the voiceless.

## **5.1. Women are multi - traumatized**

### **5.1.1. Trauma caused by Socio - Cultural and Christian traditions**

Women’s life is multi-traumatized as evidenced by stories shared in the previous chapter. Trauma results from unexpected harm, injury, threat and other event usually caused to people by trusted and or closer personalities, institutions or environment. In the present case, clergy’ wives trauma results not only from their husband’s attitudes and behavior but also from the socio cultural and Christian environment from which they come.

Traditional and Christian cultures for example, teach women to be submissive. Christian’ teachings which support such situations are failing to proclaim God’s love and commandments. For example, Ephesians is emphasized a lot and the issue of subordination is at the forefront of preaching. However, the book of Genesis ordered both man and woman to have responsible dominion over the rest of creation and to share everything that God created form them (1: 27-31)

The above quotation is a foundation of healthy relationships God intended to his people. Love, cooperation, support and accountability in all spheres of life are the visible, tangible, understandable God's teaching in that passage. According to Gerkin, pastoral care has multidimensional nature thus, calling the care givers to care for individuals, families, community and culture. He says,

“The issue is contained in quadrilateral schema: care of individuals, care for the community, care for the tradition and care of the culture” (1997: 119).

Therefore, care givers have the task not only to look after individuals and families but also to challenge traditional and Christian teachings about women. Holy Scriptures show that God never blessed oppression especially that practiced for men and religion over women. Passages like Luke 13: 11-17; John 8: 1-11; 20: 1-18 and others confirm and testify God's concern over the oppressed.

The challenge has to be directed to Christians especially because they are the ones who know that their life is God's gift, who also know that they live under God's grace and protection. According to Bonhoeffer, God's grace does not free people from doing evil. He says,

“It is a fatal misunderstanding of Luther's action to suppose that his rediscovery of the gospel of pure grace offered a general dispensation from obedience to the command of Jesus, or that it was the great discovery of the Reformation that God's forgiving grace automatically conferred upon the world both righteousness and holiness” (1954: 42)

The above statement calls for pastors as leaders of God's flock to live in a disciplined way and to follow Jesus' examples. Pastoral care givers have to share a converting and transforming grace evidenced by the service they

lead. God's grace has to drive them to other people. Only cultural sensitive care givers will be successful in their work. Positive changes enable the community to do no more harm to women or, at least, will drive people to initiate the process of peace building.

### **5.1.2. Trauma Caused By Negative and Destructive Beliefs**

The second aspect that came out during the interviews with wives who are worried to pastors is the concern with beliefs nurtured by tradition. Those beliefs are reinforced by the use of popular proverbs without scrutinizing their meanings. For instance the proverb that says '**Xihlungwa xipfalela xihundla xamuti**' meaning '**the ceiling hides the family**' secrets', (this was emphasized strongly in chapter one), reinforce the necessity to hide whatever happens to women in private life. Other '**Ronga**' proverb says '**a mhaka a yi boli**' meaning '**a problem never putrefy**'.

These two proverbs are controversial. While the first calls for silence, the second alerts that the harm we do to others remains until we deal with it. Both proverbs are commonly used by both Christians and traditional cultures in Mozambique. Women naively believe on them. They do not have the capacity to analyze the bad consequences caused by their usage thus; they accept the tyranny of private life. Clergy' wives in the PCM have to be empowered in order to be able to read 'between the lines', so as to correctly interpret popular sayings that reinforce their subordination and oppression. This is what Dreyer further explain when she says,

"People need to be guided not to accept cultural explanations uncritically, but to interpret their own suffering independently and creatively" (2005: 22)

In my home language, **Ronga**, the above is interpreted by the saying: ‘**Nyoka yo yi vona a yi lumi**’ meaning ‘when you see a snake, it cannot bite you’. This reinforces the author suggestion that women have to be empowered in order to be able to correctly interpret popular sayings and therefore learn to deal with the abusive men by breaking the silence. There are several ways of empowering them. One way is throughout group therapy which is the most suitable system that can bring about changes as Herman says,

“The creation of a privileged space made it possible for women to overcome the barriers of denial, secrecy, and shame that prevented them from naming their injuries” (1992: 28)

The empowerment done in privileged spaces will open these women’ ‘eyes’ thus, enabling them to gain conscience of what is happening in their midst.

The author is reminded of Mary, the mother of Jesus, who was very fortunate when she sang,

“He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly” (Luke 1:52)

Mary was not calling for revenge but she was putting in evidence that God is calling recognition that women like men, are full human beings. Mary’s song teaches the humanity that the last, least and sinners had attained God’s primacy grace by being the first to know His salvific’ plans for the humanity.

Fiorenza compares the above process with ‘the child-slave place’ and she says,

“The child/slave who occupies the lowest place within the patriarchal structures becomes the primary paradigm for the true discipleship-community. Such true

discipleship is not measured on the father/master position but on that of the child/slave” (1993: 220).

The above quotation means that those who reject the use of power and oppression as their way to submit others have God’s primacy choice.

The PCM is called to openly; clearly and contextually begin to change its negative behavior of protecting male clergy and it needs to challenge its structures of oppression and domination and to take a new direction to liberation. Clergy’ wives and community will become agents of transformation if well empowered.

### **5.1.3. Trauma Caused by Atrocities**

“You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt.22: 39)

Christians in the PCM know the above commandment. The biggest problem lies on understanding its meaning which is the pre-condition to use it well. Women’s stories and their low self-esteem are a proof of that misunderstanding. For instance their stories revealed a high level of insecurity.

Analyzing Nyembeti’ story when she asked Retina not to reveal the causes of her infirmities to the doctor, we can discover that the major cause of her insecurity and low self esteem were beatings; not being able to understand what her husband expected from her; high level of economic dependence; lack of acceptance and respect from others; her self concept of herself;

captivity; shame; guilt and lack of purpose in life. In the other hand, Dorothy' story highlighted infidelity and sexual abuse. In such situations, it was very hard for these women to try taking risks. Some of the women had developed unrealistic self-concept. This can be compared to the infirmities that worried the man in the passage of the gospel of John (5: 1-9).

Jesus teaches us to love our neighbors as ourselves. Here, we come first. If women have negative images about their bodies, their abilities or who they are in society, it will be hard for them to be motivated and to be liberated from their traumatic situation. According to Herman,

“Trauma robs the victim of sense of power and control; the guiding principle of recovery is to restore power and control to the survivor” (1992: 159)

The author agrees with Herman as self esteem help people to appreciate their particular gifts, to relate to others and with God.

In the PCM Clergy' wives have to be shown how important they are as women, wives, mothers of their biological and no biological children, the relevance and good impact of their work in community and how they can use their skills to go forward. Surely they will become more encouraged and proud and be willing to gain independence.

As we could see, these women' enemies had many faces. The ability of a care giver lies on the capacity of helping the survivor to identify them. Survivors can be confronted with their own faults or mistakes. In such cases, they have to learn how to correct them. When Jesus always asked his help seekers what they needed him to do, He forced them to look inside themselves and to be honest. (Mc 10: 51; Luke 17: 17-19).

Means develops his opinion it in the following way,

“The prophets fulfilled their call in a fashion that clearly, firmly, passionately, and lovingly held people accountable for what they did and did not do at the individual and community level. They directed people to look into themselves for what was in need of correction, rather than supporting and reinforcing the natural tendency to project blame onto others or project into others those aspects of themselves they considered most unacceptable and wished to be rid of” (2000: 161).

The above quotation invites care givers help people to be introspective.

The process leading to healing and transformation is long and calls for faith in God. Elias was frightened by Jezebel and decided to run away leaving God’s people vulnerable to the enemy. God prevented him from fleeing by sending an angel to touch him, to ask him to stand up and by giving him food. (I Kings 19: 5-7). People, who are fearful, lonely and hungry, will hardly have courage to take the bull by its horns. Like Elias, ministers and the community in the PCM need empowerment, encouragement and revitalizing of their faith in God as to be able to care for the God’s flock.

#### **5.1.4. Trauma Caused by Misinterpretation of Holy Scriptures**

Women stories also revealed atrocities due to the use of biblical passages such as I Timothy 2:9-15. These have been used in order to exacerbate guilt as a way of influencing them to stay in an abusive relationship. They have been used to oppress instead of offering salvation and healing. The author is not advocating for divorce, to the contrary, she is saying that Jesus resurrection means that our wounds cannot prevent us to march on in our lives. This is affirmed by Dreyer and Jürgen Moltmann’ that,

“In Jesus, God took death into God- self in order to conquer it” (2005: 24)

The above quotation means that the task of care givers is to help people to see God's presence, comfort, support and guidance in their distresses.

Clergy's deficient ministerial formation may be one of the reasons impelling them to quote Scriptures that intensify shame, guilt and anxiety. In their role as leaders of God's flock, clergy have to be trained to prioritize spiritual values such as justice, compassion, hope, love, forgiveness and reconciliation. By teaching these values, they will be liberating people from the bondage of guilt, shame, meaninglessness and fear. Mugambi states that,

“In the African context and in the Bible, salvation, as a theological concept, cannot be complete without liberation” (1989: 12)

Mugambi's statement shows that Clergy's training and education become a crucial issue if Christianity has to heal and liberate Mozambican people. It does not mean that clergy are not trained or educated but, it means that education and training can be done in such a way that it drives the trainee to do no more harm to God's flock. Again, Mugambi has this to say,

*“To talk of education for liberation is to imply that there can be education against liberation. It is to imply also that education is not always a positive force in society” (1989: 104)*

To avoid misunderstanding and frustration, clergy in the PCM has to ask themselves what type of theology they teach. The way they facilitate the processes of liberation leading to healing and transformation will show the kind of their theology.



The book of Exodus shares an Israelite experience of liberation from their situation of slaves in Egypt, to the victorious conquests of their own identity in a new promised land.

Mozambican people and clergy' wives in the PCM need to be educated to free themselves from the bondage of violence and abuse caused by the misinterpretation of Scriptures as well as some clergy who abuse their wives.

## **5.2. The Challenge to live under two Authorities**

“Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God” (Rm. 13: 1)

Interviews done by the author in the previous chapter also highlighted ministers' lack of information in important matters such as Laws or decisions undertaken by the government. For ministers to be relevant in the community, they have to be well informed. Christians are citizens in a particular country and have to know how to live and make difference in that particular country. The minister is the one who have to translate those laws, decisions to the community in a language people can understand.

Women and men in the PCM as Mozambican' citizens, have to be taught how to live in harmony under God's and government authorities. Hence, ministers have to pray for their governments so that they continue to be accountable to the people.

When well informed, ministers will be enabled to do critical exegeses of what happens within the church and society as a whole. Gerkin has this to say,

“As interpretive guide, the pastor stands in the center of that dialogue while remaining open to the possibility of reinterpretation and new insight” (1997: 126).

The above will not be possible without having the necessary knowledge of the burning and important issues happening within the country.

### **5.3. Walking Out of the Valley of the Shadow of Death**

There are those who never show the harm caused to them. They continue living their life as if nothing had happened. They can participate in public events, do their work, and chat with everyone as a way to hide or forget their trauma. Do the above work? Experience proves that this does not work. Along their lives they will have to face post traumatic stress disorder. The reader will recall how women will kill their husbands, especially when anger bus out.

Study cases shared in chapter four showed that women as well as men were severely hurt and threatened by the situations they were caught up in. Their integrity and wholeness were destroyed. They had wounds that needed healing. According to the Psalmist, they have walked through the valley of the shadow of death. (Ps. 23:4) There come a time when they no longer care.

People cannot remain indefinitely in the valley of shadow of death. They have to walk out. However, as Psalm 23 and Ezekiel 37 say, people need guidance in order to come to the light. They all needed an opportunity to reverse the situation. This calls for understanding, competence, and love.

The task of a care giver is to find a safe place where transformation can occur. People who have been wounded need to handle their pain. (Ps 32: 3) By handling their pain through story' telling, the process of healing begins. Caregivers must believe in their stories enabling the process of healing to be complete.

Jesus shared his pains with his disciples as shared by Scriptures like Matthew 26:37-38. Their listening was full of respect, trust and avoided judgment because the task of judgment belongs to God. (Mat. 7:1-2) Care givers have the sole responsibility to show the way. (Mt 28:19-20) It has to be a process in which contradictions can be captured and carefully used to analyze the situation, to create an atmosphere of acceptance and to provide guidance. The process will be successful if the survivor finds a new identity. In other words, the survivor has to be sure that effectively the person in charge really cares, that the information given is kept confidentially and that their pain is understood.

The book of Proverbs has an advice to those who are in charge of counseling. It says,

“A talebearer reveals secrets, but who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter. Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety” (Prov.11:13-14)

Stories shared put in evidence that the PCM community need debriefing because there is an accumulation of anger and rage among clergy families, among community members and vice-versa. That accumulation of anger is sabotaging God' work and it is retarding development.

The PCM is called to train those who have shown abilities and are willing to help people especially clergy' wives to come out from the valley of the shadow of death where the abuse and violence have placed them.

### **5.3.1. Empowering the Community**

Care givers have to know that within a community there are other people with skills to care for others. What they need to do is to identify those people and to empower them. Care givers will profit from that empowerment as not only they will have time for themselves but also will have time for God. Sabotages that result from lack of vision, self evaluation, and weak leadership will thus be prevented. Jethro, who was Moses' father in law, after having understood the danger that could destroy Moses relationship both with Israelite people and God, gave him a good lesson and advice in the wilderness. (Ex 18:17-19). This was done as a way of teaching him how to care and relate to people.

Empowering the community is necessary because to transform individuals, socio- cultural structures and systems, is a very hard work. Individual transformation is very sensitive and sometimes dangerous. To be successful care givers need to train others within the community they serve as to be able to meet the needs.

Empowered community may play a significant role and become the best place where the traumatized people can share their experiences of trauma. Dreyer says,

“Suffering with identity makes protest possible” (2005: 220)

The above means that only if the community is aware of what is happening can take action. It is also an advice for care givers to know that they cannot do the work without support, knowledge, resources such as material, human and spiritual as advised by St Paul in the letter to Romans 12.

### **5.3.2. Working Towards Forgiveness and Reconciliation**

Forgiveness leads to reconciliation. These are very important steps towards healing. Success will be determined by the level of trust the survivor of abuse and violence had developed with the care giver. The level of trust developed may also determine the best moment to speak about Jesus. The dialogue may begin with the words of the prophet Isaiah which say,

“We despised him and rejected him; he endured suffering and pain. Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him and afflicted” (53: 3-4)

The above image can help survivors to reflect, to consider and to compare their position with that of Jesus. Weren't their own infirmities that ended up in abuse and violence? As Christians what did they do to correct the situation? Didn't they forget that anger is blind? (Gen 4: 5b-6) Didn't they hear god's voice asking where their sister or brother was? (Gen. 4: 9)

While sincerely reflecting on their wounds and naming their enemies, the process of healing begins. Forgiveness knock to the heart and the way of reconciliation is opened. This process is not a magic ritual; care givers have to do it with God's guidance and support (Mat 28: 20; Acts 1: 8).

Forgiveness is a process. In the process the perpetrator must recognize the pain, harm or offence caused to others. (Mat. 7: 4) The perpetrator may not ask for forgiveness, but a Christian has to be taught that forgiving those who have sinned against us is a must. (Mat.6: 14). Blaming others or God because of our suffering does not help. Dreyer writes,

“Holding God responsible for suffering simply does not work” (2005: 24)

Care givers have to put their focus on the person who is suffering and help that person to identify positive images and references that can help her or him to come out of her or his predicament.

To forgive those who have sinned against us is a must. The Lord’s Prayer teaches us to do so (Mt. 6:12, 14-16). Jesus on the cross did the same (Luke. 23: 34). Care givers must help people who are humble enough to ask for forgiveness. The survivor must in turn accept apologizes as expressed in St Paul letter to the Ephesians 4: 32.

For example Dorothy’s husband in the story shared in chapter four, asked for an apology to his wife and to the church’ leadership. Recognizing his wreck situation they forgave him. From that day they were able to live again together. People who forgive others are free but those who are unable to forgive, are opening their hearts to allow the evil to be their chief. (Gen 4: 16)

People in PCM need to be taught the value of forgiveness. They also need to be taught that forgiveness open new ways that allow people to receive and to live in God’s grace. According to the second letter of St Paul to Corinthians, forgiveness has the power that allows us to reconcile with our offenders. (5: 17-18)

### **5.3.3. Meaningful Prayer**

When care givers succeed to bring people to reconciliation, then the moment of prayer has arrived. Prayers are meaningful when problems were solved. Care givers have the responsibility to teach the community that our sins hurt God. Knowing that we, as well as other people, are made in the image of God (Gen. 1: 27) is a way that may lead to repentance and change (2 Cor. 7: 9-10). Repentance has the power to bind us with God because He is present in our suffering. God's presence is invited through prayer. Dreyer writes,

*“Prayer is the language of the wounded people”* (2005:23)

The above is true because the high percentage of our prayers share suffering and ask for God's support and guidance. Care givers are asked and urged to restore an image of God in people that can influence their lives in a positive way. That image will help them to see God walking with them through their lives. The final result will be a prayer that will show their dependence in God for the good.

### **5.3.4. The Danger of Excommunication**

The exclusion of a church member within the community because of stubbornness suggested by Retina is the last of the last things care givers should do. According to Jesus, those who judge others will be judged too. (Mat 7: 2). Care givers have to call the person to accountability but never to cut her or him off from partaking in church services. St Paul says that God's power is transformative. (Rom: 14: 4) However, discipline is necessary to allow the community to breathe and to grow. Care givers must develop

efforts to continue praying for people who tend to fail, to be in touch with and to show that the community still loves them.

#### **5.4. Being in God's Hands**

Being in God's hands means that we believe in God and He is the master of our life. St Paul puts it in the following way,

“For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's” (Rom 14: 8)

If Christianity continues to be one of the leading' faiths in the world and the principal in Sub-Sahara Africa, it is because it has guided Africans in their struggles for finding their meaning and identity.

##### **5.4.1. Working Together Towards Our Neighbors**

In the beginning of this chapter, the author introduced the reader to the method of Pastoral Care by introducing a verse of Psalm which says,

“We have become a reproach to our neighbors, a scorn and derision to those who are around us”. (79: 4)

As people made in the image of God and as Christians, we must do our best to live in harmony with our neighbors and to love them. As a Church, we called to do the first step towards them. It is very difficult to do the first step but, it is a must if we really care for others and if we want to live together and to share signs of love.

Between couples, the first neighbor is a wife or husband. Bad relationship between those who by marriage had become one, affects all who are around them. Jesus calls for meekness when he says,

“Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth” (Mat5:5)



Meekness translates the way people relate to others and to God. When dealing with sensitive issues and searching for peace that may restore our sense of being humans, meekness is a must. The meek are not weak people. They are those who do not use their power to oppress, to make threaten, to make others to be submissive. The meek use their power in the right moment and for the right purpose. According to Jesus, the meek will inherit the land. The land is the world that has to be conquered to the Kingdom of God. In the Kingdom of God all and everyone has place.

Care givers must always remember that stories heard were confessions that were done with the hope of seeing a new world, to begin a new journey. Walking towards our neighbors means that we are able to deal with anger and struggle with relationships in order to give birth to a new life and to open a new ground for living together.

## **5.5. Preliminary Conclusions**

Chapter five is entirely dedicated to Pastoral Care and therapeutic model. The author, being a woman and pastor is well aware of violence and abuse prevailing in the PCM. She can also affirm that the situation is not appreciated but, it seems that there is no political will to overcome it, or, there may be gurus or untouchables who are delighted and take profit with the situation by using their power.

Pastoral care being a process that engages people towards healing, the author finds it important to develop it in the modules she did. The aim is not to give

answers but to invite women and men to be engaged in theologizing about the relationship that will open up new ways of working together and thus, seeking solutions to the problem of violence and abuse.

Care givers are therefore invited to listen, to understand and to create an atmosphere of hope for healing purposes. The process of listening requires the capacity to build relationships with people who are traumatized and to help them realize that a care giver is someone who puts interests in other people's well being.

Rogers reminds us that care givers must pay attention to their own necessities. She says,

“Working with survivors of trauma is difficult at times. Their stories of injury, their pain, grief and distress may evoke deep feelings in their care givers.” (2002: 89)

The above is a call for care givers to care for themselves thus, enabling others to help them.

In this chapter the author was applying the methodology she proposed in chapter two characterized by situation critical exegesis and shepherding model. As the reader could see, she picked the stories shared in chapter four to do the analyses and to draw a Pastoral care perspective.

In conclusion, the author shares a call made to the Church by women gathered in Ghana during the Pre-Council of WARC in 2004. It says,

“Women are encouraged to be bold and to step beyond the boundaries of patriarchy, traditions, class, race, sexual orientation, caste and tribe. Jesus crossed the greatest boundary that existed. The boundary between humanity and God, the boundary

between brokenness and all that is holy, the boundary between life and death. We are called to be courageous, to leave all protocol unabsorbed, to break barriers, to cross boundaries and to demand to be seen and heard” (2004: 10).

The following chapter will bring the conclusion of this research study.

## CHAPTER SIX

### 6. CONCLUSION

Many authors have before written about Violence against Women. Their writings show that the phenomenon is widespread and systematic. They show that efforts have to continue to be done in all aspects of life. The author identified that violence and abuse over clergy' wives inflicted by their husbands were an area which merit our attention. As H  l  ne Yinda states,

“The liberation of the oppressed implies confrontation with the oppressor”  
(2002:146)

Therefore, if women want to become who they are in God's eyes they have to struggle. But, if they turn a blind eye to the harmful actions and traditions of the culture and Church, they will remain in the shadows and will never do anything transformative.

The present thesis, therefore, is an attempt of the author to confront and to bring into the light the trauma experienced by clergy wives in the PCM. The study has thus, critically examined the consequences of gender inequality in the Church and society that were expressed by the power that undermines and limits women's chances. The critic was done with the objective to find a new theory of praxis towards healing, reconciliation and transformation. The other aim is to empower women who are caught up in position of violence and abuse.

The reader has seen that women do not appreciate to be mistreated. They believe that they are also created in the image and likeness of God, and thus, claiming to be treated with respect.

The above is a demonstration that the research study was an opportunity offered to the author to better understand the environment in which she lives. It was also an opportunity to shape her theology.

It came clear that VAW is a phenomenon that denigrates the Church image and puts into question its teachings. For instance, while the author was finalizing the present research, a Mozambican newspaper called Magazine Independente published an article saying,

“Bishop rends pregnant his niece” (2007 October 31: 1)

That article was a gift for the author because it described many of the issues she raised in this research.

Therefore she recommends that:

- The Church should be purposeful in studying, teaching and doing liberating theologies that will help God’s people to realize who they are.
- Women have to be empowered in order to be able to participate and influence positive changes in decision making bodies and structures.
- Men, who are open to inclusiveness, have to be asked to speak out.
- In its agenda of transformation, the Church has to educate young people and children about sexist attitudes in order to avoid them.
- To be effective, the Church must work with other stakeholders.

The author is aware that the study will provoke contradiction. Some will very much appreciate the author's courage in researching this very sensitive issue while others will blame her for disclosing and damaging Clergy' and Church images but some may be encouraged to take the second step in order to bring about changes. All reactions are appreciated and welcomed because the issue of violence against women will be discussed.

The author is a wounded woman who is struggling to find a theology of healing and liberation. The process of writing the present thesis enabled her to better relate with other wounded people and enabled the women folks to begin to trust her.

The environment of trust created an opportunity for them to journey together through the Valley of the Shadow of death towards healing, reconciliation and transformation. This process needs constant working with oppressed people, highlighting the issues advocating from survivors of abuse, and finally being a voice of the voiceless.

### **6.1. New Areas to Be Researched**

Through the process it came clear that the issue of VAW is a phenomenon that has many faces. One has to ask if these many faces were always there or they are a mutation of new forms. The reader is thus invited to pay attention to the following and to carry out a research into the issues listed below:

- How to prevent the escalating of new forms of abuse and violence against women?
- How can women develop skills that will help them to choose freedom instead of selfish money?

- Why are women oppressing other women?
- Why do women believe that their power is dangerous?
- Why do men fear strong women?

Interviews highlighted that most clergy are married with women with low scholar education. My question is:

- Why aren't they helping their spouses to further their studies?

This thesis had opened a new opportunity to violence and abuse within the church directed to children, young women and boys and even to men. Interviews done by the author gave birth to new opportunities for those who are willing to bring about transformation to the church and to the world.

## 6.2. Appendixes

### 6.2.1. Appendix A

## APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL CLEARANCE

### Ethical Questionnaire

Please type, or write legibly using a black pen.

Name: <b>CHIRINDA, FN</b> Address: <b>390 Abel Baptista Av.</b> <b>Matola Hanhana - Mozambique</b>  University department: <b>Practical Theology</b> Professional status (if you are a student, provide your student number, degree and year of study): <b>26342822 MA 2007</b> Telephone: ... <b>N/A</b> Cell phone: <b>+258823184720</b> Fax: <b>N/A</b> E-mail: <b>fcherinda@tvcabo.co.mz</b>	<b>TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT:</b> <b>Male Clergy Violence against theirs</b> <b>Spouses in the Presbyterian Church</b> <b>of Mozambique - A New Theory of</b> <b>Praxis</b> ..... ..... ..... ..... ..... ..... <b>PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:</b> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>X</b> Not for degree purposes <input type="checkbox"/>
ANTICIPATED SOURCE OF FUNDING (if any):  <b>N/A</b>	<b>ESTIMATED DURATION OF THE PROJECT:</b> From... <b>2007</b> to <b>2007</b> .....
<b>FIRST APPLICATION:</b>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>X</b> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>RESUBMISSION:</b>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

Please list:

The objective of this research is to raise awareness on Violence against Women in the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique. Women married to clergymen are always discouraged to share their family matters with other people. All too often they have been blamed, rejected, stigmatized and persecuted (Poling: 1999: x).

The author aims at empowering women against these violent acts by calling them to stand up to the powers and principalities of the church to ask what is rightfully theirs and to refuse to be silent or to disappear.



For better results, it will be necessary to raise the issue of joint partnership with men in addressing this barbaric behavior of violence against women. It will also be necessary to develop a Pastoral Care Model needed for healing and transformation of those affected by violence against women.

### **SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH**

Please provide a brief summary of the research.

The concern over violence against women as a treat to life is very serious these days. What is more worrying is that this behavior is also practiced in the church. This is taking a devastative toll on women's life, their families and on society as a whole.

Men of the cloth are guilty on that offence while the church remains silent. Women married to clergy are always discouraged to share their family matters with other people. As a result they have become complacent in maintaining silence. Only occasionally have such women found a just and compassionate response from their church. All too often they have been blamed, rejected, stigmatized and persecuted (Poling 1999: x). Kanyoro, a woman theologian says "We discovered that we are heavily attached to our traditions and cultures and that we must name these as subjects of analysis and critique within the field of theology" (2002:35) The author, as a woman "who have experienced the liberating power of religion" (Fiorenza 1993:3) needs to share an alternative world of justice by challenging the status quo and inviting women to stand up and break the silence.

The thesis aims to encourage women to break the silence and to empower them against violence and abuse in the church. It aims also to encourage the church, government, Faith Based Organizations and other stakeholders to engage with policy makers in addressing the issue of violence against women.

The author chooses Elisabeth S. Fiorenza and Charles V. Gerkin models as the most suitable in finding solution to the plight of women. Gerkin shares an interesting concept of shepherding. This method is needed when working with victims of abuse, while Fiorenza will be helpful in educating men to stop violence, especially among clergy in the church.

### **PARTICIPATION BY RESEARCH SUBJECTS**

#### ***Where and how will the subjects be selected?***

The subjects will be selected in different Parishes of the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique. They will be requested to volunteer depending on their interest on the topic.

#### ***If any subjects will be asked to volunteer, who will be asked to volunteer and how will the participants be selected?***

Subjects to be asked to volunteer are: clergy' wives, women's group leaders and

Ministers. They will be selected according to their interest about the topic.

***If subjects are to be recruited, what inducement is to be offered?***

N/A

***If subjects' records are to be used, specify the nature of these records and indicate how they will be selected.***

N/A

***Have you obtained permission to study and report on these records?***

Yes  No  Not applicable X

***If Yes, attach letters.*** N/A

***Salient characteristics of subjects:***

***Number:*** 30

***Gender:*** Female 14 Male 16

***Age:*** 25- 85

***Have you obtained permission from the relevant authorities (e.g. an ecclesiastical congregation, hospital, and clinic)? If so, how did you obtain this permission?***

Yes  No  Not applicable X

***If Yes, attach letters.*** N/A

***List the procedures you intend to carry out with the subjects to obtain the data you requires (mark the applicable box (es)):***

- Record review
- Interview (*Attach*)
- Questionnaire (*Attach*)
- Pastoral Care or Counseling
- Procedures. Please describe.
- Other. Please describe.

The author will previously discuss the relevance of the research with the subject. If the subject shows interest then, the author will hand the questionnaires, read and explain each question.

***If you (as the researcher) will not carry out the procedure personally, state the name and position of the person who will carry out the procedure***

The researcher will carry out the procedure on her own

## INFORMED CONSENT X

**Attach a copy of the consent form.**

***If the subjects are under 18, or mentally or legally incompetent to consent to participation, how will you obtain their assent and/or from whom will you obtain proxy consent? If already obtained, how was their assent obtained?***

***Please describe.***

N/A

***If the subjects are under 18, or mentally or legally incompetent, how will you make it clear to the subjects that they may withdraw from the study at any time?***

***Please describe.***

N/A

***If you as the researcher are not competent in the mother tongue of the subjects, how will you ensure that the subjects fully understand the content of the consent form?***

***Please describe.***

The research will be conducted both in Portuguese and Ronga/Tsonga which are the Languages spoken both by the researcher and subjects.

## RISKS AND DISADVANTAGES TO THE SUBJECTS

***Are the subjects at any risk (e.g. physical, psychological, legal, and social) if they participate in the research? No X Yes***

***If yes, answer next question:***

***What safeguards will be taken to minimize the risk(s)?***

***Please describe.***

N/A

***Will participation or non-participation disadvantage the subjects in any way?***

***No X Yes***

***If yes, explain in which way they will be disadvantaged.***

N/A

## DECEPTION OF SUBJECTS

***Are there any aspects of the research about which the subjects will not be informed?***

***No X Yes***

***If yes, describe these aspects***

N/A

### **BENEFITS TO THE SUBJECTS**

*Will participation benefit the subjects?* No  Yes

*If yes, please describe the benefits.*

Subjects will have the huge opportunity to participate in the struggle against women violence and abuse in the church towards transformation and healing. They will know that there are people who are interested on them and care for them.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

*How will you ensure confidentiality and/or anonymity?*

*Please describe.*

Subjects will not be asked to write their names in the questionnaires

### **DISSEMINATION OF RESEARCH**

*To whom will the results be made available?*

The results will be made available to the researcher, the University of Pretoria and to the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique

*In which format do you expect the results to be made available?*

*Please mark those applicable:*

- Book       Scientific article       Lay article       TV       Radio  
 Thesis       Conference paper       Dissertation       Mini-dissertation  
 Other (please describe)

### **STORAGE OF THE RESEARCH DATA**

*Will the research data be destroyed at the end of the study?* Yes  No

*If No, where, in what format and for how long will the data be stored?*

*Please describe.*

N/A

*For what purposes will the data be stored?*

*Please mark the applicable items:*

- Research  
 Demonstration

- Public performance*
- Archiving*
- N/A

*How will you obtain the subjects' permission for further use of their data?*

- Informed consent form*
- Other (please describe)*
- N/A

**OTHER INFORMATION**

*Please provide any other information which may be of value to the committee here.*  
 Subjects will be selected among those who are interested in love, peace and justice among God's people inside and outside the church in Mozambique. The results will be very important in showing the way towards a partaking church and society.

**SIGNATURES:**

*APPLICANT/RESEARCHER/STUDENT..... DATE: .....*

*SUPERVISOR:.....DATE.....*

*HEAD OF DEPARTMENT: ..... DATE: .....*

*Are you of the opinion that the proposed research project has ethical implications?*

Yes  No

*CHAIRPERSON:POSTGRADUATE COMMITTEE:FACULTY OF THEOLOGY:  
 .....DATE:.....*

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Approval from other authority's*                       *Informed consent*
- Questionnaires, interviews, assessment*                       *Subject instructions*
- Other Research Proposal*

## **6.2.2. Appendix B**

### **INFORMED CONSENT LETTER**

#### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

When talking about violence against women people always exclude women married to the men of the cloth. This is so because the church is always associated with good ethical behavior and good morals. Like all women in the society, the wives to the clergy have accepted it as normal for a woman to be mistreated.

The aim of this thesis is therefore to empower women against these violent acts. It is also aimed at challenging the church to be in the forefront in fighting against violence on women as she is at the central point where issues concerning women can be addressed.

The other purpose is to raise the issue of the necessity of joint partnership with men in addressing this barbaric behavior of violence against women.

To develop a Pastoral Care model, a new theory of praxis needed for healing and transformation of those affected by violence against women.

To encourage the church leadership to engage with governments to legislate gender violence policy that provides for stiff punishment for those offenders on violence against women.

#### **RESPECT FOR PERSONS AT ALL STAGES OF THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

##### **Procedures to be followed**

Violence against women is an issue that can prevent people to fully participate in the interviews. The author will therefore need to use strategies to both encourage people to participate and to avoid them to suffer from later eventual physical harms. This will be done by framing the study in general terms, for example, by using the new Family Law in Mozambique that mentions violence in marriage.

Four structured questionnaires addressed to women's groups ministers' wives, ministers and key individuals like healthy providers and police, will be raised to explore the magnitude of the problem.

## **Discomforts and confidentiality**

Well being of the participants will be ensured by affirming anonymity and confidentiality. The transformative beneficence that the research will bring to the respondents, the church and society; balancing reality, full respect, social changes and care will be the focus.

Participation of the subject is voluntary. An interview will be terminated if the impact of the questions becomes too negative especially for women who become emotional. Interrupted interviews, however, may be finished if respondents want to. Only the research, subjects and the University of Pretoria will have access to the research data.

## **6.2.3. Appendix C**

### **SURVEY ON THE IMPACT OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MOZAMBIQUE**

Violence against women is the most pervasive yet under-recognized human rights violation in the world. It is also a profound health problem that saps women's energy, compromises their physical and mental health, and erodes their self-esteem. (Ellsberg and Heise 2005:9).

Violence hosts harmful behaviors directed at women because of their sex. A woman response to abuse may be limited by various factors surrounding her and by the options available. Practically all the world's states today have implanted in their constitutions the equality of men and women under the law. Frequently, however, this equality under the law does not penetrate into the "household" says Lienemann-Perrin. (WARC women pre-council 2004:53).

In the PCM the uses of discretion as an excuse gives privileges to male clergy and maintain and stimulate gender oppression and hierarchy. Domestic violence in the private spheres of PCM takes place unobserved by the outside world. Participation in this survey is an opportunity to challenge the status quo, to change behaviors and to create a new theory of Pastoral Care.

#### **QUESTIONS TO WOMEN IN GENERAL**

1. Have you ever heard about the new family law in Mozambique?
2. Which is your response to it?
3. As a woman, what do you think about domestic violence?
4. Which are your experiences, as a Christian, about women' abuse in the church?
5. Do you know/ have some stories that you would like to share? Which?
6. Which are your suggestions to challenge abuse in the church and society?

#### **QUESTIONS TO CLERGY' WIVES**

1. Have you ever heard about the new family law in Mozambique?
2. Do you use it in women's gatherings?
3. Which are the most suitable aspects/ experiences that women emphasize when discussing it?
4. Those aspects/experiences are also common to minister's wives? Would you like to share some with me?
5. Which kind of problems (health, emotional, spiritual and social) do you think are caused by these experiences?
6. What do you think must be done to challenge or change them?

### **QUESTIONS TO THE CLERGY**

1. Have you ever heard about the new family law in Mozambique?
2. Do you often use it to sensitize couples to avoid domestic violence in their marriages/families?
3. What do you think about ministers who abuse their wives?
4. Which are your feelings/views regarding the church norm of transferring ministers who abuse their wives/congregants to new places/parishes?
5. As a shepherd of God's flock, what do you think the church must do in order to educate ministers, their wives and congregants to stop violence and abuse in the church and society?
6. Do you have any other suggestions?

### **QUESTIONS TO HEALTH PROVIDERS AND POLICE**

1. How common is violence and sexual abuse referred by women who seek your help?
2. Who are the perpetrators?
3. Do they reveal the motivations or places where did the violence happen?
4. What are the most common circumstances of forced sex?
5. Was fear of violence an important issue in women's ability to protect them from HIV contamination?
6. According to your statistics which kind of diseases result from domestic violence?

## **6.3. Bibliography**

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