



# **If Gender-Based Violence Knows no Racial Boundaries, what is Its Colour and Complexion in Africa? A Case of Mashonaland Province of Zimbabwe**

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**Abstract:** Vehemence is largely an extreme human attribute, hence not new to Africa. However, violence is culturally relative, determined and handled. This means that culture is at the epicenter of gender instituted violence and schemes that curtail or control it. A people's epistemologies, metaphysics and cosmology are central to their behavior, notion of sexuality and gender relations. Africa is therefore a relatively unique grouping of humanity that has a unique philosophy and world view, tendencies, attributes, behaviors and conceptualization of gender and gender relations. This paper therefore explores the nature of gender-based violence in the African human landscape, its characteristics, causes and strategies of managing it. The research adopts the Cultural Relative Determinism Theory, which is a hybrid conceptual framework comprising Cultural relativism and Cultural Determinism tenets. The theoretical framework acknowledges how different human beings of variant cultures differ in the conceptualization of gender-based violence and strategies adopted to deal with it. This paper underscores that Africa has its own understanding of gender, violence and solutions to challenges surrounding Gender-based conflicts which are different from those of Eastern and Western countries. In so doing, the paper recommends for the understanding of the relative nature of gender-based violence across human societies and prescribe relative correctional measures, rather than generalizing theories across humanity. The paper also recommends pragmatic understanding of the nature of gender-based violence in the globalized Africa seeing how much Africa has shifted from its axis and how it can adapt its old strategies to conform to a new world order with universal rights and democracy.

**Keywords:** Metaphysics, epistemology, gender-based violence, Cultural Relativism, Cultural Determinism, Universal Human Rights, Contemporary democracy.

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## **1. Introduction**

Gender-based violence (GBV) affects one in every three women globally (World Bank, 2019; Moses, 2020). In

Zimbabwe, 40% of women aged 15-49 have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner, including 19% who suffered such violence during the previous 12 months (Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency