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Social media's influence on public policy in gender based violence

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SOCIAL MEDIA'S INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC POLICY IN GENDER BASED VIOLENCE.

By

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law, and Management at the University of Witwatersrand in fulfilment of the requirements for the Master of Management (by Dissertation)

Supervisor: Lihle Ngcobozi

2022

ABSTRACT

Constitutional transformation is the cornerstone of our new democracy and has entrenched Constitutional supremacy in South Africa. However, regardless of our twenty-six years into a new democracy, we are still challenged with social injustice around gender-based violence in our country. These historical challenges are rooted in the legacy of apartheid, colonialism, and a patriarchal society. Although our Constitution and Bill of Rights protects the rights of women, and there has been progressive interventions around policy changes, we are still not effectively addressing the scourge of gender- based violence. Policy changes require active public participation to ensure social justice and the protection of the rights of women in our society. Today, with the advancements in technology the use of social media has become a popular tool in social movements and their mobilization strategies. This component of social media in advocacy has broadened the scope and reach of social movements and has in many ways created wider terrain for which public policy can be influenced. To enhance democracy public participation has become a critical component and has contributed to changes in public policy, as it signals the ability of citizens to engage in democratic processes and to make contestations where necessary. The primary purpose of this research is to investigate, using qualitative methodology and a case study analysis, how the #TotalShutDown: 24Demands campaign leveraged social media in influencing public policy on Gender - Based violence in South Africa. Individual semi structured interviews were used for the collection of primary data from national and provincial members of the coordinating committees, while document analysis was used for the collection of secondary data which was collected and analysed. The research study revealed that through the leveraging of social media the #TotalShutDown:24Demands campaign was able to influence the policy environment. In addition, the study revealed that social media, as a strategic mobilization tool, allows for movements to broaden the terrain in which they can engage with women, thus providing wider reach for advocacy objectives to be reached. In the study, this was evidenced by the movement as they were able to effectively create networks across the country (nationally and provincially) to achieve its mission as described in the 24 Demands. Finally, the study will also show how integrated methods of mobilization (making use of traditional mobilization strategies while leveraging digital forms of engagement) strengthen advocacy efforts and often results in multiple forms of movement building and advocacy. The main recommendations made were, for a more inclusive approach to the Gender Based Violence space on the issue of intersectionality that needs to be addressed. A deeper

engagement with what constitutes a feminist approach needs to be analysed as there were different interpretations to this concept. Finally, for meaningful changes in the policy environment of the GBV space a more holistic approach needs to be adopted in the economic, social, and cultural spheres.

Key words: Gender Based Violence, social media, public participation, social movements.

PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg School of Governance

SENATE PLAGIARISM POLICY

Declaration by Students

I Nalianee Naidoo (Student number: 2285984) am a student registered for Master of Management in the year 2022. I hereby declare the following:

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- I have followed the required conventions in referencing the thoughts and ideas of others.
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Signature: **Date: 2022**

DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my husband Reggie Naidoo for encouraging me to pursue and complete my master's program and my parents Mr and Mrs K Reddy for their inspiration in the constant pursuit of knowledge.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
BLM	Black Lives Matter
CBO's	Community Based Organizations.
GBV	Gender Based Violence.
GBVF	Gender Based Violence and Femicide
ISC	Interim Steering Committee
KZN	Kwa-Zulu Natal
LGBTQIA	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, sexual.
MWRI	Masimanyane Womens Rights International
NGO's	Non-Governmental organisations.
NSP GBVF	National Strategic Plan on Gender-based Violence Femicide.
POWA	People Opposing Women Abuse
TAC	Treatment Action Campaign
#TTS	The #TotalShutDown:24Demand campaign.

CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Gender Based Violence (GBV) has reached pandemic proportions in South Africa and there have been many interventions from government and civil society that has attempted to address the increasing incidences of GBV in South Africa. Despite these interventions, the increase of GBV continues unabated.

Historically this cycle of violence has been attributed to the legacy of apartheid, colonialism, patriarchy, and the systemic inequalities that women have experienced throughout our history (Britton, 2006).

Although today the legislative framework of South Africa for GBV is progressive and comprises of national, regional, and international instruments as well as the various interventions and programs like 16 Days of Activism by government and civil society, the impact of these efforts have been questioned in respect of the rise in GBV cases.

There has been a widespread engagement with civil society and government to influence the policy environment of GBV using traditional methods of public participation through advocacy, demonstrations, and petitions in shaping GBV policy (Everatt, Marais, & Dube, 2010). However, these efforts have not had a significant effect on reducing the incidences of GBV in South Africa. To address the crisis of GBV necessitates new ways of thinking around public participation and alternate ways in which the policy environment and social justice can be influenced.

The leveraging of social media has always been a platform for political and social change for civil society activism and has facilitated a link between government and citizens influencing the policy environment (Hollands, 2012). Bohler - Muller and Van der Merwe reference the revolutions of Tunisia and Egypt, and the use of Facebook, Twitter, and other forms of social media in influencing socio – political change (Bohler, Muller & Van der Merwe, 2011).

ElSherief, Belding and Nguyen argue that social media provides a platform for open discourse and collective action which negates a culture of silence and denial

(ElSherief, Belding, & Nguyen, 2017). Further to this, the use of social media as a tool in advocacy strategies challenges power relations in society which can influence and mobilize people creating dynamic online social movements (Liou, 2013).

Social media can thus play a critical role given the current rise in the use of social media and the numerous social media movements that have mushroomed within civil society with an aim of influencing the policy environment. #JusticeForTshegoPule, #JusticeForNaledi, #JusticeForSanelisiwe are social media movements that have leveraged social media through creating an awareness around GBV to highlight the crisis of GBV in South Africa. These have had a profound impact on the democratization of GBV discourse and discussion online and on social media, and it has also broadened the space in which these social movements have been able to reach due to the scope and reach of online platforms.

The use of social media, until recently, has been underutilized and clearly reflects a greater potential as an effective tool for political and social activism (Isa & Himelboim, 2018), especially in addressing the issues of gender-based violence which has escalated to a crisis in South Africa. This crisis of GBV calls for a more interactive and transparent interaction between government and civil society to facilitate public participation.

This use of social media in public participation reflects the changing nature of citizens in their relationship with Government.

This vehicle of communication shifts the power from the government to the people and creates a platform which brings the government closer to the people and improves public participation. This relationship can build a partnership of trust and a bottom up rather than a top - down approach.

Given the above, this research then aims to investigate the leveraging of social media by social movements as an additional tool in their mobilization strategies and structures in influencing the policy environment specifically where GBV is concerned. More specifically, this research intends to use the #TotalShutDownCampaign to examine the ways in which social media was strategically leveraged in influencing public policy on GBV in South Africa.

1.2 Gender Based Violence: A South African Contextualization

Gender based violence (GBV) can be defined in different ways whether it is sexual, physical, economic, social, or psychological. Generally, it is used to capture violence that occurs in normative role expectations and unequal power relations in a society (Bloom, 2008).

South Africa is experiencing unprecedented increases in GBV. The National Gender – Based violence Command Centre confirmed an increase of 37 % higher statistics in GBV numbers in 2020 from a weekly average of 87 290 in 2019 (Pikoli, 2020). These statistics reveal that there is clearly an escalation of cases of violence against women despite the introduction and development of policies and strategies to effectively deal with GBV in South Africa.

The National Strategic Plan on gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa attribute the high levels of GBV to institutional and systemic violence and the prevalence of gender inequality which is rooted in patriarchal norms (National Steering Committee, 2020). These harmful social norms contribute to tolerance and the creation of a culture of violence in our society. Rape, femicide, and sexual assault can be attributed to the norms of toxic masculinity and gender inequality which contributes to the incidents of violence (Abrahams, et al., 2009). #Remember Kwezi, #JusticeForTebogo are reflective of this toxic environment.

Currently, in South Africa, approaches of social movements on GBV have incorporated an element of social media to share grievances on the abuse of women, sexual violence, and femicide (Chimboza, Abrahams, & Chigona, 2020).

Although GBV and domestic violence and its impact on women and children have dominated public discourse and the policy frameworks in South Africa dating to the advent of a constitutional democracy, the death of Karabo Mokoena on April 28th 2017, who was brutally murdered and then set alight by her boyfriend, rejuvenated contemporary debates and discussions not only on GBV and domestic violence, but it highlighted the nature of patriarchal dominance and the pervasive nature of violent and toxic masculinities in South Africa. In addition, the murder of Karabo Mokoena also saw a form of social media participation in public discourses related specifically to GBV which was relatively new to South Africa.

At the root of GBV are the inequalities between men and women and the imbalance in the power relations between both. The Emergency Action Response Plan on Gender Based Violence and Femicide (April 2020) describes GBV as a violation of human rights which is pervasive in the South African society.

Given the status of GBV in South Africa the South African Constitution,1996 has changed the landscape of the rights of women through a supreme Constitution which enshrines the values and principles in Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights. The right to equality (section 9), the right to human dignity (section 10), the right to life (section 11), and the right to freedom and security of the person (section 12) are some of the fundamental rights enshrined in our Constitution. These transformational rights were also entrenched to address the inequality and discrimination of women together with the past legacy of apartheid, colonialism, and the existing patriarchal society. Gouws questions whether men and women gained the same citizenship on the advent of Democracy (Gouws, Unthinking Citizenship, 2016). This is because the norms of gender inequality and patriarchy still exist in our society. Beyond this, Gouws further interrogates how the legal protection on abuse and violence have been able to garner social responses and actions which protect the dignity and equality of victims of GBV, which are primarily women.

There are many Legislations and policies that give effect to section 9 of the South African Constitution 108 of 1996. The most prominent of these legislations are the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act, 4 of 2000.Other related legislations that protect women from violence are the Domestic Violence Act No 116 of 1998 and Criminal Law (Sexual Offense and Related Matters) Act No 32 of 2007.

Although the democratic dispensation has seen the proliferation of gender sensitive protections and human rights, this legal framework has had minimal effect in addressing the issues of gender-based violence in South Africa. To the contrary, the level of violence against women has invariably permeated the social, religious, and the very moral fibre of our society (Chalira & Ndimurwimo, 2018).

Mechanisms like the Commission for Gender Equality (CGE) and the Office of the Status of Women have not had significant impact on issues affecting the rights of

women in African Customary Law and has not translated into meaningful changes especially in addressing issues of GBV in South Africa (Ojha, 2015).

Internationally South Africa has signed many human rights instruments that are designed to protect and promote the rights of women. Although these United Nations and African regional instruments have been incorporated and implemented in our legal system, violence against women is still widespread in South Africa (Chalira & Ndimurwimo, 2018).

Globally, the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals is also used as an instrument for policy change with a focus on women and children. Within this Human Rights framework, Goal 5 specifically aims to achieve gender equality through the empowerment of women and girls and supports social media as a mechanism to advocate for the rights of women (Nowacka, 2015). Additionally, The World Bank has also been piloting the innovative use of social media to create awareness and educate men and women on the issues of GBV (The World Bank, 2019).

There is a recognition that the use of technology can be optimally used to achieve certain objectives in a much more effective way. It is clear from the above discussion that gender equality needs to be cross – cutting in all areas that impact on the rights of women including education, politics, economics, and the basic promotion of human rights (Economic Commission for Africa, 2015).

The crisis of GBV in South Africa, has not been sufficiently supported by the transformative Constitution, 1996 or other national, regional, and international instruments due to a lack of proper implementation which has therefore resulted in different forms of GBV activists using many different methodologies to influence the policy environment through public participation. With a transformative legislative framework, which is progressive and aware of the existing patriarchal mores, violent masculinities, and the gendered inequalities these produce, GBV still remains a crisis in South Africa, as legislation has not been able to drastically change attitudes and behaviours related to violence and abuse.

1.3 Gender Based Violence Activism and Public Participation in South Africa

Public participation is the cornerstone of any democracy and sustains a relationship between government and civil society. This relationship, according to Fourie, is drawn from ‘communitarian ideas’ that support public participation process (Fourie, 2001). Everatt, Marais, and Dube describe public participation as a process allowing citizens to participate in the policy environment and for the voices of the public to be heard (Everatt, Marais, & & Dube, 2010).

Traditionally public participation involved public forums, petitions and public comments that informed the decision-making process of government. But today the use of social media is a much more innovative way of collaboration and facilitates a participatory relationship between government and civil society (Mafihlo, 2015). This relationship according to Mafihlo, creates public value and creates a two-way dialogue between government and civil society empowering them to participate more effectively in the policy environment (Mafihlo, 2015).

The use of social media as an added component of public participation and the creation of public value has motivated GBV social movements to use this platform to influence the policies on GBV through the integration of traditional and contemporary forms of advocacy, public engagement, and public discourse.

There have been many different GBV movements that have demonstrated activism in the GBV space. The key role players being NGO’s and CBO’s who have championed the cause of women’s rights. Organizations like Masimanyane Womens Rights International and People Against Women Abuse (POWA) have implemented programs in urban and rural communities to educate and create an awareness of GBV. They have contributed to changes in our Judicial system with landmark decisions on Ukuthwala which looked at the context of the practice of Ukuthwala in African Customary Law and Marriages. The High Court case of Jezile vs S and Others (A127/2014) [2015] ZAWCHC 31 held that the practice of Ukuthwala was ‘aberrant’.

These organizations have had an impact on policy and have made contributions to our current legislative framework on GBV through programs like the Victim Support program that has created a partnership between government and NGO’s providing support to women who are victims of violence and the various inputs made by NGO’s

in the public participation process of the Domestic Violence Act (No 116 of 1998). This has demonstrated the public participation of civil society in the policy environment.

Traditionally, civil society has been at the forefront of the GBV discourse while calling for policy reformation related to justice and sentencing, the protection of rape and domestic violence survivors, as well as pushing the state to provide psycho - social, medical, and economic support to survivors. Longstanding organizations such as the '1 in 9 Campaign' and other feminist organizations have mobilized at various moments to engage the state on several levels, with much success.

One example of this was how feminist and GBV organizations, through the brutal murder of Anene Booysen, led a campaign that saw the reintroduction of Sexual Offences Courts and a project that was linked to this was the Thuthuzela Care Centre's based at police stations to assist rape victims (Gouws, 2016). These are significant in so far as they show that there is historical evidence of the ways in which public participation and mobilization related to GBV has made significant strides in influencing policy and state interventions.

For many years GBV social movements have participated in policy reform through petitioning, picketing, lobbying and other forms of public participation to influence public policy with limited success. Rowe and Frewer have evaluated the traditional ways of public participation like public hearing and consensus conferences and many other methods and agree that these public participation methods need to be more accessible to the wider public (Rowe & Frewer, 2000). Although these have had a profound impact on progressing human rights, and women's rights and protections specifically, the digitized era coupled with globalization has provided the opportunity for the broadening of the terrain of the activist, the advocacy, and scope of engagement. This has been specifically demonstrated in the 21st century with the rise and impact of online movements on social media. This is no different in the GBV activist space, the leveraging of social media as a tool in GBV activism has facilitated a more accessible way for social movements to shift the methods of public participation and influence the policy environment in critical ways.

1.4 Leveraging social media in Gender Based Violence Activism

1.4.1 Social Media: Use and Transformation

Social media has been described as a web based and mobile technology that facilitates social communication and interactive dialogues generating online information and knowledge (Baruah, 2012). Bornman also agrees that social media is made up of websites which allow users to share their experiences on these online platforms (Bornman, 2018).

There are many different forms of social media as identified by Kaplan & Haenlein, blogs e.g.: Twitter, social network sites e.g.: Facebook, content communities e.g.: You Tube and Instagram and others (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Initially, social networking sites created in the 1990's were used for public policy advocacy (Edosomwan, Kalangot, Kouame, Watson, & Seymour, 2011). Social media expanded in 2000 including many more social networking sites, like Lunar Storm, Six Degrees and others which increased the level of communication between individuals through the sharing of music, movies, and friendship (Edosomwan, Kalangot, Kouame, Watson, & Seymour, 2011). Of these social networking sites, Facebook is one of the most popular forms of communication used for political and public participation (Mafihlo, 2015).

Today, public participation is facilitated using social media and is popularly used for political activism allowing civil society and citizens in general to engage more effectively with government and to contribute to public discourse (Hollands, 2012).

What is unique in the leveraging of social media is the concept of "long tail" which allows conversations to reach a wider audience and be conveyed to many different forums (Edosomwan, Kalangot, Kouame, Watson, & Seymour, 2011).

This transformation in the use of social media has created a new component to social organizing allowing social media networks to utilize this tool as an effective way of public participation and to influence the change in policy through mass based social movements which are wider in scope and reach.

#TotalShutDown campaign is a classic example of how this provincial and national movement through the leveraging of social media influenced the policy environment through the national marches and their 24 Demands which led to the Presidential Summit, a Gender Based Violence and Femicide Response fund (GBVF) and the development of a National Strategy for GBVF. A closer look into their strategies in using social media in their mobilization efforts is worthwhile exercise as it will enable us to understand how social media can become a critical advocacy tool.

1.4.2 Social Media: a new component to social organizing for Gender Based Violence

Social media networks have grown exponentially and the data that is shared amongst millions of users has created a powerful political environment to effect change in society (Orth, Andipatin, & Mukumbang, 2020). These platforms encourage diversity and collaborative activism through public participation and increased communication between citizens and the government (Zhoa, Lin, & Derudder, 2018).

This explosion in the digital world has created opportunities for both citizens and government to promote transparency, openness, and accountability through broad based networked public participation.

Social media provides a faster, cheaper, and more effective and innovative way of communication between Government and citizens providing collaborate and interactive platforms for dialogue (Mafihlo, 2015). This is reflected in the movements like #JusticeForKarabo and other movements which have leveraged social media because of the relative ease in which women all over South Africa were able to participate in and facilitate a more active communication between government and civil society.

Through feminism and activism women have contributed to the discourse on the rape crisis and using social media shifted the political debate in contributing to new legislations on GBV. Universities across South Africa have launched campaigns like #RUReferenceList addressing the culture of rape using social media as a tool to create awareness of this problem and to influence policies.

Another example of this is the #MeToo campaign which went viral on social media in countries around the world, after allegations of sexual violence and assault against Harvey Weinstein were made. Although this was in the United States of America, it had global reach insofar as women across continents, including South Africa, shared their experiences of sexual violence and assault within their working environments especially at the hands of their seniors or powerful men in their work environment.

On a national level #RememberKwezi, #RUReferenceList, #JusticeFor's, have used social media to hold government accountable by calling for harsher punishment for perpetrators of GBV, but not as effectively as the #TotalShutDown campaign. This is evident in the 24Demands drafted by the #TotalShutDown campaign in response to issues highlighted by women in South Africa and the impact that this had on the policy environment.

To this end social media has played a vital role in pushing the boundaries around GBV and has effectively been able to influence public policy (Bornman, 2018). Bornman argues that politically, there is a lack of legitimate space for policy development and that the use of social media allows for new communication channels and collective reflection (Bornman, 2018). Social media as a public space allows for collective discussions of people's problems and has the potential of a more direct, fast, and easy form of participatory democracy (Bohler-Muller & Van der Merwe, 2011).

These social movements are "an effort by a large number of people to collectively solve a problem that they feel they have in common" (Toch, 2014, p. 5.).

The strategy to use Facebook or Twitter and trending hashtags to mobilize and create awareness and strengthen dialogues on violence against women has built common ground on socio-political issues on GBV due to the sharing of experiences as well as challenges in relation to justice and access to adequate police services related to this.

Today, the use of Facebook has become a popular platform to address social change and together with trending hashtags have the power to mobilize women in a manner that has never been seen before as was evident in the #TotalShutDown :24Demands campaign. Thus, the growing use of social media by social movements requires special attention in so far as it signals a different way of public participation in a post- Apartheid South Africa.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine, through a case analysis, how the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign leveraged social media, specifically Facebook and the use of the hashtag, in influencing policy on GBV in South Africa. Furthermore, this research will determine the internal strategies and mechanisms used by the campaign to mobilize women on a national and provincial level through their effective use of social media collaboration.

1.5 #TotalShutDown: 24 Demands Campaign and the Leveraging of social media

The #Totalshutdown: 24DemandsCampaign was initiated on the 6th of June 2018 on Facebook and in a short period of time the campaign had over 40 000 members. In the years that followed over a million members have since joined. Through this platform, the campaign was able to create a safe space for women to challenge the culture of silence and share their experiences openly. With the use of social media platforms, woman all over South Africa shared their stories on abuse at the hands of men.

Although there have been many social media campaigns in the past, the #TotalShutdown: 24Demands Campaign has been the first of its kind to make use of social media as an intricate part of their strategy, and this was the first time in South Africa's popular discourse on GBV that we have been able to witness the scale in which social media was able to reach and mobilize citizens across the country in the fight against GBV.

In 2017, #NotInMyName was formed by activists after the death of Karabo Mokoena. This campaign gained momentum on the ground and although the death of Karabo Mokoena triggered the #MenAreTrash social media engagement, this engagement on social media was not limited to outrage, but it also spoke to the cultures, value systems, and social mores which embolden men to perform such violence. The #MenAreTrash as well as the #JusticeForKarabo hashtags spoke to the need for social transformation as well as the call for a robust and effective justice system which is harsher on perpetrators, respectively.

The posts of Karabo's friends, family, and responses by women in general on Facebook led to the #Totalshutdown:24Demands campaign nationally and provincially. This campaign was fuelled by the frustrations at the South African

government and the lack of urgency in dealing with violence against women, children, queer and LGBTI individuals. The aim of the campaign was to shut down economic activity in the country on the 1st of August 2018 by marching to the national and regional centres of power and to deliver the 24 Demands of the campaign which were drafted by the organizers (BBC News 2nd May 2018). More than the aim of drawing attention to the issues of GBV, the objective of this platform was to act and change the discourse on GBV, while simultaneously calling on the state to reform existing policy, as well as calling on the state to enhance already existing structures of support to work more effectively and enhance implementation of policies. Some of the demands included the roll out of Thuthuzela care centres, provision of shelters, and provision of psycho – social support for victims and survivors of GBV. In addition, important demands related to justice and legislative reform included, but not limited to:

“A commitment to beginning a process to develop a comprehensive law on addressing gender-based violence against women. This includes engaging the South African Law Reform Commission to begin a consultation process.” (The report of the Presidential Summit against GBV and Femicide, 2018, p 3).

“Government should ensure that laws, policies, practices and systems are sensitive to gender diversity to protect the bodily and physical as well as the psychological and emotional integrity of transgender and gender non - conforming people from GBV.” (The report of the Presidential Summit against GBV and Femicide, 2018, p 4).

These are important interventions in justice and the law and are essential in ensuring a holistic approach to the challenges of GBV in South Africa. The 24 demands adopted an integrated approach and represent each year that the government has failed to address these issues since its constitutional democracy (Mail and Guardian 2nd August 2018).

The impact of the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign was far reaching and this crisis gave impetus to regional networks, in Gauteng, Kwa Zulu Natal, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, North - West, Free State, Eastern Cape, Northern and Western Cape. This was followed by the nationwide National march to the Union buildings on the 1st of August 2018 and regional marches country wide. These networks mobilized women and members of the LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual) community nationally and highlighted the plight of women,

which forced the government to act (Motsai, 2018). Through the mobilization efforts which were predominantly online, the campaign was able to successfully task the government to hold The National Gender - Based Violence and Femicide summit in November 2018. The purpose of this meeting was to address the crisis of GBV in South Africa as the incidence of GBV had increased and was highlighted by the death of Karabo Mokoena and many others. This summit was jointly hosted by the government, civil society, and other key role players. This then resulted in the Presidential launch of the Gender – Based Violence and Femicide Declaration signed on the 28th of March 2019.

This summit gave birth to the Interim Steering Committee on GBV whose responsibility was to draft the National Strategic plan on GBV and Femicide 2020 – 2030 (National Strategic Plan on GBV and Femicide 2020). In addition, there are three Bills: The Domestic Violence Amendment Bill, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act Amendment Bill, and the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Bill open for public comment.

In February 2021, President Cyril Ramaphosa launched a multi – sectoral Gender Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF) Response Fund which was aimed at supporting the National Strategic Plan (NSP). This Fund fulfilled one of the resolutions of the Gender – Based Violence and Femicide Declaration which saw the culmination of the GBVF Summit in 2018. A National Strategy for GBVF is envisioned with contributions to the fund by the private sector in South Africa.

This process reflects the impact that collective dialogue can have in influencing the policy environment, and the lasting impact of the movements in South Africa including the #TotalShutDownCampaign through their strategic use of social media to influence the policy environment on GBV in South Africa. Although the focus of this research will be the #TotalShutDown:24 Demand campaign, other movements on GBV will also be used to reflect on the interventions made in the GBV space.

Social media platforms have been used globally for different purposes including political and educational advocacy. Social media has equally become a prominent and powerful tool in addressing policy issues related to GBV and has facilitated public participation through collective collaboration (A Burford, 2012). This has demonstrated the potential social media has to drive economic, social, and political change (Mafihlo

P., 2015). However, there is limited research on the effectiveness of the use of social media in influencing public policy on GBV.

The growing use of social media requires special attention in so far as it signals a different way of citizen participation in post- Apartheid South Africa, related specifically to GBV mobilization and state interventions.

In theory and in application, this research located gender-based violence in social media seen through the lens of public participation. Public participation is seen as a challenge in any democracy. Any Democracy demands openness, accountability, and transparency through active public participation (Brody, 2009), creating a culture of public participation which can contribute to social transformation and justice especially in the policy environment (Mchunu & Theron, 2014).

1.6 Problem Statement

GBV in our country has reached epidemic levels and despite the legal frameworks mentioned in the introduction, there is little evidence of reducing the incidence of GBV (Vecchiatto, 2019). There have been many attempts to highlight the plight of victims of GBV through civil society by creating awareness of the problem through 16 days of activism and other platforms. The effectiveness of these methods has been questioned, as the incidence of violence against woman keeps rising despite policy intervention by government (Vecchiatto, 2019). The different methods of public participation used in the past, like petitions and broad - based advocacy, have contributed to policy change but the process is slow and based on our high incidence of GBV today, they have been largely ineffective. More innovative ways of public participation need to be explored to impact on the policy environment in a more effective and strategic way to influence policy changes.

What is of particular interest in this research is not so much the nature of civil society and its impact on GBV policy and discourse, as much of the mobilization methods have remained relatively the same, but the ways in which social media, as an added dimension to mobilization methods and strategies, has been used within GBV movements and feminist organizations in South Africa. Although social media has been the platform where ‘historic’ cases of GBV have been debated and reflected on (#RememberKwezi, #AmINext, #JusticeForTebogo), these have not made social

media an intricate component of their mobilization, awareness raising, and policy reformation strategy.

In addition, the challenges of public participation will be explored through the lens of social media and the effectiveness of this medium in influencing policy and the long-term sustainability of this medium in the overall approaches to public participation in policy decision making process.

The findings and recommendations of this study could assist both government and civil society in encouraging more active public participation through this two-way communication using social media as a platform, and from civil society's view of how the strategies and mechanisms implemented can be used for social justice and policy change.

This research will investigate, using a case analysis, how the #Totalshutdown: 24DemandsCampaign used social media as a tool to advocate against incidences of GBV, and to mobilize its members across the country in their efforts to influence the policy environment.

To this end the internal dynamics of the movement will be investigated on a national and provincial level, and their rationale for their use of Facebook as a social media platform, and their structures and strategies that facilitated this process. This research will specifically focus on the internal structures and strategies used by the #TotalShutDown:24Demands campaign and how this mass - based movement leveraged social media in influencing the policy environment in South Africa.

1.7 Research Question

The research will primarily investigate:

How did the #Totalshutdown:24Demands campaign leverage social media in influencing public policy on Gender Based Violence in South Africa?

Secondary questions are:

- How did the #TotalShutDown campaign leverage social media as an advocacy tool in influencing public policy on gender-based violence? And
- What social media strategies and mechanisms did the #TotalShutDown campaign use to mobilize women nationally and provincially?

1.8 Research Objectives

The aim of this study is to determine how #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign used social media as a tool in influencing public policy on GBV

- To investigate the leveraging of social media as a tool by the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign.
- To determine the strategies and mechanisms and structures used by the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign to mobilize women nationally and regionally.

1.9 Chapter Outline

This research report is divided into 6 chapters as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction and Background

This chapter looks at a brief introduction of the research to be conducted, highlighting the problem of GBV in South Africa, and the links between the use of social media by social movements and public participation. An outline of the legal framework of GBV is explained with a focus on national, regional, and international instruments. Further, as the research is located within the #TotalShutDown campaign a brief background is given on the campaign. This chapter is concluded with the description of the problem statement, research question, and research objectives.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Definitions and the contextual theory of the key concepts of the research and the theoretical framework will be explained and further, how they intersect with each other.

Literature was examined on the use of social media focusing on the history and evolution of social media, as well as the leveraging of social media specifically using Facebook and the importance of the use of hashtags. The literature review will include global, regional, and domestic practices of social movements and their use of social media in the policy environment for a broader perspective on the leveraging of social media and the pros and cons of the use of different types of social media like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

The research approach, tools and sampling methods will be discussed and explained. Data collection, analysis, limitation, and ethical considerations will be discussed.

Chapter Four: Data Presentation

This chapter presents the data collected from the focus groups and individual interviews and questionnaires together with a document analysis of the internal documentation of the #TotalShutDown: 24Demands campaign, newspaper articles, and other documents relevant to answering the research question. The presentation of the data will address the issues of strategies, structure and mechanisms used by the #Total Shutdown campaign.

Chapter Five: Interpretations and Analysis of Research findings

Using thematic analysis, the data will be transcribed, coded, themes generated, reviewing of the themes, and defining of the predominant themes. Through this type of analysis, data will be able to be interpreted and inform the recommendations.

Chapter six: Conclusion and Recommendations

The insights of the research will be outlined and highlighted, best practices identified, and recommendations made based on the findings of the research.

1.10 Conclusion

This introductory chapter focuses on contextualizing the concepts of GBV, social media, social movements, and public participation in this research. The legal framework is explained to focus the study on existing policy. The links between GBV, social media, social movements and public participation are made to further investigate the leveraging of social media to influence the policy environment. The outline of the research problem, question and objectives are further explained.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review is a critical component of any research process as it assists the researcher in reflecting on the theoretical approaches used to conduct their research, and thus informing their process (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012). Wagner, Kawulich and Garner maintain that a literature review is necessary for researchers to conduct, in informing their primary research and representing a relevant sample of the body of knowledge connected to the researcher's topic (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012).This, according to Merriam, enables the researcher to establish the knowledge gap in their area of research and further advances the knowledge base in the area of study (Merriam, Qualitative Research : A guide to design and implementation , 2009). Wisker argues that a literature review allows a researcher to engage with theory and theoretical perspectives that underpin their research (Wisker, 2015).

The literature review conducted in this study focusses on the use of social media, specifically by social media movements, primarily focusing on Gender Based Violence (GBV), and their impact on public policy. The literature review will focus on the main concepts, debates, and discussions on the use of social media as a tool in advocacy, and the strategies used to mobilize women, especially with reference to social movements working within the GBV space.

To contextualize this research, the literature review will investigate the use of social media by social movements in South Africa, as well as global movements which have made social media a critical part of their advocacy strategies. The review will also focus on social media movements as a platform to collaborate, mobilize, strategize, and influence social and economic issues, and by extension, public policy. Furthermore, this literature review will analyse the knowledge gaps in understanding the concept of public participation through the leveraging of social media in addressing the issues of GBV in South Africa through influencing public policy relevant to it.

The Literature review focuses on social movements using social media as a tool for public participation and investigates the strategies and structures of these social movements. This literature review will concentrate firstly on domestic, regional, and

international social movements with a social media component to their advocacy strategy, and how these social movements leveraged social media to influence the social and political environment in which they exist. The structures and strategies used by these movements to facilitate public participation will also be explored.

2.2 Public Participation

2.2.1 Background

According to Everatt and Marais, there are many interpretations of public participation. The common understanding is the involvement of people in a particular activity to achieve a common goal (Everatt & Marais 2010). Everatt, Marais & Dube see public participation as being part of a process but went further to say that it allowed communities to take ownership of the process (Everatt, Marais, & Dube, 2010). This process involves the participation of citizens in the decision-making process which underpins a democracy and demands transparency and accountability from government.

The fundamental principle in any democracy is the ability of citizens to actively participate in the political process and thereby influence the policy environment. This political process involves participatory democracy which enables citizens to create dialogue between themselves and the government. According to Mchunu and Theron citizen participation creates spaces in which citizens can participate through dialogue and hold government accountable. However, in circumstances where these spaces are not available, disillusioned citizens create these spaces through protest and/or social movements (Mchunu & Theron, 2014).

Public participation is an important process in post- apartheid South Africa and is entrenched in the Constitution (1996) and Chapter 2 of the Bill of Rights. The founding provisions in section 1(d) promote participation and views it as a fundamental principle in any democracy. Participatory democracy allows for citizens to be involved in the decision-making process, and section 19 of the Bill of Rights protects the political rights of every citizen. Theron & Mchunu support this statement by stating that public participation encourages democracy through the participation of people in the

decision-making process (Mchunu & Theron, 2014). Therefore, public participation is a necessity in the decision-making process in any democracy.

These constitutional provisions mentioned above resonate with the concept of “bringing government to the people” (Fourie, 2001), which is an important concept, especially given our political history in the past and the changes in the current transformative constitution that protect our democracy. This means that public participation is imperative in our new democracy as it encourages the active participation of citizens in the decision-making process.

There are many broad-based strategies that have contributed to public participation like lobbying, media advocacy, research, public education, and coalition building, to name a few. Lobbying and public gatherings have the potential to bring large groups of people together, and this has given rise to social movements that have engaged in public participation through mass-based mobilization (Ballard, 2007). Social movements empower people to participate, and according to Bhattacharya and Jairath, as social movements create popular spaces influenced by socio-political situations that allow social movements to exist and develop (Bhattacharya & Jairath, 2012).

Masango argues that participation being a relative concept is influenced by the context in which it takes place (Masango, 2001). The question then is how do people participate? There are many different participation methods which citizens use to participate as political and social agents. Traditionally, these have included public meetings, petitions, and face to face interaction between citizens and/or between citizens and public officials in their respective capacities. However, with the advent of the technological era, participation methods have shifted and have included online participation as one of its methods. These social media platforms have facilitated digital activism on a large scale especially by social movements seeking to influence the socio, political, and economic environment (Bohler-Muller & Van der Merwe, 2011).

In this technological era, some social movements have shifted their strategy in relation to how they engage in public participation. A fundamental shift has been the move from traditional methods on the ground with petitions and face to face interactions, to leveraging social media allowing people to connect more easily in real time (Bowen,

Gordon, & Chojnacki, 2017). This shift in strategy has broadened the reach and scope of social movements in the social justice landscape in ways in which traditional approaches have not been able to. This is further supported by Bennington and Moore, who state that public participation can create public value, using social media, which is central to governance (Benington, 2011). The ease and easy access of social media has paved the way for social movements to participate in the policy environment as it has become a powerful means of mobilization as was evident in #Justice for Tshegofatso Pule and other GBV activist movements (Thabela-Chimboza, Abrahams, & Chigona, 2020).

Mafihlo acknowledges that citizens are no longer passive recipients of government policy but active participants in policy making thus adding public value (Mafihlo P, 2015). Therefore, social movements leveraging social media as a tool in public participation can create public value through their participation in the political process and impact on the policy environment in a positive way.

Likewise, these new forms of collaboration can create new social identities based on shared interests and allow government to optimally use social media to address the needs of citizens (Mafihlo P, 2015). This makes government more open, responsive, and accountable and supports a good democracy which encourages public participation of its citizens giving effect to positive policy changes.

2.2.2 Importance of Public Participation

The importance of public participation cannot be underestimated in the decision-making process as it holds government accountable. According to Hartley and Wood, public participation increases transparency in the decision-making process, creating public awareness and more importantly support for the decisions that are taken (Hartley & Wood, 2005). Neshkova and Guo argue that in any democracy, there is an emphasis on participation, equality, and in respect of the decision-making process, a bottom -up approach (Neshkova & Guo, 2012). Yung and Chan support a bottom-up approach and agree that disadvantaged communities can in this way influence policy and the decision-making process (Yung & Chan, 2011). This bottom-up process of public participation involves broad-based participation of citizens at a local level which can then influence the political process in a democracy.

Public participation creates active citizens and encourages a collaborative relationship between government and citizens (Barnes, Newman, & Sullivan, 2007). Ballard argues that this requires a more participatory process which goes beyond voting or representative democracy calling for active citizenry that can hold government accountable (Ballard, 2007). This participatory process involves the active participation of citizens in the decision-making process for example when new legislation is open for public debate which allows citizens to comment on the proposed legislation before it is passed through parliament.

Public participation is critical in any democracy and allows for openness and transparency. Mass based social networks like #RhodesMustFall, #FeesMustFall, and other movements have been able to influence change in society and reflect a shift in citizen participation. This shift reflects new modes of participation like the use of social media which has shifted from traditional forms of public participation like public meetings and petitions.

Democracy in any country requires public participation and is indicative of the notion of “bringing the government to the people” (Fourie, 2001). One of the many roles of government is to ensure public participation through the South African Constitution Act 108 of 1996. More importantly Chapter 2, the Bill of Rights, places importance on citizen participation as one of the key values and principles enshrined in our Constitution.

Although the Constitution entrenches the right to participate, there is an acknowledgement that there are constraints in this participation which can be attributed to the inequalities in our society and the limited spaces for voices to be heard (Newman, Barnes, Sullivan, & Knops, 2004). Therefore, the importance of public participation needs to be analysed through the effectiveness of public participation methods, as with the rise of social movements the effectiveness of these methods has been questioned.

Rowe and Frewer question the effectiveness of public participation methods, like public hearings, focus groups, and questionnaires, and acknowledge that there are limitations to these methods. For example, with public hearings, although they are relatively cheap, the disadvantage is that they normally constitute presentation of

information rather than debating issues by various stakeholders (Rowe & Frewer, 2000).

Therefore, the rise of social movements necessitates more effective ways of public participation as the context of public participation has shifted. Civil society has become more activist in respect of social justice issues and is placing more importance on public participation to influence changes to policy.

This expanded space requires innovative ways of public participation which is why Eltantawy discusses social networked governance which comprises of individuals connecting on social media through information sharing, creating common values which can impact on policy changes (Eltantawy, 2011). Benington believes that social networks have the ability of assisting government in resolving complex problems through collective action (Benington, 2011). These mechanisms allow government to be more responsive and accountable to the concerns of citizens, thus embracing the core principles of democracy and the importance of public participation. Therefore, the role of public participation by social movements requires a shift from traditional ways in which social movements have participated in the policy environment to more innovative mechanisms of public participation, which is discussed in later sections of this chapter.

2.3. Social Movements and Traditional Forms of Public Participation

Throughout our history, we have seen the power of citizens to effect change through social movements, The French Revolution in the late 18th Century and the Arab Spring in 2011 are classic examples of this. Leaning deeper into history, The Storming of the Bastille, one of the most famous historical social movements, which resulted in the uprising of the peasants against the King, saw citizens make a claim for equality, citizenship, and inalienable rights.

Similarly in the 19th Century, the Industrial Revolution was also a social movement which called for political and institutional changes (Clark, 2012). The aftermath of the Second World War saw a change in social movements from class and citizen rights to peace and anti – nuclear movements (Clark, 2012). These social movements involved social, political, and cultural changes mainly against government or the ruling authorities at the time. Social theory distinguishes between old and new social

movements which involve a Postmodern analysis of the falling away of Western welfare capitalism and the demise of Soviet socialism with the advent of a “New Right” ideology (Dykstra, 1994).

These new groups focus on the interests of the group like gender, environment, and peace. New movements focus on single causes opposite to the old which focused more generally on issues like social and political democracy. Clark, in his research report, claims that social movements arise because society is being unjustly treated by their governments (Clark, 2012).

McAdam defines social movements as “rational attempts by excluded groups to mobilize sufficient political leverage to advance collective interests through non-institutionalized means.” (McAdam, 1982, p 37). Tarrow identifies social movements as a collective with a common purpose against authority (Tarrow, 1994), while Tilly talks about “ordinary people making collective claims” (Tilly, 2004, p 39).

Toch views social movements as forms of collective behaviour that aim at either promoting or resisting change in our society (Toch, 2014). According to Bowen (2014) social movements have a common purpose to collaborate for the common good of people which can make institutions more responsive and thereby influence public policy through public participation. Public participation is central to democracy and the legitimacy of government as it requires citizens to build new relationships with government and shift the power to the people (Barnes, Newman, & Sullivan, 2007).

The political history of South Africa is testimony to this shift in power from the government to the people which was achieved through social movements that refused to accept the apartheid government and challenged its authority through participation in the political process (Ballard, 2007). These social movements encouraged a “bottom up” approach to the political process to hold government accountable. Social movements have created popular spaces especially for those who have been marginalized and traditionally have been symbols of resistance in the dominant form of politics (Bhattacharya & Jairath, 2012).

Although these traditional forms of public participation discussed in the introductory section on public participation (public meetings, petitions, and face to face interactions) have been used in the past, the effectiveness of these methods have been questioned

(Rowe & Frewer, 2000). Rowe and Frewer, in the evaluation of these methods, suggest for example that public meetings are relatively cheap and quick methods of public participation, but their effectiveness is questioned as they are conducted generally over the weekdays and therefore exclude low-income citizens that are working, this therefore impacts on the representation (Rowe & Frewer, 2000).

The digitized era of social media has now been used by social movements in shaping policy as an alternative way of public participation. Further social movements in South Africa using traditional methods of public participation have also had an impact on public policy. Social movements in South Africa have shaped public policy, for example organizations like People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA) and Masimanyane Womens Rights International (MWRI) are non-governmental organizations that have advocated for a safe space for women and children free of violence, through their programs on education and training and lobbying for policy changes, not only in the Criminal Justice system but also in Health and other sectors.

However, with the increase in the use of social media we are seeing new strategies being added to already existing forms of public participation of social movements. Although these forms have been useful, the gains that we have seen over the years, (Commission on Gender Equality and other mechanisms that have been created), have had certain limitations due to not only the limited resources, but the reach and scope of these mechanisms. Traditional forms of movement building and mobilization have also had limitations specifically around communication and the reach that these movements have. In this respect the use of social media has been able to bridge that gap.

Despite the transformative nature of social movements, they have often struggled with resources and the limited spaces for public participation (Ballard, 2007). As a result of this, the sustainability of social movements has become a critical point in how they develop and evolve in the shifting contexts in which they exist. In many ways, the sustainability of these social movements is often dependent on new methods of participation and how they adapt their strategies in their engagement in the political process.

2.4 The Evolution of social media

The 21st century has seen significant shifts in varied aspects. From the global economic crisis, the change in environmental challenges, increased social inequality, and to political contestation; digitization has signalled a critical shift in the ways in which people engage with each other, but also how they engage as political agents. This shift has also seen the evolution of social movements insofar as how they have been able to make use of the wave of digitization alongside globalization in ways which are strategic and crucial to their objectives.

According to Callum Staff, the use of social media pre- dates to the twenty first century and can be traced back to the late 1990's (Staff, 2016). According to Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame, Watson and Seymour, social networking sites were created in the 1990's and these social networks provided opportunities for collective and collaborative interaction on social and political issues (Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame, Watson, & Seymour, 2011).

The emergence of social media became a reality with the growth of the internet and the attempt to get computers to communicate with one another. The first online social media site was Six Degrees, which was the forerunner to Google, Yahoo, and Facebook. These social networking sites allowed people to interact with each other and social network platforms began to include a component of political debate, public policy advocacy, and general socio-political and economic discussion (Edosomwan, Prakasan, Kouame, Watson, & Seymour, 2011). Today, social media cultivates a participatory culture enabling mass-based movements to collectively participate, creating a platform for their voices to be heard (Orth, Andipatin, Mukambang, & Wyk, 2020). This is evident in the online #GBV social media movements that have mushroomed in this digital activism space. Hollands confirms that the use of social media in political activism has become popular in the last ten years and created a communication channel between government and civil society (Hollands, 2012).

Researchers have given different meanings to social media. Staff defines social media as a web-based platform (Staff, 2016), whereas Bornman argues that social media comprises of websites and applications that allow users to share their experiences and participate on social platforms. Budree et al describe social media as the use of

technology to build collaborative networks by interacting and sharing of information, creating, and promoting online social communities (Budree, Fietkiewicz, & Lins, 2019). Social media according to Baruah takes on different forms like internet forums, weblogs, social blogs, podcasts, and social bookmarking (Baruah, 2012). Kaplan and Haenlein identified six different types of social media collaborative projects: blogs, content communities, social networking sites, virtual game worlds and virtual social worlds (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

Facebook is one of the leading social media networks (Mafihlo,2015). Since its inception in 2004, it is also one of the largest social networks (Bowen, Gordon, & Chojnacki, 2017). Baruah describes Facebook as a social networking platform which can be used as an effective tool for different purposes including crisis situations (Baruah T, 2012). Lewis and Orderson talk about the crisis of violence against women and the use of social media in highlighting the plight of women (Lewis & Orderson, 2010). They consider social media as an effective means of communication in addressing the crisis of violence against women by increasing public conversations.

Literature shows that recently, social media platforms like Facebook have encouraged policy makers and advocacy groups to interact and thereby influence policy changes (Gupta, 2018). Bornman argues that politically, there is a lack of legitimate space for policy development and that the use of social media allows for new communication channels and collective reflection (Bornman, 2018).

Like Staff, Bornman argues that research has shown that the ability of social media to mobilize large numbers of people in real time and facilitate collective discourse on a broad range of issues, makes the use of social media platforms very effective (Bornman, 2018).This is further evidenced by policy makers using social media data to make changes in government policy as this data is easily accessible in real time (Staff, 2016).

2.5 Social Movements and Digitization in the 21st Century

Initially, social media was used as a means of communication and networking, but today through evolution, there has been an explosion of subsets of social media, like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, which have evolved from mere entertainment and

online communication, into platforms for activism, political education, and an opportunity to advocate for social change.

This shift in social media and its potential to make commentary on public issues and issues of social impact, has inadvertently prompted government to harness data from social media platforms in the development of policy and social dialogue on issues related to the economy, the environment, and Gender Based Violence, to name a few (Staff, 2016).

The evolution of social media, specifically Facebook, has seen this platform evolve from a means of communication and creating awareness on various issues of health and education, to a two-way communication platform through which relationships are created between government and civil society. Most researchers view social media as a means of communication and entertainment, through Facebook and Twitter, (Ciszek, 2017) while others see it as an opportunity to create awareness on health issues and education (Rusli, 2019).

According to Bowen, Gorden & Chojnacki, research has shown that Facebook is an effective social media platform for public participation in respect of political issues (Halpern & Gibbs, 2013). This is confirmed by Steenkamp and Hyde - Clarke who investigated the use of Facebook by citizens to participate in political discourse (Steenkamp & Hyde - Clarke, 2014). Mafihlo, in a research report, reveals the popularity of the use of Facebook as a means of communication for citizens, especially with government, using mobile phones (Mafihlo,2015).

Although Facebook is more popular, literature suggests a more integrative approach to the use of the different types of social media like Twitter, WhatsApp, and Instagram, and how this approach can facilitate citizen activism and participation (Budree, Fietkiewicz, & Lins, 2019). Kumwenda takes the research further by suggesting that a more integrated approach also bridges the digital divide using various types of media like newspapers and a reader posting an extract on Facebook or Twitter, thus bridging the digital divide (Kumwenda, 2016).

Facebook and Twitter were used in the political uprisings in many countries in Africa; like Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya in 2011, facilitating robust engagement and collective action between citizens using Facebook and Twitter (Jonathan, Obar,

Zube, & Lampe, 2012). These platforms were used to co-ordinate strikes and to mobilize people. These political uprisings reflect the use of social media like Facebook and Twitter that have mobilized millions of people around a common cause, bringing political change, whereas in the past newspapers, posters and leaflets were used to organize collective action (Gerbaudo, 2012).

Part of making use of social media for political, social, or general awareness is the use of hashtags. Hashtags are a fundamental part of social media mobilization as they allow people to participate by voicing their opinion on social issues affecting them and are normally used in a crisis or an emergency (Dwarakanath, 2014). #FessMustFall and #RhodesMustFall were used in these crises situations to address issues of students and created a platform which went viral and was able to advocate for change in the higher education space (Dr Onslow, 2021).

Hashtags are popularly used for online advocacy and demand attention from like-minded citizens and promote activism and mobilization online. Hashtags facilitate a more spontaneous and effective way of speedily airing the frustrations of people and allow for a culture of protest and activism. #BlackLivesMatter is a classic example of the use of hashtags to mobilize people and create activism around this issue and advocates for social justice (Mundt, Ross, & Burnett, 2018).

The #DelhiGangRape was used as an effective tool to mobilize millions of people in India around the rape crisis and thus extended the public space of citizens (Belair-Gagnon, Mishra, & Agur, 2013). In addition to this, the #RUReferenceList movement which also made use of social media to expose the rape and GBV crisis in higher education, showed how collective movements and moments on social media have not only encouraged woman to expose perpetrators of GBV using social media, they have also been used as an opportunity to address GBV and to call for the state and public institutions to implement policy and effective interventions to manage and deal with varied components of GBV (ElSherief, Belding, & Nguyen, 2017).

The Arab Spring uprising on January 25th, 2011, reflects “unprecedented use of technology” (Burford A, 2012, p 1) in achieving a political objective. The uprising of the Egyptian people played out on social media platforms, like Facebook, to voice political concerns which ultimately led to the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak. This mass social media movement challenged political, social, and economic issues

through leveraging Facebook by sharing information which led to broad based political change in this region (Eltantawy, 2011). Baron describes the Arab Spring uprising in 2011 as a “Facebook revolution” (Baron, 2012). These platforms were used for reporting and discussions, and a broad - based socio -political mobilizing of people as well as for the organization and action of the protests. More importantly these platforms allowed like - minded individuals to identify with each other in respect of a common cause. The role of Facebook played an important role in creating spaces for political discussions through social movements (Baron, 2012).

Effing, van Hillegersberg, and Huibers researched the use of social media in public participation by social movements and how today, Facebook has facilitated a more active role in public participation through mass mobilization (Effing, van Hillegersberg, & Huibers, 2011). Social movements using social media have changed the ways in which they organize as it gives a voice to ordinary citizens at very little cost with a global reach (Lopes, 2014).

Mundt, Ross, and Burnett, using the case study of Black Lives Matter (BLM), reflect on how social movements used social media as a tool to mobilize participants by expanding and strengthening the movement through support networks by assisting local BLM groups to form coalitions to increase the impact of the social movement (Mundt, Ross, & Burnett, 2018).

Studies have shown that there is a gap in the research of social networking strategies and structures that can be used to broaden community participation (Effing, van Hillegersberg, & Huibers, 2011). Black Lives matter and the Arab Spring social movements have evidenced the impact that the use of social media through Facebook can have. Beyond this, both these examples reflect the impact social networks can have, and the impact on the mobilization of participants both locally and globally, which can result in strengthening public participation of people in socio-political issues. It is argued by Lopes that there have always been social movements that have been advocated at universities and cafes, but the change in the use of social media has scaled up the participation and speed in which information is exchanged and encouraged collective discussions that cannot be censored (Lopes, 2014).

Traditionally, social movements required finances and media support to communicate, and relied on resources to sustain them whereas social media such as Facebook and

Twitter has revolutionized the way in which social movements interact in real time and mobilized large numbers speedily and more effectively (Lopes, 2014). Research has also shown that social movements can use social media for the mobilization of internal and external resources and for building coalitions (Mundt, Ross, & Burnett, 2018). The BLM movement for example, internally relied on support networks for sharing of knowledge and ideas, while externally sourcing funding for the movement and building coalitions with other groups creating a cross movement network challenging social injustices (Mundt, Ross, & Burnett, 2018).

2.6 Social Media and Gender Based Violence Advocacy

Civil society has for years organized and mobilized women around GBV issues focusing on issues of patriarchy and gender inequality. Historically these interventions have centred around cultural and traditional practices, child marriages and challenges in the judicial system around sentencing and other issues (South African Development Community, 2018).

The #TotalShutDown:24Demand campaign was not the first in terms of GBV mobilization in South Africa. Amongst others, in 2015 there was a GBV march in Pietermaritzburg, Kwa-Zulu Natal to create awareness around the 16 days of activism of violence against women. This march also saw the handing over of a memorandum to the government asking the government to act against the rising statistics of GBV (Sonke Gender Justice, 2015).

Campaigns in the past have focused on specific issues like violence against women and were characterized by one crisis after another. In 2003 there was a shift to a broader scope of GBV where activists linked GBV to health, education poverty and other issues (Britton, 2006). This period also saw the rise of ‘hashtag’ social movements mobilizing women nationally on GBV issues, in 2013 the death of Anene Booysen, #MenAreTrash in 2016, with women talking about emotional abuse (Vetten , 2021).This reflects the use of social media in the past, especially as a vehicle for activism and in many respects has given the impetus to the social movements today that have successfully used social media as a tool to mobilize women, as was the case with the #TTS. The use of hashtags by social media movements was therefore an

important method that was used by Gender Based Violence movements more especially in times of crisis.

Social media, as discussed above, has become a tool for social justice and activism by mobilizing people and has also revealed a powerful lens into GBV, through the sharing of personal stories and creating awareness around this issue (ElSherief, Belding, & Nguyen, 2017). Social media offers a platform that creates mass-based awareness on crisis situations and calls for action on broad based social and political issues, which traditional forms of organizations are not able to do at this level due to their limitations in geography, capacity, and resources.

The potential of social media is the communication strategy that can enhance awareness, allow robust dialogue, mobilize, and influence policy on GBV (Liou, 2013). Collective action is promoted by using social media as a tool, more specifically Facebook and the use of the hashtag that allows for conversations on issues of GBV (ElSherief, Belding, & Nguyen, 2017).

In the last decade, social media has been used as an activist platform not only for racial equality, like the #BlackLivesMatter. It has also become a platform for gender, sexual identity, and sexual violence issues. It has not only been a platform for the expression of stories and instances of sexual violence, but it has also been a space where popular discourse and debates of patriarchy, masculinities, and gender- powered relations are discussed.

Looking at South Africa specifically, there have been many social media movements that have highlighted socio economic issues. For the purposes of this research, review focus will be on the more recent social media platforms that have used Facebook and other forms of social media to mobilize people around social justice issues.

In 2017, #NotInMyName was formed by activists after the death of Karabo Mokoena, who was brutally murdered by her ex -boyfriend. This hashtag was in response to #MenAreTrash which started after the death of Karabo, prompting women to take to social media by sharing their own experiences (Mukoma, 2017). The platform allowed women to share their experiences and to collectively address issues of gender-based violence and the challenges that they faced. #JusticeForTshegoPule, #JusticeForNaledi, #JusticeForSanelisiwe reflected the serious state of gender-based

violence in South Africa and demonstrated the use of social media to ensure justice for these women (The Citizen 9th June 2020).

The Facebook platform was used to share experiences of women, but also to share information on the challenges facing women and called for stronger punishment for perpetrators of GBV. Through these Justice hashtags the collective voice of society is harnessed in addressing the issues and challenges of Gender Based Violence by using social media.

In addition, the strategies used by the #RapeMustFall and #FeesMustFall movements reflect the strategic use of not only Facebook but also of other social networks like Twitter, which has attracted both national and international attention in the fight against Gender Based Violence (Hussen, 2018). This was achieved through the strategic use of online space and real time Twitter feeds that encouraged global digital activism and collective conversations using hashtags.

Louden, in a case study of the Treatment Action Campaign (TAC), an organization championing the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS, researched the mobilization strategies of this social movement revealing the use of social media combined with the use of emails, mobile telephones, and the internet, which allowed for participation of poorer participants as well as broadening the scope of accessibility of information and resources around the campaign (Loudon, 2010, Hussen, 2018).

More recently, a study by Anyidoho, Crawford and Medie argue that social movements play a critical role in the adoption of laws affecting the rights of women, but question whether they can influence the implementation of policy as they acknowledge that there are many factors contributing to the implementation of policy (Anyidoho, Crawford, & Medie, 2021). This reflects the strength of social movements in successfully advocating for policy change, but the need for a more holistic process in public participation. Furthermore, this research identified both internal and external factors that impact the implementation of policy and how social movements can play a role in the implementation process.

The link between the use of social media, specifically Facebook and Twitter, and social movements has changed the strategies that can be used to mobilize people. The literature review reveals the coalition building, the resource mobilization strategies and

social networking that has strengthened social media movements, but also reflects the different internal and external strategies that can be used to broaden the impact of social movements on public participation.

2.7 Conclusion

The use of social media by social movements facilitating public participation are crucial concepts in creating the scope for the analysis of social media engagements, mobilization, policy debates, and contributions related to GBV. Public participation in social media and the influence this has on policy, creates the opportunity to analyse the intersection of the use of social media and public participation. Beyond government and think tanks making use of social media for data purposes, here we can see social media as an alternative and effective tool to broaden the scope and terrain of public participation.

This research will make use of these theoretical concepts through a case study of the #TotalShutDownCampaign's use of social media supported by their internal strategies and structures in influencing policy on GBV in South Africa.

Social media will be used in its broad and all -encompassing sense which goes beyond entertainment and communication. Instead, social media will be used as a platform imbued with varied political, social, cultural, and educational dynamics which have the potential to contribute to, or shape public discourse on issues, in this case GBV.

Viewing social media in this way allows us to see it not as an apolitical space which does not have cross cutting, conflicting, and multiple issues related to social justice. Instead, social media is seen and understood as a microcosm of society and gives us the scope to be able to see and appreciate its complexity, and its ability to be central to and contribute meaningfully to public discourse. Public participation in social media and the contribution this has on the policy environment, creates the opportunity to analyse the intersection of the use of social media by social movements and public participation strategies used.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

2.8.1 Introduction

In Qualitative research, a theoretical framework can serve as a lens to guide the research conducted. This theoretical enquiry will look at the models of different academic writers on social movements and their use of social media to effect change in our society. Specifically, the theoretical framework will look at the theories used to understand the activism and mobilization of people using social media, and how this has had an impact on the decision making of government.

For the purposes of this research, the focus of this theoretical framework will consider the resource mobilization theory and the social movement theory as they are closely linked to the leveraging of social media in social movements and more importantly the research question.

2.8.2 Resource Mobilization theory

The resource mobilization theory was formulated in the 1970's by theorists in North America. While at the same time in Europe theorists developed the social movement theory (Edwards & Kane, 2014). Both these theorists rejected the traditional notion that social movement participants were deviant or irrational, but rather that they are rational participants pursuing their desired goals (McAdam, 1982) (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). Historically, the resource mobilization theory focused on the reasons why people participated in social movements (Kandermans, 1984). Personality traits and marginality were some of the reasons why people joined social movements.

In the resource mobilization theory, there has been a shift from irrational social movement participants to a more rational movement of participants in their activism for social change (Jenkins, 1983). Theorists of resource mobilization theory have focused on social movements involving institutionalized change rather than personal change like cults and religious groups (Jenkins, 1983). These social movements attempt to influence social change representing interest groups previously excluded from polity that have identifiable goals (Tilly, 2004). Traditionally, theorists focused on the social psychology of collective movements but today the focus in social

movements revolve around the mobilization of resources, the synergies between social movements, and more importantly the dependency on external resources and effective strategies (McCarthy & Zald, 1977).

The approaches of both McCarthy and Zald, and Tilly looked at social and political movements as movements for social change and are very goal orientated (McCarthy & Zald, 1977) (Tilly, 2004). According to McCarthy and Zald and other sociologists, the resource mobilization theory addresses many of the questions that have challenged leaders of social movements and theorists by looking at the changes of social movements in respect of their growth, dynamics, strategies, and their decline (McCarthy & Zald, 1977).

Strategically this involves mobilization of supporters, sympathizers and interorganizational support. This also allows social movements to utilize external resources which includes social media and other existing networks. Edward and Kane identify three categories of resources, money, people, and organizations (Edwards & Kane, 2014).

These resources inform research by theorists in understanding the development of social movements, the strategies movements use and the outcomes they achieve. According to Mkhize and Davids, this helps in identifying the scarcity of resources in social movements (Mkhize & Davids, 2021). This theory also highlights the importance of structural factors, for example accessing resources and the status of individuals in the social movements (Kandermans, 1984). According to both Kendal and Manky the success of social movements is dependent on effective mobilization of resources which contributes to the realization of the movement's goals (Kendal, 2006) (Manky, 2018).

Generally, the resource mobilization theory upholds that political action is normally socially structured and that activists have resources available to them that are accordingly structured (Rootes, 1990).

2.8.3 Social Movement theory

The 1970's saw the emergence of research on social movements of the sixties. This research studied the origins, purpose, and impact of these social movements thus

developing new social movement theories (Edwards & Kane, 2014). Langman argues that traditionally, social movement theory focused on local political issues and mechanisms to promote collective action. However today with the advent of globalization and the effective use of social media, theorists have been prompted to rethink social movement theory (Langman, 2005). This transformation into the technological era has changed the trajectory of the social movement theory into a robust, interactive platform using the internet and other forms of social media like SMS, Instagram and blogs that has revolutionized social activism.

There is a shift from a more collective action to a more connective action as described by Chen and Liao (Chen & Liao, 2014). In the past activists of trade unions and mass-based movements used social media for information and communication because of its speed and real time responses (Soares & Joia, 2015).

This has further impacted on the leadership of social movements from a hierarchical structure to a more horizontal structure which impacts on the dynamics of social movements both internally and externally through the acquisition of resources and the composition and structure of the social movement (Chen & Liao, 2014).

The role of leadership within social movements has been questioned although some theorists argue that the advent of technology has created new forms of leadership (Chen & Liao, 2014). Decentralized and horizontal structures encourage different actors in different places to interact through social media networks like Facebook and Twitter, enabling them to share their grievances (Soares & Joia, 2015). Weber and King highlighted structural possibilities and mobilization of social movement resources that facilitated collective action (Weber & King, 2013).

Theorists are asking questions about how social media is changing the face of collective action and the means of communication used by activists (Chen & Liao, 2014). According to Chen and Liao this shift in communication strategies supplements existing theories in three ways. This shift in communication strategies is critical in creating public emotion around a specific issue. Secondly, it has given rise to new types of leadership, within social movements, who are skilled in the use of social media and politically savvy. Lastly the mobilization of people in social movements is easily facilitated through these communication strategies (Chen & Liao, 2014).

This mobilization via social media is reflected in the Arab Springs protest action, mass-based movement in Spain (2011), and the protests in Brazil in 2013. These movements displayed the shift in mobilization strategies compared to traditional movements of trade unions and political parties (Soares & Joia, 2015). Lopes supports the contention by Soares and Joia that mobilization strategies have shifted from universities, coffee shops and other social hubs to internet mobilization through social networks and platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube (Lopes, 2014).

Jensen argues that social media is also more commonly used when government mechanisms are failing to address grievances of the people (Jenkins, 1983). Furthermore, the advantage of using social media avoids the traditional gatekeepers and government blockages, allowing participants to communicate directly with activists on collective issues (Isa & Himelboim, 2018).

The resource mobilization theory will guide the researcher in understanding the challenges of the #TheTotalShutDown campaign in gaining access to resources, and the constraints that were placed on the movement to broaden the scope of their resource mobilization given the challenges that they faced. This theory will also be used as a lens to analyse and assess the internal and external resources, structures and mechanisms used by the #TTS campaign in leveraging social media.

The social movement theory is relevant to this research as it allows the researcher to reflect on the shift from collective to connective action of social movements. In this case analysis of the #TotalShutDown campaign (#TTS), the social movement theory explains the transformation into the digital era and the leveraging of social media in social justice activism. Furthermore, this theory questions the leadership dynamics and structures of social movements which will assist the researcher to reflect on the research objectives which investigates the internal mobilization strategies, structures, and mechanisms of the #TTS.

2.9 Conclusion

This chapter evidenced the literature on the public participation, social movements and traditional forms of public participation, social movements, and the digitization in the 21st century and the use of social media and GBV, drawing the links between these

concepts. This chapter assisted the researcher to contextualize the methodology used for this research and informed the process of the research approach.

The theoretical framework gave the researcher an insight into the models of different theorists in the use of social media and the social movement and resource mobilization theory, which highlighted the shift in social movement theories from the traditional models of collective action to a more connective action. Literature reveals that these theories are constantly evolving and are changing given the social, political, and cultural environment.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 Introduction

Research methodology is seen as a process resolving research problems. This then necessitates the researcher understanding certain techniques and procedures in respect of that problem (Kothari, 2004).

According to Noor the research methods used is also dependent on the social phenomena to be researched (Noor, 2008). The research methods selected in the methodology will enable the researcher to effectively solicit responses from the participants with reference to the research question that needs to be answered.

There is a distinct difference between the concepts of a method and methodology. A method is the practical steps used to solicit responses from a participant, for example an interview, whereas a methodology is an ideological and theoretical model or set of beliefs that guides the researcher in the selection of the methods to be used in the social phenomena researched (Wahyuni, 2012).

3.2 Research Approach

A research approach according to Creswell is dependent on the nature of the research problem (Creswell, 2014). Further Creswell defines a research approach as:

Plans and the procedures for research that span the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis, and interpretation". (Creswell, 2014, p 31)

Merriam and Tisdell describe qualitative research as "research focused on discovery, insight, and understanding from the perspectives of those being studied, and offers the greatest promise of making a difference in people's lives." (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p 25).

For this research, the qualitative research approach will be used as it is best suited for a case study analysis (Brajanac, 2019). The need for rigor in data collection makes the qualitative approach more effective and trustworthy for the aims and objectives of this research. Using the qualitative research method, this research aims to use a case study approach as a unique method to interview that lends itself to inquiry and the ability to ask questions about the unit of analysis (Rowley, 2002).

Noor describes case studies as a "strategic qualitative research methodology" (Noor,

2008, p 1602) and despite criticism of case studies lacking "scientific rigor" (Noor, 2008, p 1603) and not being able to address "generalizability"(Noor, 2008, p1603), it can still be used as a reliable tool when dealing with the nature of a social phenomenon which allows for insight, discovery, and interpretation when focusing on a particular issue (Noor, 2008).

A case study is effective when the researcher needs to undertake in - depth analysis of an issue in its real- life context (Crowe, et al, 2011). Through this methodology, new insights will be gathered on the phenomena. Case studies are also useful in answering the question how? and why? (Rowley, 2002). According to Yin, case studies can be used to explain, or describe a phenomenon as it occurs in its daily context (Yin, 1999). Case studies allow you to understand the phenomena and to capture different perspectives. According to Yin (2003) the case study method allows a researcher to understand complex social phenomena. This method allows the researcher to maintain a holistic picture of real- life circumstances.

In addition, case studies allow for lessons to be learnt through obtaining detailed knowledge on a phenomenon using multiple sources of data that supports new theories and techniques (Range, 2019).

Case studies are commonly used for organizational studies and the Social Science field and despite criticism of the use of this approach, they can be useful in gaining insight into a particular issue, or the nature of the phenomena to be investigated (Noor, 2008).

This case study will not focus on the entire movement but rather on a particular issue internally within the movement, because this research is looking at how things happened, therefore a case study would be best suited for this type of research (Noor, 2008).

Further, according to Yin, using a case analysis allows a researcher to explain a phenomenon and can assist the researcher in explaining the causal links to policy initiatives (Yin, 1999). Accordingly, case analysis of how the #TTS leveraged social media to influence the policy environment is best suited to understanding internally how the #TTS accomplished this.

The research in this study will attempt to explain the perceptions and views of the organizers on a national and provincial level of the #TotalShutDown: 24Demands campaign regarding leveraging social media and the internal structures and mobilization strategies used to influence the public policy environment.

3.3 Research Tools and their Application

Rowley argues that research design is an action plan that guides you from the questions to the conclusions (Rowley, 2002).

The primary research methods that would be used are semi-structured interviews. To this end, online individual interviews were conducted using a semi structured interview guide with open ended questions that were able to facilitate responses from the members (Vandermause & Fleming, 2011).

The interview process, especially in qualitative studies, allows the researcher to probe and explore deeper and is a useful tool to corroborate other resources (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012). Interviews allow the researcher to identify new trends and observations that can address the phenomena being investigated. This two – way conversation allows for the collection of data through the sharing of perceptions, and by observing the behaviour of the participants (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012).

Initially focus group discussions were considered as part of the research process but due to practical reasons of participants not being available at scheduled times and the Covid-19 restrictions, the researcher decided to proceed with individual interviews which facilitated a broader discussion on the questions in the interview guide sheet.

The use of semi-structured interviews allowed participants the flexibility to interpret a question in their own way and further allowed the researcher to clarify questions and explain the question to the participant (Babbie, 2014).

This method of interviewing allowed the researcher to use an interview guide sheet with core questions that define the scope of the interview and further permits the researcher to ask probing questions which facilitates the process of triangulation of other data sources (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012).

Individual interviews were conducted with coordination committee members of the #Totalshutdown: 24DemandsCampaign who were part of either the national or regional coordination committees.

This purposive interaction through asking questions from the interview guide sheet enabled the researcher to draw on the perceptions of the participants. The duration of the interviews averaged between forty-five minutes to one hour. Further, the transcription of the interviews allowed the researcher to verify the data collected especially for audit purposes.

The secondary research method used was document analysis which included a review of the internal policy documents of the #TotalShutDown campaign, Facebook posts, the 24 demands of the #Totalshutdown: 24DemandsCampaign, as well as externally written policy reports following on the national and provincial marches, and any other relevant resource which highlighted how the #Totalshutdown: 24Demands campaign leveraged social media to influence GBV policies in South Africa.

Document analysis, although not universally recognized, is commonly used by researchers especially in cases where they are relevant (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012). Wagner et al further go on to describe “documents” broadly to include historical writings, reports, government documents, mass media and others (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012).

For the purposes of this research, documents were selected based on their content and relevance to the case study of the #TotalShutDown: 24Demands campaign. Reference was also made to The Report of the Presidential Summit against Gender- based Violence and Femicide, 2018, the GBV and Femicide Declaration, November 2018, The Emergency Response action plan on GBV and Femicide, April 2020, and The National Strategic Plan on GBV and Femicide, March 2020. These documents informed the question on the impact of the use of social media as a tool on the policy environment.

This use of multiple techniques in data collection, using semi-structured interviews as primary data and document analysis and observations as secondary sources of data collection allowed for triangulation of data and compensated for any limitations (Yin, 1999). These research tools enabled the researcher to triangulate the data collected from the interview process and ensure reliability and validity on a holistic level.

3.4 Sampling

The size of the population for this study on a national level was approximately 23, while on a provincial level the composition of the committee members fluctuated between 5 in the smaller provinces and 15 in the larger provinces.

From this population, 10 members were selected and interviewed overall, 5 on a national level and 5 on a provincial level.

In choosing a sampling technique it can either be probability or non- probability sampling (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012). Although probability sampling is preferable for research as the results of the research can be generalized (Acharya, Prakash, & Saxena, 2013), for this research non-probability sampling was selected as it allowed the researcher more flexibility in the selection of the sample for the research.

Neuman and others support this method of sampling, as in qualitative research we select a few relevant cases to allow the researcher more insight and understanding of certain phenomena in the social world (Neuman, Barnes, & Sullivan, 2014). This type of sampling is commonly used in qualitative research and allows the researcher to identify the participants that are a representation of the population (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012).

There are 4 types of non-probability sampling, namely convenience, snowball, quota, and purposive (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012). For the purposes of this research, purposive sampling will be used as according to Neuman this method is more effective when choosing participants that are informative (Neuman, Barnes, & Sullivan, 204). Babbie reinforced purposive sampling as the researcher can purposively select participants in respect of the research question and the overall goals of the research (Babbie, 2014).

The sampling method used allowed the researcher, through her own experience and knowledge, together with the consent and assistance of a national coordination member of the #TotalShutDown campaign, to identify the most suitable coordination members on a national and provincial level who are representative of the population (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012).

Of the 23 national members 5 were selected from the coordination committees on a national level and 5 on a provincial level, who were involved in the day to day organizing of the #TotalShutDown: 24Demands campaign

Further, members interviewed were requested to recommend other members involved in the coordination committees of the #TotalShutDown: 24 Demands campaign on the national and provincial coordination committees, to address the issue of gate keeping.

This research sampled 10 members of the #TotalShutdown: 24DemandsCampaign, 5 members on the national coordination committee and 5 members as representatives of Gauteng, Limpopo, Northwest, Eastern Cape, and Kwa-Zulu Natal. Participants were interviewed using the individual interview process which was guided by a semi-structured questionnaire.

On a national level, the founder of the #TotalShutDown: 24 Demands campaign was interviewed, the national head of media and communications, provincial coordinator and other members who formed part of the different portfolio groups.

Geographically, members were selected from different provinces of the organizing committees to ensure representation on a national and provincial level and to solicit responses and perceptions of the use of social media, the internal mobilization strategies, and structure of the movement.

Online interviews were used to facilitate communication as it was a safer option due to the covid situation. These online interviews were recorded and subsequently transcribed to ensure an accurate account of the participants responses to the semi structured questionnaire.

TABLE 3.1 Interview participants: National Co-ordinating committee: #TotalShutDown:24Demands campaign.

Participants	**Position**	**Reasons for selection**
Participant 1	Founder of #TotalShutDown campaign.	Knowledge of the historical background of the #TotalShutDown campaign.
Participant 2	Head of Media	Journalist and gender activist.
Participant 3	Coordination Committee member	Started provincial groups with founder.
Participant 4	Coordination Committee member	Student activist
Participant 5	Coordination Committee member	Participated both in national and provincial coordination committees

TABLE 3.2 Interview participants: Provincial Co-ordinating committee: #TotalShutDown:24Demands campaign

Participants	**Position**	**Reasons for selection**
Participant 1	Gauteng: coordination committee	Student activist and participation in all portfolios committees
Participant 2	Limpopo: coordination committee	Involved in the mobilization of participants.
Participant 3	Eastern Cape: coordination committee	Participated in national and provincial coordination committees

Participant 4	Northwest: coordination committee	Journalist and participation in the portfolio committees

Participant 5	Kwa-Zulu Natal: coordination committee	Co-Ordinator of the Provincial coordination committee.

3.5 Process of Analysis

Neuman describes qualitative data analysis as the process of,

"Organizing specific details into a coherent picture, model, or set of tightly interlocked concepts." (Neuman., 2014, p 479).

The process of analysis allows the researcher to make sense of the data through simplifying and transforming the data (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012).

Thematic analysis is a common method used by researchers in qualitative research as was used by Soares and Joia in their research on the "Influence of Social Media on Social Movements" where key words were identified in sixty-four different journal articles (Soares & Joia, 2015).

Other researchers use thematic process to analyse responses from Facebook focus groups and triangulated this data with data collected from Facebook comments (Orth, Andipatin, & Mukumbang, 2020).

Generally, thematic analysis is used to analyse qualitative data with the purpose being to understand the phenomena and gain insight into how a particular phenomenon occurred (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012). Thematic analysis also allows for the flexibility of interpreting the data, although caution needs to be applied for ethical reasons not to be subjective in the interpretation of the data, as this could skew the results of the research.

Thematic analysis was used in this research to analyse the content of the transcripts of the individual interviews from the national and provincial coordination committee members and secondary data collected from the #Totalshutdown: 24DemandsCampaign.

The method of analysis for this research will be a deductive a priori method which will identify codes and subsequently themes addressing the research questions and the questions in the interview guide sheet (Peel, 2020). The deductive analysis is best suited to the researcher's theoretical and analytical interest. This method of analysis will allow the researcher to simplify the data and focus on the main characteristics of the data that could result in themes emanating from the data set. This process of analysis will allow the researcher to identify patterns and themes in the data collected and to report findings with clarity and validity (Miller & Parsons, 2020).

The initial process involved thorough reading and identifying potential themes and patterns followed by coding the data into broad themes and then reassessing the data to confirm that they are in the correct themes, and if not, they would need to be recoded until they fit into the correct themes (Miller & Parsons, 2020).

The analysis of the data will focus on the main themes identified in the discussions and identify trends and outlying themes that are important and will add rigor to the research.

The analysis of both primary and secondary data will allow for triangulation of the data, more specifically the data collected from the internal process of individual interviews of national and provincial coordination committee members in comparison to an internal analysis of only Facebook posts on the #TotalShutDown :24Demands campaign and secondary data of the 24 Demands that was submitted to the President and external documentation of policy reports.

This will also allow for further triangulation of data collected and identification of trends and themes that will be relevant to the research question. This combination of primary and secondary data analysis will also increase the trustworthiness of the study (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012).

3.6 Limitations, feasibility & positionality

Some challenges were time constraints, availability, and the scepticism of co-ordinating committee members of the study to be conducted. On many occasions interviews needed to be re-scheduled due to the unavailability of the participant due to work commitments. In anticipation of this problem, the researcher ensured that more than 20 members were approached to allow for those who cancelled interviews at the last minute. Although the scheduling of the online interviews was done a few weeks before, there were still interviews that had to be re - scheduled and in some cases cancelled because of the unavailability of the participant.

Limitations of the study involved the unavailability of some members which was beyond the control of the researcher, who did try to accommodate those participants who were able to re-schedule their interview. Furthermore, there was also the issue of connectivity and data availability, although all interviews were set up by the researcher and links forwarded to participants to access. In some cases, the researcher was forced to telephonically interview the participant as they were unable to access the link due to connectivity problems, as some of them worked in the rural areas.

In the sample selection, the researcher did achieve data saturation as during the process of the data collection, the data collected was repetitive and no new data was forthcoming (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012). This phenomenon was recognized by Creswell and suggested that between 3-5 participants be used in case study research (Creswell, 2014). As the method used in this research was also individual interviews it is possible for sample size to be small as the researcher during the interview process identified repetitive data.

The issue between individual comments versus the collective can also result in conflict which does have an impact on the reputation of the person. It was identified by the researcher that there was diversity in the selection of the participants which also resulted in some conflict when it came to processes within the #TotalShutdown campaign.

This impacted on the rules and guidelines of the #TTC, as there was disagreement and difference of opinions on the issue of intersectionality. One of the rules which evidenced this was that no men were allowed to participate in the process or marches.

Many of the members in the #TotalShutdown: 24DemandsCampaign come from a feminist activist background which could also generate data that reflects a certain viewpoint. Most of the participants were gender activists and student activists with a very strong feminist background.

The researcher being a feminist human rights activist, could also result in the interpreting of data from a certain perspective. Therefore, the researcher ensured that subjectivity was avoided in the analysis and interpretation of the data collected, by confirming with members the correct interpretation not only in the interview process but also in the transcription of the interview sessions.

Given that members of the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign have a strong intersectionality and feminist composition, the selection of the coordination committee

members for the individual interviews needed to ensure a balanced selection of all representations on a national and provincial level. Although the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign is a much more homogenous group, the participants do come from different ideological backgrounds despite a shared feminist background.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Ethical guidelines are an important consideration from the research process to the implementation process, to ensure that participants are not harmed physically or emotionally by the research conducted (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012).

3.7.1 Informed consent

In the collection of primary data, the informed consent of a participant is paramount in their willingness to participate in the research. Informed consent protects the right to privacy section 14 of the 1996 Constitution of South Africa.

According to Kumar, informed consent means that the participant must be aware of what type of information is required from them and what is the objective and purpose of the study and if the study will affect them (Kumar, 2014).

In this study, informed consent was sourced and was a necessity when collecting data (Beninger, 2017). Anonymity was also ensured for coordination committee members who participated in the research and full disclosure was made on the purpose of the research. Co-ordinating committee members were also given the option to opt out of the interviews if they so desired. All interviews were recorded once written permission had been received from all committee members.

A consent form drafted by the researcher was signed by the Founder and a national member of the organizing committee of the #TotalShutDown:24Demands campaign on behalf of coordination committee members to be interviewed on a national and provincial level.

An Ethics submission was made to the Wits University Human Research Ethics Committee for approval. The vulnerability, safety, confidentiality, and anonymity of all participants in the individual interviews was ensured by excluding all personal and irrelevant data which could potentially make the participants identifiable.

3.7.2 Anonymity and confidentiality

Non-disclosure of the identity of the researcher is important for the researcher to ensure and maintain throughout the research process. The researcher is aware of the identity of the participant but does not disclose it, as this creates a relationship of trust between the researcher and the participant (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012). Although confidentiality and anonymity were emphasized and explained by the researcher, some participants expressed their willingness to waive anonymity.

A brief synopsis of the research to be conducted was circulated to all participants before the interview process together with a copy of the interview guide sheet, depending on whether the participant was from the national or provincial coordination committees.

3.7.3 Voluntary participation

Due to the schedules of most of the participants, the researcher did ensure the voluntary participation of all participants and tried to accommodate the participants according to their availability. Accordingly, the participants were also informed that there is no monetary compensation for their participation in the study and that they could withdraw from the interview at any stage should they request to do so. Most of the participants were eager to participate as they were interested in the field of study and the importance of the study being conducted (Kumar, 2014).

3.8 Validity, reliability, dependability

Reliability and validity encourage rigor in any research. The credibility of the research contributes to this rigor (Roberts & Priest, 2006). Although validity and reliability are separate concepts, they are closely linked and require the use of reliable and valid instruments to ensure a valid research process (Wagner, Kawulich, & Garner, 2012).

Validity refers to the truthfulness and authenticity of the responses of the people who live it daily (Neuman, Barnes, & Sullivan, 2014).

In this research validity was secured through a well-developed interview guide sheet with core questions sourcing the perceptions of participants on the use of social media by the #TotalShutDown: 24Demand campaign in impacting on the policy environment.

Neuman et al state that the reliability of the study is dependent on the consistency of the study (Neuman, Barnes, & Sullivan, 2014). Both the concepts of validity and reliability establish the credibility, trustworthiness, and dependability of the study.

Representation of the individual interviews was taken into consideration to ensure a diversity of members and that the data collected is truly reflective of the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign and the diverse views.

Secondary data further triangulated the data and encouraged and supported validity, reliability, and dependability of the research. The trustworthiness of data collected will also be subjected to peer examination by the research supervisor.

3.9 Conclusion

In choosing a qualitative research approach the aim of the researcher was to respond to the main research questions and objectives of the study, being leveraging of social media by the #TotalShutDown:24Demand campaign and the mobilization strategies and structures used to influence the policy environment in South Africa. This research purposively chose a sample of 10 participants from the coordination committees, 5 nationally and 5 provincially.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants of the coordination committees that were involved in the various portfolio committees, especially participants from the media portfolio. The selection of participants was also geographically representative of some of the provinces, namely Kwa-Zulu Natal, Gauteng, Limpopo, Northwest, and the Eastern Cape.

Data collected was facilitated through an online interview process using semi-structed interview guide sheets and subsequently transcribed by the researcher. Ethical considerations were respected throughout the research process and the data collection process. Limitations of the study have also been highlighted and acknowledged.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the presentation of data collected in the interview process using a semi – structured interview guide sheet. Further secondary data, that being, internal, and external documentation of the #TotalShutDown:24Demands campaign (#TTS), was also analysed. 5 participants were selected from the national and 5 from the provincial coordination committees. Both primary internally and secondary data internally and externally will be analysed with a view to triangulation of data to ensure credibility.

This chapter deals with both primary data analysis looking at the transcripts of the interviews conducted using semi-structured interview guide sheets and secondary data analysis using documentary analysis of all documents internally and externally relevant to the case analysis of the #TotalShutDown:24Demands campaign in leveraging social media to influence public policy.

The primary purpose of the data collected during the interview process was to explain the leveraging of social media by the #TotalShutDown:24Demands campaign in influencing the policy environment. Secondly, to assess the internal strategies of the #TTS in respect of their composition, structure, and mobilization mechanisms. Thirdly, using document analysis to assess both internal and external documentation of the #TTS in the public participation process. This chapter further presents the findings of this analysis categorized into themes. The perceptions of the participants of both the national and provincial coordination committees will be presented and discussed using the thematic approach. The section on document analysis will also analyse the data identifying themes in the internal and external documentation relevant to the

#TTS, focusing on the Facebook posts and 24 demands internally and selected policy documents externally.

The presentation of the data revolves around the main question:

- *How has the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign leveraged social media in influencing public policy on GBV in South Africa?*

This main question is underpinned by the following objectives:

- *To investigate the leveraging of social media as a tool by the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign.*
- *To determine the strategies and mechanisms and structures used by the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign to mobilize women nationally and regionally.*

4.2 Research Findings and Presentations

The data collected from both the national and provincial interviews were categorized into the following themes: internal structures of the movement, strategies of the movement which included leveraging social media, mobilization, and other strategies. As this is a case analysis of the #TotalShutDown campaign a brief historical background of the campaign will also be explained from a national and provincial perspective.

4.2.1 National Co-ordinating Committee of the #TotalShutDown: 24Demands Campaign. (#TTS)

4.2.1.1 Background /Context:

This section of the analysis outlines the historical background of the #TTS from the perceptive of the members of the national coordination committees interviewed. To get an understanding of this, the question asked to the participants was:

"What is the historical background of the #TTS?"

3 participants responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 1: "In 2018 we had a number of women who were killed or abused, and you know on Social Media, especially on Facebook if you follow a number of women, you'll see even my wall on Facebook it was mostly about the women who died at the hands of men knowing the perpetrator or not knowing the perpetrator and those who were abused and decided to share"

Respondent 2: "So with the total shutdown campaign, the woman who started it, she just posted on social media one day saying, because we were all activists from different backgrounds, doing different things regarding gender activism and raising awareness on different sides"

Respondent 3 "Started because around 2017/18 there was an influx of social media

posts of women either being murdered or abused by their intimate partners"

The establishment of the National Co-ordinating committee arose out of a Facebook post by a GBV activist calling for the shutdown of the country.

This call to shut down the country was premised on the escalation of the killings of several women in 2018 whose stories were shared on Facebook by GBV activists. This was supported by members who stated that 2018 saw several women killed or abused and these deaths were captured on social media, especially Facebook, by women who were concerned with the increasing numbers of GBV cases (participant 1, 13th August 2021). This call to march against femicide made by one of the activists on Facebook attracted attention and gained traction as the posts increased. At this time, there were also many incidents of GBV in the media and the frustration amongst activists was increasing as seemingly nothing was being done to address these issues (participants 1,2,3,4 and 5). There was a feeling of anger and frustration that something more needed to be done to address this increase of GBV cases especially after the killing of a women by her ex-husband against whom she had a protection order (participant 2).

This led to the creation of private platforms by the national coordination committee where friends were invited to join. Communications were initially made on Facebook messenger and WhatsApp groups with about three to four people (participant 1,2 and 3). As the numbers increased, all participants joined the main Facebook page which was the official platform of the #TTS.

The main aim and objective of the #TTS was the march on the 1st of August 2018 and the development and presentation of the 24 demands that were to be made to the President (participant 1,2,3,4, and 5). The #TTS was responsible for the collating and consolidation of the 24 demands which was premised on the 24 years of democracy, which in the view of the movement, government had failed women in South Africa despite the democratic dispensation. Therefore, the 24 Demands were symbolic of the 24 years of democracy reflecting little change to the lived realities of women experiencing GBV (participants 1, 2, 3 and 4: 7th August 2021).

The participants also felt that they had the solutions to the challenges of GBV as they were the victims and survivors and could reflect on their experiences (participant 1). Because of these experiences, they felt that they were better placed to work together

with government to make changes in the policy environment as they had at first hand witnessed the failures in the Justice system.

The mobilization of women nationally culminated in the march on the 1st of August 2018. The objective was to “mainly to start August on a different narrative”, “tired of the celebrations”, “tired of tokenism”, “tired of making GBV just a buzz word” (participant 2).

When interviewed by the Daily Vox one of the #TTS activists stated that:

“We suggested to just mobilize to shut the whole country down and get the government’s attention because they are just too silent. We are being outraged on social media and having dialogues is not working. If we shut the country down and affect the economy in some way that will grab their attention.” (GBV activist: The Daily Vox, June 18th, 2018).

Members expressed that there was no anticipation of what impact this statement will have calling for a shutdown and suggesting a march to address issues of GBV and femicide. What happened subsequently is history (participant 1).

The name of the movement, #TheTotalShutDown campaign arose from the comment on Facebook to shut down the country to draw attention to the plight of women in respect of GBV (participants 1 and 3).

With the above mentioned and described by the participants, the #TTS campaign was sparked by high levels of distrust and frustration that victims and activists had in the government in relation to dealing with the issue of GBV as well the challenges in the justice systems. Beyond that, the reports and incidents of women being killed and violated, and these circulating social media, gave impetus to the call to shout down the country, and by extension, the formation of a social movement.

- **Internal composition and structure of the national #TotalShutDown movement.**

Discussion for this theme was guided by the following question:

Explain the composition and structure of the #TTS?

3 participants responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 1: "For a while there was no structure, people didn't want a structure. I believe in structure"

Respondent 2: "we had a different area we were working in so because I'm a journalist and I have a background in media, I became the head of media and communications."

Respondent 3: "In the beginning there were actually 15 individuals who joined National"

The composition of the members were mainly young women in their 20's, a few in their 30's, and the founder of the #TTS, 53 years (participant 1). Their backgrounds were women activists and students, many who already had a presence on Facebook. For example, participant 2 who had created a group called "abortion support SA" where she shared her experiences and through this platform she helped and gave support to women to find solutions and empower women (participant 2).

Some of the participants referred to themselves as a "community" that has interacted for a long time online (participant 2). Therefore, the online network of GBV activist had already existed with formal and informal campaigns leveraging social media in raising their voices on GBV issues.

Most of the participants were victims, survivors, and part of the statistics of GBV in South Africa (participant 2). Their passion and dedication, despite immense odds, was driven by their own personal experiences of GBV.

Civil society organizations were also approached to join the movement as they also came with a lot of experience (participant 2 and 3). Weekly meetings were conducted with these organizations to draw on their experiences and utilize their resources where possible (participant 1 and 3).

The start of the Facebook post by a gender activist calling for a total shut down was the initial 'structure' created for the #TTS, which was motivated by the high incidences of GBV and the frustration of women during that period (participant 1, and 4).

Although at the beginning there was no formal structure, the Facebook messenger group, which was soon developed, initiated the process of the creation of a national coordination committee and subsequently a Facebook page which everyone joined, including the provinces once their WhatsApp groups were set up (participants 1, 2,3).

There was resistance to a hierarchical structure and there was preference for a flat structure (participant 1). Later, after much discussion and debate, committees were

formed to facilitate the organization of the #TTS.

Committees were established on the national level, for example media and communications committee, and others. The media and communications committee were also responsible for social media and were driving the social media narrative of the #TTS (participant 2).

Other committees established were the policy, sponsorship, funding, and stakeholder committees, which were responsible for identifying and encouraging different stakeholders like civil society, traditional leaders, churches, unions, and faith- based organizations to join the movement (participants 1,2,3,4,5).

This also meant that a media strategy had to be developed to ensure a coordinated and structured approach (participant 3 and 4).

On a provincial level, WhatsApp groups were facilitated by national members, and once established, provincial members would continue with the process of mobilization of participants for the march with guidance from national (participants 1,2,3,4,5).

Further, in each of the provincial coordination teams there was a national representative which allowed for open communication channels between national and provincial structures and allowed for guidance from a national level without interfering with the provincial decision- making process (participants 1,2,3).

This was a strong element in the structural dynamics, although the provincial committees were open to guidance, they were protective over their regional autonomy. Although all nine provinces participated in the march, some provinces like the Northern Cape had smaller groups which went to certain strategic places to commemorate the march (participant 4).

Structurally the #TTS was made up of the national coordination committee with approximately 23 members, and portfolio committees, together with the provincial co-ordinating committees with between 5 and 15 members and provincial portfolio committees which included a national representative. It was an unregistered organization with a membership ultimately of 100 000 members.

- **Internal strategies of the national #TotalShutDown campaign.**

There were several strategies that were used by the national #TTS, with the core strategy being the leveraging of social media, mobilizing strategies, and other

strategies which were important not only on a national level but also on a provincial level.

- **Leveraging social media as a strategic tool.**

The leveraging of social media was the core theme identified in the analysis of data collected from the semi-structured interview process which were guided by the following questions:

1. *What was the motivation to use the social media platform?*

4 participants responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 1: "In the past few years Social Media has become our go to platforms for entertainment and everything"

Respondent 2: "I don't think there was a motivation, I think it's because that's where our most of our activism was in the first place for a lot of us"

Respondent 3: "The biggest motivation for us was accessibility. Just in terms of when you want to mobilise you are able to reach far more people that you would in person – so social media in a sense that's when we started the hashtag we were connecting with people from New Zealand, Australia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho – people whom we couldn't otherwise have reached had we just been doing an in person thing but even with social media as a huge reach out"

Respondent 4: "We used Social Media also for safety, you post one thing, and it goes viral, and you use # to track"

The term "keyboard warriors" used by participant 2 aptly describes the motivation to use the social media platform, as many of the participants interviewed were already active on social media and already had a presence on social media for many years.

Many of the participants were activists and had previously used social media as a means of creating awareness on different issues like participant 2 who was a journalist by profession but was the founder of "Black women's healing garden" on Facebook and was also a gender activist on sexual and reproductive rights. While other social media content on Facebook spoke to patriarchy and GBV issues and tried to influence the mind set of people through their activism online (participant 2 and 3).

Other participants were student activists who had also participated in the #FeesMustFall movement and were very active online (participant 4). Therefore, the use of social media was a natural tool as many of the participants had already been

engaging on the social media platform for a long period of time (participant 2 and 3).

The biggest motivation for the leveraging of social media, according to participant 3, was the accessibility of social media, and how once comments were posted on social media, they generally went viral or at least had the potential to.

The use of social media was an effective tool as many hours were spent contacting and responding to participants joining the WhatsApp groups and subsequently the Facebook platform (participant 1,2,3,4,5).

The use of social media was further an effective tool in influencing policy as is evident in the success of the national march on the 1st of August 2018, the 24 demands of the #TTS and the policy processes that followed, like the Presidential summit and the National plan of action and other policies which have subsequently influenced the policy environment.

In this process of leveraging social media, people from different sectors were contacted like Ministers, Mayors and policy makers that were tagged on Facebook (participant 1). This gave the #TTS an added advantage in their mobilization strategy.

Social media served as a constant reminder of the challenges faced by women around GBV issues, and this momentum was sustained by the movement at least until the end of 2018 (participant 1).

Although Facebook was the core medium of communication, other forms of social media were also used, like Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Telegram (participants 1,2,3,4 and 5).

2. Why did you use the #hashtag and the Facebook platform?

3 participants responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 1: "because people understood how hashtags work to monitor your momentum if you have # it is easy because when you use the # it is easy. It is like a filing system that documents for you without knowing"

Respondent 2: "we had seen how hashtags can get people talking and can get sort of a campaign or a message across. And, because a lot of the times in South Africa, when a woman dies, she becomes a hashtag."

Respondent 3: "The more we used the hashtag the more people were sort of like being interested"

The motivation to use the hashtag was because people knew how to use hashtags and the momentum hashtags would gain as the process unfolded. Hashtags were described by participant 4 as “an additional footprint”.

Hashtags facilitated conversations between people especially in cases where women were killed. The use of hashtags spread the message across more speedily and effectively drawing attention to the problem of GBV. Hashtags also allowed conversations to continue Twitter and other social media platforms which could increase the mobilization of women (participant 4).

When the Facebook group was created with the hashtag, it even allowed connection with people from New Zealand, Australia, Zimbabwe, and Lesotho (participant 3). This extended the reach of the movement and increased the awareness and support for their cause globally.

Participant 1 described the use of the hashtag #TTS on their Facebook page as a “filing system” that documents everything which also allows you to monitor the momentum of the process.

There was a #IwillMarchwithyou campaign, that was part of the mobilization strategy of the #TTS campaign, where women used the Facebook platform to write their stories about GBV which gave traction to others who joined the movement to march (participant 3 and 4).

3. What were the advantages and disadvantages of using this platform?

2 participants responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 1: “Its time consuming, I spent 20 hours a day on Facebook”
Respondent 2: “So using a hashtag was important to be identified but It wasn't enough to get the message to, especially those women who are not necessarily on social media”

The advantages of the use of social media were the easy access that people had to communicate with one another and to share their stories on GBV to allow their voices to be heard (participant 1). Further it was a popular platform that had already been used by activists to highlight the issue of GBV (participant 2), and therefore a natural tool to use in their activism.

The disadvantages on the other hand were that the process was very time consuming, and members spent many hours online reaching out to women to join the movement (participant 1). There was also a lack of physical interfacing with women which did not

create strong personal relationships (participant 1). Furthermore, it was challenging to manage the influx of people interacting on the Facebook platform (participant 4) as there were insufficient resources and skills to address all the issues.

Many women shared horrific stories of their abuse and women trying to run away from their abusive husbands. The #TTS did not have the necessary resources, capacity, or skills to deal with these issues (participant 4). Fortunately, organizations with skills and resources came forward to assist the #TTS in these cases. This interaction with women sharing their stories of abuse was emotionally draining and the #TTS was not psychologically prepared to deal with these types of cases (participant 4).

In addition, a lack of and /or insufficient data was also an issue as participants were volunteers and did not have sufficient resources to access social media (participant 1). This placed a huge burden on the #TTS as they were reliant on the goodwill of others, like civil society organizations.

Further, because not all women could be reached via social media, other methods needed to be used to mobilize women. Pamphlets, flyers, and banners leading up to the march had to be used to maximize the reach of the #TTC (participant 2,3 and 4).

Participants physically visited Alexander, Sandton, and other places across Gauteng to ensure that the message of the march was visible and reached as many people as possible (participant 2 and 3).

4. What was the strategy of your social media campaign?

2 responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 2: "For social media, the plan was to make sure that the main thing was that #TTS is on every social media platform."

Respondent 3: "We used a lot of twitter and Instagram, and twitter was very useful"

The social media strategy evolved over time and as the need arose. Initially it was about ensuring the presence of the #TTS on every social media platform, which would lead to tweeting on GBV issues and uploading videos aimed at creating awareness of the problem of GBV (participant 2).

The Facebook group was mainly used for the purposes of quantifying the number of women joining #TTS, while Twitter and Instagram were used to give the #TTS visibility (participant 2).

Other forms of social media were also used such as open editorials shared with the

print media, community radio interviews, and others like Instagram, and Twitter (participants 1). The use of different forms of social media and the media in general was also to give the #TTS credibility so that people could join the movement (participant 2).

5. How did you leverage social media in achieving your objective?

2 participants responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 1: "You know the more others were calling inviting others by responding that's how we leveraged it"

Respondent 3: "We had one messaging across the board even when someone from national is saying something, we had to have one vision that is how we managed a media strategy campaign"

The communications media team handled the strategy for the social media campaign, as some of the members were journalists and worked for radio stations. A strategy was adopted to develop scripts for radio interviews and to identify who would be responsible for interviews and what would be said at these interviews to reflect a common voice of the #TTS (participants 1, and 4).

Although there was some fluidity in the process there were also guidelines that informed the strategy for the social media campaign (participant 1).

- **Mobilization strategy**

Social media became a critical tool in the mobilization strategy of the National #TTS and the mobilization theme was guided by the following questions:

1. What strategy/s did you use to mobilize members nationally?

3 participants responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 1: "*we had 2 to 3 WhatsApp groups."*
Respondent 2: "One of the other things we did that worked really well was to open up an online platform to ensure that anyone – literally anyone anywhere can edit and put a demand and then we would at the end put together a team of experts to edit those demands and curate them in a way that would be presentable to government"
Respondent 3: "the idea was to engage with all the civil society organisations"

Initially the mobilizing strategy involved a few members of the national coordination committee who daily would contact and chat to women on Facebook messenger. As the process unfolded more people joined Facebook messenger and friends and colleagues were added onto the chat (participant 1).

Strategically, people with certain skills were also invited, like policy makers, lawyers and journalists who would add value to the different portfolio committees that were created later (participant 2). Ultimately 23 people joined this group from all over the country, the majority from Gauteng (participant 1).

It was established that normally, WhatsApp groups can accommodate approximately between 254 to 257 participants (participant 1). As the groups were filled, more groups were created, and in Gauteng for example, 2 to 3 WhatsApp groups were established (participant 1). Some of the provinces like the Eastern Cape also had between 2 to 3 WhatsApp groups (participant 5).

The strategy was that, where there was a need, more groups would be created to facilitate the process. Participants joined on a voluntary basis and even used their own resources to sustain the movement (participant 3).

2. *What strategy did you use to engage with the provinces in setting up their structures?*

3 participants responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 1: "We opened the 9 WhatsApp groups, and I had meetings with them every night that's how we kept the WhatsApp group going, also making them join the Facebook page"

Respondent 3: "each member of national will sit in at least one provincial committee"

Respondent 4: "people joined via the links and there was already provincial representation at national"

Once the national co- ordinating committee was established, the strategy then was to effectively mobilize participants on a provincial level. Nine WhatsApp groups were created with daily meetings scheduled that were set up to manage and co-ordinate the processes. All nine WhatsApp groups also joined the Facebook page which was the common platform for all participants (participant 1). This mobilization strategy of the #TTS extended the influence of the #TTS on a national and provincial level.

The first post on the #TTS Facebook platform was posted on the 6th of June 2018. Subsequently thousands of posts were uploaded, which can still be accessed today (participant 1). These posts mobilized participants not only in South Africa but also regionally and gaining global support.

Regular meetings also facilitated the mobilization process as each province was contacted for feedback and updates on their progress (participant 1,2 3 and 4).

The strategy involved for mobilization was spearheaded by the stakeholders committee which was primarily responsible for the mobilization of participants (participant 3 and 4). This called for the engagement and recruitment of civil society organizations as they had resources and more experience in movement building (participant 2 and 3).

This mobilization strategy assisted #TTS in increasing the number of participants for the march scheduled for the 1st of August 2018. Although there was no formal strategy in place, the members of the #TTS used their own experiences to strategize. There was flexibility in the strategies used nationally and provincially. These strategies evolved as the need arose not only nationally but also provincially.

Rhodes University and the University of Johannesburg were contacted to participate in the marches (participant 4), many participants contacted were student activists and had participated in numerous campaigns previously like #FeesMustFall.

Strategy for mobilization took place both online and, on the ground, to ensure participation of people from different sectors and to encourage a broader reach of people on the ground. This was conducted through face-to-face engagements at taxi ranks, malls and on the street, especially in cases where people had limited or no access to social media (participants 1,2,3,4 and 5). This multifaceted mobilization strategy assisted the #TTS to mobilize over 100 000 participants through leveraging social media as a core strategy together with other strategies on the ground.

- **Other Strategies Used**

Besides the use of social media as the main strategy, other strategies were also used by the #TTS to influence the policy environment.

The following question guided the discussion on other strategies.

Besides social media, were there any other methods used to influence government to change policies?

- **Date of March**

The selection of the date of the march was debated amongst members as some members were pushing for the 16th of June 2018 while others were suggesting the 9th of August (participant 1). Strategically, it was decided that the 1st of August was more appropriate as this was the start of women's month (participants 1,2, 3, and 4). Strategically the #TTS wanted to make a statement; they therefore did not want the march to conflict with the main dates that were suggested. The #TTS wanted to start August on a different narrative.

- **Policy of no men**

To maximize the voices of women, no men were allowed to join the movement or participate in the national and provincial marches (participant 1,2,3, and 4). This caused problems with the LGBTQIA group as the issue of intersectionality was questioned as some of the participants identified as men which was contradictory to the rule of no men being accepted into the #TTS (participant 1)

This strategy of no men also caused confusion and disgruntlement with those members that were in the gay activist space and identified as gay (participant 1). The rationale was this was an intersectional movement and further included LGBTQIA, but there was strong opposition to men participating in the march. This was seen as contradictory as there were females who identified as men especially in the gay space. This was a principled decision that was taken by the movement to allow only females to participate as the movement wanted to create a safe space for women to voice their concerns. It was not a popular decision as some of the provinces, like Kwa-Zulu Natal totally opposed this rule.

- **Black and Red Wednesday**

Black and red Wednesday was an initiative on the Facebook page to create awareness on GBV issues. Whether you were in church, at work, or at home, you could take pictures of yourself in these colours and upload them onto the Facebook social media platform (participant 4). This initiative was also used as a strategy to mobilize women and at the same time to create awareness around GBV issues.

- **#IWillMarch**

#IWillMarch was also a campaign to allow women to tell their stories of GBV on a private group which was another media strategy to afford women a voice to be heard and to share their stories with others who had similar experiences (participant 4).

The main aim and objective of #TTS was to march nationally to draw attention to the issues of GBV. The idea of the marches came from other marches held in South Africa like the 1956 women's march in Pretoria, the Treatment Action campaign marches, and other smaller campaigns (participant 2).

There were approximately 21 marches hosted by the #TTS nationally (participant 1). The main march was in Pretoria, with the presentation of the 24 demands to the President at the Union buildings in Pretoria (participant 1).

These marches were strategically planned to go to the most important government institutions in that province to deliver the 24 demands, for example the Union buildings in Pretoria, the House of Parliament in Cape Town and to local municipalities and other government institutions (participant 4).

- **24 Demands**

A separate link was created on Facebook for the demands that were submitted by women nationally and provincially (participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). Anyone who had access to the internet on their computers or mobile phones could include their comments on google documents (participant 4).

There were thousands of demands, which had to be narrowed down to 24 demands. This was a symbolic number as in 2018 South Africa was into its 24th year of democracy (participant 1). This also questioned what the government had done in these 24 years to address the issues of GBV in South Africa.

The 24Demands came from the participants who joined the 24Demands link. Although there were thousands of demands received, a team of experts had to edit and curate the responses in a way that would be presentable to the government (participant 2). All provinces were also encouraged to contribute to this link as people were despondent

with the current situation on GBV and were feeling disempowered. Television interviews were used to encourage people to contribute to the 24 demands and to join the march (participant 2).

These 24 demands will be discussed in more detail under the section on internal document analyses of the #TTS.

- **TV, Radio, and other strategies**

Other strategies included recording of poems, letters, and stories of women from different places sharing this on social media, television, and radio station promotions (participants 2).

Generally, the other strategies used by the #TTS supported the main strategy of leveraging social media. The strategies mentioned above further assisted the #TTS in mobilizing women nationally as they acknowledged that mobilization of women required a more multi layered approach to accommodate women from different sectors of society.

4.2.2 Provincial coordination committee of the #TotalShutDown:24Demands campaign.

The participants interviewed were selected from Gauteng, Limpopo, Eastern Cape, North - West, and Kwa-Zulu Natal and were part of the coordination committee of these provinces.

Similarly, to the national interview process, the main questions for the provincial co-ordinating committee centred around the historical development, the aims and objectives, the structure and composition, of the provincial #TTS.

The second part of the interview process dealt with the strategies used by the provincial #TTS focusing on the leveraging of social media and other forms of social media used, mobilization and other strategies.

Data collected was categorized into the same themes as the national interview process, namely the internal composition and structure, and the strategies' theme which dealt with the leveraging of social media theme, mobilization theme and other strategies.

- **Historical background**

The provincial #TTS was initiated by the national coordination committee through the WhatsApp groups and then added to the Facebook page of the national #TTS platform.

Similarly, the participants who joined these groups were gender activists and already had a presence on social media. Participants who attended the first meeting of the provincial #TTS formed part of the coordination committee. These participants were driven by the passion and the GBV issues that they dealt with daily.

The main objective of the movement was to mobilize women in the province to attend the coordinated march provincially and galvanize the voices of women to respond to the issues of GBV. It was also to break the silence around GBV as the incidences of GBV cases were on the increase.

- **Provincial Internal composition and structure of the #TotalShutDown movement.**

The #TTS was not a registered organization, so the structure initially was fluid and allowed for flexibility in the organization of the movement (participant 5: 23/12/21).

Like the national structure the provincial structure was also not hierarchical in the sense that there was no chairperson or president (participant 1: 1/08/21). The committees were relatively smaller than national, between 5 and 10 participants (participant 3: 09/09/21). In the bigger provinces like Kwa-Zulu Natal and the Eastern Cape the composition of the committees were +/- 15 (participant 4 and 5: 10/09/21)

The provincial committees also had representation from national to ensure that the core guidelines and principles were common for both national and provincial co- ordination of the movement (participant 1).

Later committees were created like the fund raising, organizing, and drafting committee which mirrored some of the national committees (participant 1). There was a devolution of duties and women were selected to co-ordinate the committees based on their skills and experience (participant 4). As resources were limited in most instances, participants had to multi- task in the organization of the provincial #TTS.

There were also weekly meetings between national and provincial structures to share updates on the organization of the marches and strategies used (participant 1). Although the province did have autonomy in respect of their decisions they were guided by national representatives.

The composition of the participants also came from the same background as national, namely student activists, online bloggers and activists who already had a presence on social media (participant 5). Similarly, to national, the participants were volunteers and worked pro bono (participant 2). In most cases these volunteers used their own funds as there was no major financial assistance, although national did raise limited funds to assist the provinces (participant 2: 24/08/21).

- **Internal Strategies of the Provincial #TotalShutDown movement.**

Like the national coordination committee, the provincial committee used social media as their core method of mobilization, but also used other strategies to suit the needs of the provinces. The strategies discussed below are some of the strategies that the provinces used which was like national as funding was a constraint and members had to find innovative ways of mobilizing women provincially as many of the areas were rural.

- **Leveraging social media as a strategic tool.**

The following questions were used to guide the interview process:

1. Explain the overall strategies used in the province and were they different to the national strategies?

3 participants responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 1: "The genesis and evolution of this movement was on a social media platform, so we organized on social media"

Respondent 3: "Used telegram to avoid infiltration of men and that it was more secure"

Respondent 4: "Used same strategy as National"

The “genesis and evolution” of this movement was on social media platforms through the Facebook groups, WhatsApp, Telegram, Twitter, and other forms of social media (participant 1). The motivation to use social media was that it was easily accessible and could reach women throughout the country (participant 2).

The core strategies which came from national and were implemented provincially, but the province did co-ordinate the marches and adapted the core strategies to suit their own local needs (participant 1, 2 and 3).

Some provinces also received support from local unions and civil society. This was a strategy that was used to ensure that the movement was able to maximize their mobilization in that province (participant 2).

This was because some of the provinces did not have sufficient funds to carry out the mobilization strategies, so they relied on local support like churches and in some instances local municipalities to assist them. Further in some provinces the local need dictated that radio stations be utilized and posters and leaflets to spread the message of the march as most women were based in the rural areas.

As there were representatives from national on the provincial structures, the strategies used in the provinces were also replicated in the province although as is evident, these strategies did evolve as the needs of the provinces changed.

2. Did you also use the social media platform? Why?

3 participants responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 1: “We were able to access it. Also, for security reasons to organize when we don’t have resources to be in different places at different times social media helps because we can connect with people anywhere in the country”
Respondent 4: “Social Media a 4th Industrial revolution and a significant tool”
Respondent 5: “national initiative, Facebook easy access”

The main reason for the use of the social media platform was that the WhatsApp groups were set up by national and all provincial groups were then linked to the national Facebook platform (participant 4 and 5).

The motivation to use social media on a provincial level was further driven by national, and the rationale for leveraging social media was the same as national. Common factors highlighted were the connectivity, ease of access, and recognition of Facebook as a significant tool (participant 1, 4 and 5).

The leveraging of social media was a powerful tool to disseminate information, to co-ordinate, mobilize and encourage a feminist narrative (participant 5)

The reason for leveraging social media was that compared to traditional media, social media enables instant communication with a larger number of people and is more cost effective (participant 1).

The use of hashtags was a new and more popular way to deliver advocacy messages and encourage discussions, especially for a mass based social movement (participant 5).

The advantages of the use of social media were that it allowed the #TTS to mobilize women not only in South Africa but regionally and globally (participant 1).

The social media strategy was to create a safe space for women's voices to be heard on GBV issues. Many women used this space to break the silence on GBV and were able to share their stories and their lived experiences (participant 3).

- **Mobilization strategy**

The mobilization strategy for the province was essentially the same, in the main use of social media in mobilizing women. However, in most cases, provinces had to adapt their mobilization strategies to suit the needs of the province, especially in rural areas. The following question guided the interview process:

1.What were some of the challenges you faced in mobilizing women in your province?

3 participants responded to the above question as follows:

Respondent 1: "A lack of resource's, monetary resources to transport – ferrying protestors from one place to another"
Respondent 3: "Lack of interest. Not a lot of women showed up and numbers were low. Finances also a challenge. No funds"
Respondent 5: "Power relations between the women"

The provincial strategy to mobilize women was through approaching other NGO's, CBOs, and civil society organizations (participant 1 and 5). Different sectors like faith-based organizations, church groups, stokvels, and government departments also assisted in the mobilization of women for the main march on the 1st of August 2018 (participant 5). In some provinces Ministers and the provincial legislatures assisted with resources and actively participated in the co-ordination of the marches (participant 5).

Provincial legislature in Kwa Zulu Natal for example, contributed funds for payment of banners and pamphlets and other expenses (participant 5).

Only women were allowed to join the movement as this was a policy that was passed down from national (participant 1,2 ,3 and 5). This was a problem for some provinces like Kwa Zulu Natal who wanted men to participate in the marches. This created conflict between national and provincial coordination committees.

A lack of monetary resources was a factor that impacted on the mobilization strategy as buses had to be hired to transport people to the marches (participant 5).

One of the strategies of mobilization was to involve the taxi ranks to spread the word about the march, and shopping malls and robots (participant 2, 3, and 5). This was so that the #TTS could reach women who did not have access to social media, further due to insufficient funds the provinces had to look at other means of mobilizing women in their region.

Besides the use of social media word of mouth was an effective mechanism to reach people on the ground that did not have access to social media (participant 2).

The challenges experienced by the provincial committees were mostly caused by a lack of funding, so different mobilization strategies had to be used to ensure that women were informed of the marches. Civil society played an important role in this process as their resources and structures were used to spread the message of the march and to get women to join the Facebook platform and submit their demands on the link (participant 5).

Some provinces did ensure that rural women were part of the process as the mobilization of rural women was challenging without the necessary funding (participant 2 and 4).

The momentum on the Facebook platform was kept alive through constant messaging up until the march on the 1st of August 2018 to ensure maximum mobilization (participant 5).

The time frames were in most cases about two weeks to strategize and mobilize women in their provinces, which was a huge challenge given that finance was an issue (participant 1). Provinces had to be innovative in their strategies to mobilize participants which reflects a multi-faceted mobilization strategy.

- **Other strategies**

- **24 Demands**

The 24 Demands process was the same throughout the provinces as they were centrally collated and finalized. Participants at the provincial level contributed to the demands and highlighted issues on GBV that were relevant to their provinces (participant 1,2,3 ,4 and 5).

- **T/shirts, radio, and other strategies**

In the provinces, posters at taxi ranks were also used to create an awareness about the national march and call for women to join the march. T/shirts were sold to increase awareness around the national march and further to generate funding (participant 3 and 4).

Traditional media like TV and radio stations were contacted specially to reach women in the rural areas as community radio stations were very popular amongst the rural communities (participant 5).

Trade unions like Cosatu assisted the #TTS in the mobilizing of women (participant 5). This together with civil society organizations and in some province's government institutions assisted the provincial coordination committees to extend their mobilizing strategies (participant 5).

One of the strategies adopted was the use of Telegram for security purposes and to ensure that men did not join the platform (participant 3). Because there were security breaches where men were joining the Facebook platform, some provinces resorted to using Telegram as it was safer and easier to control who was allowed to join this platform.

- **Black and Red Wednesday**

Like national, the red and black colour theme was replicated at provincial level (participant 4). Another effective strategy was to carry out a photoshoot with messaging on placards that went viral on the #TTS Facebook platform. The placards contained messages of the 24 demands and these photoshoots highlighted messages that spoke to GBV (participant 4).

Conclusion:

Although the research focused on the role of social media relating to public policy and the use of social media as a mobilizing strategy the data also reflected that there were

other issues not related to social media that were useful for the movement more broadly, like issues of intersectionality, toxic masculinity and sustainability that impact the movement in a critical way.

4.2.3 Document analysis: Analysis of Internal and external documents relevant to #TotalShutDown Movement.

Internal documents of the #TTS relevant to this research that were the Facebook posts on social media and the 24 Demands submitted on the Facebook link. External documents analysed comprised of the Presidential Summit report, The Summit Declaration and the Emergency Response Plan, and the National Strategic Plan of Action.

This analysis allowed the researcher to look at internal and external documents relevant to the following themes leveraging social media, mobilization, and public participation.

The document analysis assisted the researcher to understand the links between the leveraging of social media facilitating the mobilization of women and the public participation process which led to the Presidential Summit and the development of new policy in the GBV space.

The document analysis of secondary data further supports the triangulation of data and adds credibility to the research process.

4.2.3.1 Internal documentation of #TotalShutDown:24Demands campaign

The Facebook post and the 24 demands were analysed to address the research question of how the #TTS leveraged social media in influencing policy on GBV in South Africa.

On the 6th of June 2018 an official press release was made on the Facebook platform that on the 1st of August 2018, a national march will take place and that women in Lesotho and Botswana will also be participating in the march. The message mentioned that the deaths of women, children, and gender non - conforming people was a national crisis and that the social media platforms will be used to highlight this issue. The message on the Facebook group was to hold government accountable and stop rape culture and gendered discrimination that continued to endanger the lives of women.

- **Facebook posts.**

On the 6th of June 2018 the #TTS went live on Facebook after the post of one of the GBV activists, on her private Facebook page in May 2018, called for a total shut down in South Africa to address the issue of GBV. No one foresaw the impact that this call will have on the policy environment of GBV in South Africa. The Facebook page was the main platform of the #TTS and was the main tool leveraging social media in the strategizing and mobilization of over 100 000 women, not only in South Africa, but regionally and abroad. The Facebook posts analysed all the posts on this platform that was relevant to the respective themes of leveraging social media, mobilization, and public participation.

- **Communication and Resource Strategy using social media via Facebook Posts:**

The analysis of the Facebook posts focused on the mode of communication of the #TTS through leveraging social media with stakeholders that they would not have ordinarily had access to, which gave the #TTS a broader reach and scope. Social media, via Facebook, was used as the main communication tool of the #TTS to communicate and create resource mobilization strategies such as raising funds and mobilizing women. This vehicle of communication allowed the #TTS not only to mobilize resources but also to mobilize women nationally.

Early in June, Google document links, were established to start receiving the demands of the #TTS. The #TTS crowdsourced the demands and kept the link open for a week, after which a team of experts were responsible for the editing, comments, and finalization of the demands.

“#TheTotalShutdown”

We are happy to welcome you to the first draft of the demands we wish to present to government. At this stage we are crowdsourcing desired demands and you'll be able to add yours as a comment to the document. This document will remain open for at least one-week at which point the editors will close the document and focus on accepting comments, editing, and finalizing.” (Facebook post: June 7th, 2018).

The demands were organized so that they could be presented to targeted institutions from the Union Building (Office of the Presidency/Office on the Status of Women), Courts (judicial reform) Parliament (legislative amendments) and Police and Security

(policing).

Closer to the 1st of August, the national #TTS leveraged social media to raise funds for transport, print flyers/posters/banners to promote #TheTotalShutdown, rent portable toilets for march routes, public announcement systems, etcetera. Donations were sourced from the public not only nationally but globally via a Facebook link, a bank account at FNB and via PayPal.

Social media was also leveraged to advertise radio programmes which covered the reasons for the shutdown. Some radio stations allowed the national spokesperson of the #TTS to address issues like patriarchy. Radio stations country wide, especially community radio stations were also a vital tool that was used by the #TTS especially in mobilising women from the rural areas.

"#TheTotalShutdown is at work, we are challenging patriarchy. Tune into Cape Talk tonight. One of our national spokespersons Lesley Ncube (Grey Fortress) will be talking to Koketso Sechane about our movement"(Facebook post : June 13th 2018).

Podcasts were uploaded of interviews that were missed on radio stations for participants to access on Facebook.

#RedAndBlack campaigns were also advertised on Facebook for participants nationally to join and used slogans like "our bodies not your crime scene" to create awareness.

"Tomorrow's #wcw will step out in #RedandBlack to support #TheTotalShutDown against Gender based violence." (Facebook post: June 12th, 2018).

"Don't forget to wear black and red tomorrow.

In black we mourn the lives lost because of gender based violence and femicide. In red, we symbolise the blood that has been spilled."

"#TheTotalShutdown" (Facebook post: June 19th, 2018).

Women nationally posted pictures of themselves dressed in black and red on Wednesdays to drive the message of GBV. Women from Botswana and Lesotho also participated in these initiatives.

The Facebook page shared information on cases that were currently being heard in our courts like the case of the transgender woman, Mrs J who was convicted and sentenced for the murder of her husband and was placed in an all-male prison although she

identified as a female. She was discriminated against because of her gender identity, and she instituted an action in the Equality Court against the Justice Department.

Cases of young activists belonging to the LGBT group who were brutally murdered were also highlighted on this Facebook page to draw attention to hate crimes in us society. These stories of GBV were flooding the Facebook platform giving women a voice to be heard and to break the silence on GBV.

One post shared on this stated that “The 22-year-old activist was dragged from her home in Drift sands near Khayelitsha, by up to 11 men in the early hours of Sunday morning before being shot and killed. Her brutal murder is a suspected hate crime” (Facebook post: June 21st, 2018).

The high incidence of child murders and violence against children were reported on this platform, calling for changes. The victimization of female sex workers was also reported on the #TTS Facebook page.

“Female sex workers are more likely to be victimised, raped, and killed than other women at the hands of both police and clients, report activists. But if sex work remains illegal in South Africa individuals are left at the mercy of a system that dehumanises them.” (Facebook page: June 22nd, 2018).

The Gender Links Facebook page was created for a live discussion on GBV issues. Anonymous posts of intimate and horrific stories of women who were raped, abused, and sexually assaulted multiple times were shared on the Facebook platform.

Placards were created and posted on Facebook and subsequently went viral.

By the 31st of July the #TTS was officially trending on Twitter and the call was to take the digital activism to the ground.

After the national march, stories of GBV continued to be posted on the #TTS Facebook platform. Petitions were also placed on the #TTS Facebook platform calling on people to sign them. Women at Rhodes University placed a petition on the #TTS platform demanding a sexual offences unit.

- **Mobilization Strategy Through the Use of social media via Facebook**

On the 8th of June 2018 an article on Facebook highlighted the importance of mobilization and solidarity of women in marching against GBV, which included gender-non- conforming individuals, LGBTQIA, and other individuals.

“#TheTotalShutdown”

A call to all women and GNC folk (gender non-conforming folk) from various economic sectors to stay away from work and join us in marches across the country on 1 August 2018.” (Facebook post: June 6th, 2018).

A national Protest Strategy & Wellness task team meeting was hosted at Constitution Hill in Gauteng, which contributed to the mobilization of women and shared strategies of how the #TTS would be mobilizing women provincially and nationally.

“#TheTotalShutdown”

Our national Protest Strategy & Wellness task team meeting at Constitution Hill.” (Facebook page: June 14th, 2018).

Around the 24th of June 2018 there was a strong move to mobilize women as the 1st of August was drawing closer. Participants on the Facebook group were requested to remember to use the hashtag #ThetotalShutdown. A slogan appearing on the Facebook page:

“If they won't listen, we'll make them listen. If they don't care, we'll make them care.”

#Iwillmarch was also a mobilization strategy closer to the national march which told the stories of women who were abused by their partners and spouses. These stories also gained traction on BBC News Africa.

“A woman’s place is in the revolution! #TheTotalShutDown #IWillMarch” (Facebook post: June 28th, 2018).

In July the mobilization drive was at its height when the movement was on the ground in places such as Soweto, and many other places nationally to draw attention to the GBV march on the 1st of August 2018.

At the end of July 2018, the mobilization strategy was increased through the black and red campaigns and on the ground meetings at taxi ranks and at malls to encourage women to join the march on the 1st of August 2018. Universities and colleges were invited to join the WhatsApp groups and to participate in the marches. Flash mobs were used as a mobilizing strategy at malls and other venues calling on women to rise against GBV.

Strategically no men were allowed to participate in the march. This campaign galvanised over 100 000 women on Facebook who spoke truth to power and refused

to keep silent but chose to fight against neoliberalism, capitalism and a patriarchal society that dehumanised women.

- **#TotalShutDown: 24Demands.**

The 24 Demands of the #TTS called for an integrated approach to issues of GBV and represented each year in the 24 years of democracy that the government in their opinion, had failed the women of South Africa in preventing violence against women. These demands called for a multi- stakeholder process, developing a national plan of action and other policy documents discussed later in this section.

In summary the demands called for a national summit on GBVF and a national plan of action. The establishment of oversight and accountability mechanisms to ensure implementation of the national plan of action. Prevention services on gender-based violence awareness training on GBVF issues. Development of legislation combating VAW and consistent sentencing and enforcement of existing laws. Adequate training and psychosocial services to be provided for victims of violence. The resourcing of the Thuthuzela centres and gender inclusive shelters. The registration of GBVAW cases in hospitals, media campaigns and legislation sensitive to gender diversity.

These demands were drafted with a view to addressing failures within the Justice system and provided recommendations on changes to policy and action that needs to be taken to address issues of violence against women.

On Wednesday 1st August 2018 the national march of the #TTS mobilised women using social media to stand against GBV. National attention was demanded calling for sustainable action against GBV. The #TTC presented a 24 Demand memorandum to 3 pillars of governance: The Executive at the Union buildings in Pretoria, The Legislature in Parliament at Cape Town, and the Judiciary in Bloemfontein. Other Provinces presented the memorandum to local government offices.

The presentation of these 24 demands were made on the day of the national and provincial marches on the 1st of August 2018 in Gauteng, Limpopo, Mpumalanga, Northwest, Free State, Kwa-Zulu Natal, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Lesotho, and Namibia.

The collation, editing, and compilation of the 24 demands were made by the #TTS team which was facilitated through their online Facebook link which allowed participants nationally and provincially to participate in this process. The consolidation of thousands of these demands was made by a team of experts within the #TTS whose responsibility

it was to summarise the thousands of demands received from people nationally and provincially.

- **Influencing Gender Based Violence (GBV) Policy**

The participation of the members of the #TTS in forwarding their comments and suggestions on the demands of the #TTS was solicited via a link on Facebook that enabled participants to voice their concerns on GBV issues. The collection, analyses and consolidation of these demands allowed participants to make recommendations on problems existing within the GBV framework like the lack of a victim centred approach or the issue of low sentences in GBV cases.

The 24 demands where a reflection of the 24 years that South Africa was a democracy and yet neglected to protect the Constitutional rights of women to be free from all forms of violence. The 24 demands were a direct result of the shared frustrations of the #TTS with the South African government's lack of urgency in dealing with violence against women.

The formulation of the 24 Demands was to influence change in the policy environment especially in areas where the existing policy was not working. These demands were made by women who had experienced violence and the failure of the judicial system to assist them. There was a recognition by the #TTS that political will was required to make these changes.

What is important for this discussion is not so much the content of the 24 demands but the influence that it had on the policy environment as this supports the main question in this research of how the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign leveraged social media in influencing public policy on GBV in South Africa.

Demand 1 was realised on the 1st and 2nd November 2018 when the Presidential Summit was hosted by the Justice Department and attended by 1200 delegates. A draft Declaration was the result of this summit which was signed by the President and the establishment of an Interim Steering Committee set up to carry the process forward. The Interim Steering Committee also submitted the Emergency Response plan which was concluded in March 2020 and the drafting of the National Plan of Action.

Generally, the goal of the 24 demands was to ensure accountability of the government and further to ensure that the Judicial mechanisms support survivors of GBV. The #TTS also called for more accountability with regards to law enforcement and sentencing in respect of GBV cases (#TTS Demand 6).

The #TTS demanded a more comprehensive policy on GBV and the provision of services that set “clear legal and policy framework for protection and support services for victims and survivors of violence” (#TTS Demand 14, 2018).

A National strategic plan addressing GBV, and gender inequality was also demanded by the #TTS (#TTS Demand 4). Some of these demands of the #TTS was included in the National Strategic Plan on Gender-based Violence and Femicide (NSP GBVF), which was drafted by the Interim Steering Committee and handed over to the President in 2020.

Because the #TTS strategically was able to reach large groups of people through their campaign, they were also able to directly speak to government on issues such as the implementation of the 24 demands which is evident on their Facebook platform where communications were sent directly to government.

Another important influence of the 24 demands on policy was the establishment of sexual offences courts in the country. The establishment of the sexual offences courts was a direct result of the collaboration of government and civil society when in January 2020 the Judicial Matters Second Amendment Act provided for sexual offences courts.

The #TTS has acknowledged on its Facebook platform that a more holistic change is required not only in the policy environment, but also socially and culturally where mindsets need to be changed especially because we live in a patriarchal society.

Not all the demands of the #TTS have been realised, a few have, but overall, the progress in the realisation of the 24 demands has been very slow. However, the recent assenting by the President to legislation on GBV has realised some of these demands. This discussion is taken further in the section on Government responses to the #TTS.

4.2.3.2 External Documents: Government responses to the #TotalShutDown movement.

This section is an analysis of selected external documents, like the Presidential Summit Report 2018, The Summit Declaration 2018, The Emergency Response Plan 2020, and the National Strategic Plan 2020. Using thematic analyses, the researcher will analyse the content of the documents in respect of public participation. The purpose of this analysis is to further triangulate the primary and secondary data collected. The analysis of this data is clear evidence of the influence the #TTS campaign had on the policy environment.

After the #TTS campaign, there were several government responses, primarily demand

1, which was the call to host a summit on GBV. As a result of this demand, there were policy interventions arising from the relationship between government and the #TTS movement.

Following the nationwide march on the 1st of August 2018 the #TTS organising committee were invited to a meeting at the President's office on the 2nd of August. This meeting was to bring all stakeholders together to address the issues of GBV and to discuss the action that needed to be taken in respect of the 24 demands.

This meeting led to the realization of demand 1, as mentioned above, of a gender summit which was hosted by the Department of Justice on the 1st and 2nd of November 2018. A steering committee was appointed to ensure that the 24 Demands submitted to government and law makers, was top of the agenda of the summit.

The external documentation discussed below was as a direct outcome of the Presidential Summit hosted in November 2018. The Report of the GBVF Summit 2018 and the Declaration of the GBVF Summit were collaborative documents drafted during the Summit. The Emergency Response Plan 2020 and the National Strategic plan of

Action 2020 were drafted by the Interim Steering Committee, which was set up after the Summit, to carry the process forward.

A general analysis of external documentation which talks to the theme of public participation will be discussed in this chapter. Like the discussion above, this section will not look specifically at the content of these documents, but instead discuss overall the theme of public participation in relation to the research question of how the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign leveraged social media in influencing public policy on GBV in South Africa.

Further to the selected policy documents discussed below it is important to acknowledge that on the 28th of January 2022 the President assented to three GBV legislations that have addressed some of the demands of the #TTS and addressed some of the GBV issues contained in the policy documents discussed below. This policy development will briefly be discussed in the conclusion below.

- **The Report of the Presidential Summit against Gender-based Violence and Femicide, 2018.**

Introduction and context

This report is a summation of the collective discussions of all stakeholders who

attended the Summit which was supported by facilitators, scribes, and rapporteurs. The predominant stakeholders were the #TTS, Civil society organisations, and represented government institutions. More specifically, this report reflected the key questions, discussions, and debates and more importantly the recommendations and decisions taken at the Summit.

It is also important to acknowledge that this Summit was as a direct result of demand 1 of the # TTS which called for a Summit. Through the speeches presented and discussions, key messages and insights were reflected in this report.

This report carries the voices of women who shared their experiences on GBV at the Summit, drawing attention to the systemic violence in our country and at the same time reflecting women's agency in calling for changes to the policy environment.

Analysis of Report

The summit was an ideal platform for participation between civil society, government, and the justice system. From a civil society perspective, the #TTS wanted change in respect of GBV and for the voices of women to be heard. The summit and the subsequent report of the summit was a direct result of the 24 demands presented to the President.

"*Representatives from across society– including civil society, government, parliament, the judiciary, labour organisations, business communities, traditional healers, traditional leaders, sector-specific specialists, religious leaders, persons with disabilities, members of the LGBTQIA+2 community, Gender Non-Conforming (GNC) persons, older persons, youth, survivors of GBVF, activists, womxn, academics, members of the media and South Africans from all corners of the country* (The Report of the Presidential Summit against Gender-based Violence and Femicide, 2018).

This representation is reflective of the broad-based public participation process that was initiated by the #TTS through demand 1 and hosted by the Justice department.

The 24 demands of the #TTS was distilled into 6 thematic areas to ensure that all issues contained in the demands would be addressed. They were laws and policies; prevention; response, care, and support; accountability and resource; coordination; and communication. These thematic areas guided the participation process in the different commissions of the summit.

Overall, the recommendations made by this summit in the form of the Declaration would be carried forward in the public participation process.

There was an acknowledgement that although the #TTS was the catalyst for the summit, the activism for this process started before the national march of the #TTS. The #FeesMustFall campaigns and other national campaigns on GBV laid the foundation for the summit. The timing was right for the #TTS and the social movement gained traction not only through leveraging social media but also through their campaigns on the ground.

The presidents concluding remarks sums up the public participation that he was calling for to adequately address the crisis of GBV.

"*I call on all South Africans to become champions of the fight against GBV and femicide. This is a societal problem. It should never be seen as a problem for women alone. It is our collective problem-men and women-all of us, as South Africans"* (The Report of the Presidential Summit against Gender-based Violence and Femicide, 2018).

- **The Gender Based Violence and Femicide Declaration, November 2018**

Introduction

This Declaration reflected the voices of the one thousand and two delegates who acknowledged GBVF as an epidemic and a national crisis in South Africa. What is important for the purposes of this research is the acknowledgment that the Summit and the Declaration of the Summit was due to the mobilization strategies of the #TTS in the organising of the marches in all nine provinces drawing attention to the high levels of GBVF in society and the ineffectiveness of the Justice system in the past twenty-four years.

Analysis of Report

The Declaration reflected a "multi-layered" and a "multi-sectoral" approach. This reveals a much more inclusive public participation process as the Declaration was made by all stakeholders, including Government and Civil society, and informed the policy process that followed on GBV issues. Further, all the main issues of GBV discussed at the Summit, like policy changes and cultural and religious norms, formed part of the declaration.

The Declaration looked at a situational analysis of GBV in South Africa and highlighted that although the rights in the Constitution afforded to women were recognised and the current legislative framework addressed issues of GBV, there was an acknowledgement that these mechanisms were ineffective as women were still

experiencing an increase in GBV cases.

Therefore, the public participation process adopted at the Summit was necessary to address the incidence of GBV and femicide that had reached crisis proportions. The review of the legislative framework of GBV was a further necessity in the policy environment and was part of the Declaration. There was also a commitment to address

issues of cultural and religious norms that impact negatively on GBV and other issues concerning GBV in South Africa.

The purpose of the Declaration was to set in motion the policy changes that were required which were jointly negotiated by government and civil society and encouraged openness and accountability of government in the public participation process at the Presidential Summit. The collaboration in this process of policy changes was an important factor to change the policy environment of GBV and afford women the constitutional protection that is entrenched in our 1996 Constitution.

“THEREFORE, WE REAFFIRM our commitment to a united, comprehensive and united prevention and response to gender-based violence and femicide in South Africa.” (The GBVF Declaration, November 2018).

- **The Emergency Response action plan on Gender Based Violence and Femicide, April 2020.**

Introduction

The main aim of this report was to address the systemic failures in the Justice system to respond adequately to issues of GBVF in South Africa. This report was drafted by the Interim Steering Committee that was created after the Presidential Summit and collectively comprised of government, Civil society, and development partners. The report focused on five areas of implementation; being access to justice for victims and survivors, changing norms and behaviour, urgent response to victims and survivors, strengthening accountability in response to GBVF, and addressing the economic challenges of women.

Analysis of Report

The objective of this document drafted by the Interim Steering Committee which was established after the Presidential Summit was also to encourage multi stakeholder participation. Accountability was a key factor that was identified as imperative for any participation process.

This response action plan was a collective effort by all stakeholders to ensure broad based participation. A detailed action plan was drawn with the intervention that was required and included the targets and time frames of these processes. This comprehensive plan of action would involve joint participation of all stakeholders and establish a strong partnership between government and civil society and other stakeholders.

Accountability, resources, and political will would be some of the challenges that would face the successful implementation of this response action plan.

- **The National Strategic Plan on Gender Based Violence and Femicide, March 2020.**

Introduction

The National plan of action was also drafted by the Interim Steering Committee and was a strategic framework to address GBVF in South Africa. This document is underpinned by a human rights framework and is premised on the right of equality of all gender groups including LGBTQIA. Like the Emergency Response Plan on GBVF, this plan focused on six pillars, accountability, co-ordination and leadership, prevention and rebuilding the social cohesion, justice, safety and protection, response, care, support, and healing, economic power and research and information management (The National strategic plan on GBVF, 2020).

This document prepared by the Interim Steering Committee was, as mentioned previously, a collaboration of various stakeholders which included civil society and government. This process involved public participation and called for contributions to the final document.

This was a cohesive and strategic framework that worked on the consultative processes that preceded this strategic plan on GBV and femicide. This vision of a collective multi-sectoral approach was the cornerstone of the process of what went into the drafting of the National strategic plan.

The multi-sectoral consultative process contributed to the refinement of the National strategic plan especially in the areas of implementation. Public consultations were conducted in all nine provinces involving civil society, GBV providers, faith-based organisations, community organisations and LGBTQIA communities. Active and

meaningful participation of all stakeholders was encouraged to facilitate a more collaborative outcome.

This comprehensive plan involved all sectors of the community and allowed for meaningful participation in the policy environment on GBV and femicide.

In any public participation process, accountability is key to ensuring a transparent process. The success of the implementation of the national strategic plan is dependent on the ownership of the process to overcome the challenges faced in the GBV space. Ultimately public participation is imperative for positive changes to the policy environment addressing the issues of GBV and femicide.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the analysis of the secondary data collected for this research from the document analysis internally of the Facebook posts and the 24 demands of the #TTS and externally of selected policy documentation in the public participation process like the National Strategic Plan of Action and others mentioned above.

Using the thematic approach, the key theme identified of the external document analysis was public participation. This theme of public participation addressed the research question of how the #TTS campaign leveraged social media to influence the policy environment.

Secondary data analysis considered internal and external documentation of the #TTS with reference internally to the Facebook platform posts and the 24 demands drafted through crowd sourcing. This analysis focused on the themes of leveraging of social media and mobilization and the analysis of the 24 demands was guided by the theme of public participation.

The external documents like the Presidential Summit report, the Summit Declaration, The Emergency Response plan, and the National Action plan that were analysed, were relevant to the research question identifying public participation as a theme.

The analysis of both primary and secondary data assisted the researcher in the triangulation of the data which gave more credibility to the research process.

In conclusion the recent legislation assented to by the President is also testimony to the influence that the #TTS had in leveraging social media in influencing the policy environment through the national marches and the 24 demands, of which demand 1 called for the Summit. Furthermore, the resultant policy documents were an outcome of the Summit, namely The Summit report, the Declaration of the Summit and the documents drafted by the Interim Steering Committee which informed the legislative process of the three legislations assented to by the President.

CHAPTER FIVE: INTERPRETATIONS AND ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH FINDINGS.

5.1 Introduction

According to Merriam, data analysis is “the process of making sense of the data” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016 p 202). In this chapter the interpretation and analysis of the data findings in the previous chapter will be presented by the researcher. To make sense of the data the researcher needs to consolidate, reduce, and interpret the perceptions of the participants together with what the researcher has read (Merriam & Tisdell, Qualitative Research: A guide to design and implementation, 2016). This necessitates that the researcher must ensure an interactive process of data analysis throughout the research process.

Considering the literature review, the researcher needs to make sense of the data collected in the research process. To analyse and interpret the findings of this research, the literature reviewed in chapter two was used with particular focus on the conceptual and theoretical framework. This process allows the researcher to “improve understanding, expand theory, and advance knowledge (Neuman, 2014).

In any qualitative research the researcher is aware of the problem and based on this problem selects a purposeful sample to facilitate the data collection process but is unaware of the outcome of the final analysis of the data. The final analysis of the data needs to answer the research question and identify sections in the data that respond to the main question of the research. In this regard, the objectives of this case analysis were to understand how the #TotalShutDown campaign (#TTS) leveraged social media to influence public policy, and to understand the internal structures, composition, and mobilization strategies of the #TTS. The purpose of the research study guided the analysis and interpretation of the data collected.

As mentioned in chapter four, themes were identified guided by the research question to assist the researcher to interpret the findings. The themes identified in chapter four in the internal interview process of the #TTS and the internal and external document analysis are as follows:

leveraging of social media, internal composition, and structure of the #TotalShutDown campaign, mobilization strategies and other strategies used by the #TTS and public participation.

The analysis of the findings both on a national and provincial level reflects similarities in the responses and are combined to reflect a holistic analysis of the themes mentioned above.

5.2. The #TotalShtDown campaign and the leveraging of social media.

Generally, all the co-ordinating committee members interviewed both on a national and provincial level, agreed that the leveraging of social media was a popular tool and easily accessible by most people. Hollands confirms the popularity of the use of social media especially for political activism (Hollands, 2012). Furthermore, both co-ordinating committees in the national and provincial co-ordinating committees leveraged social media previously through their Facebook pages, like “Black women’s Healing Garden”, Twitter accounts, and blogs on GBV issues. Facebook as a social network platform is effective as a tool and can be used for different purposes (Baruah, 2012). This is reflected in the literature review in chapter two where mention is made of the Arab Spring in 2011 which resulted in the use of social network platforms by socio-political movements that resulted in political change in this region. Furthermore, several movements in South Africa have used Facebook and other social network platforms to create an awareness on GBV especially in crisis situations like #JusticForKarabo.

The #TTS leveraged social media as a tool to mobilise women nationally and to create an awareness on the issues of GBVF in South Africa. This was a useful vehicle as the ease of access and real time communication of Facebook assisted the movement in mobilising not only women to attend the national march but also the collating of the 24 demands and resources for the movement.

Furthermore, the experience of the co-ordinating committee members informed the leveraging of social media of the #TTS and afforded the participants the advantage of background experience and knowledge of leveraging social media, especially on Facebook.

According to the social movement theory, the advent of globalisation and the use of technology has changed the face of social movements and has revolutionised social activism from a collective to a connective action (Chen & Liao, 2014). This was the motivation for the # TTS to leverage social media because of its speed, connectivity, and ease of access to most people.

There was a common understanding by both national and provincial co-ordinating committee members interviewed, that the use of social media has been a preferred

platform GBV activists engaged with in drawing attention to issues of GBV. There is a “community” of activists on social media which has fostered “unity” amongst activists in respect of GBV issues. This is supported by ElSherief et al who state that in the last decade social media has been used as an activist platform (ElSherief, Belding, & Nguyen, #NotOkay, 2017). This is evident in the #TTS campaign as Facebook and other social media platforms were strategically leveraged to mobilize women on a national and provincial level which led to a successful march on the 1st of August 2018. Further, one of the objectives of this research was to investigate the composition of the #TTS campaign which revealed that not only were the members of the national and provincial committee GBV activists, but also the participants that joined the Facebook movement were student and community activists who had worked in the GBV space.

There was a collective understanding of how the social media platform worked and how it could be leveraged to influence the policy environment. Although strategically there was a broader acceptance that the #TTS had to go beyond the traditional ways of leveraging social media to achieve their objectives. These sentiments were echoed by Louden who studied the TAC, supporting the use of both social media combined with the use of emails and other methods of mobilizing people, especially those who could not access the internet (Loudon, 2010).

This was evident in the holistic approaches to leveraging social media used by the #TTS and the multi-sectoral methods used to realise their objectives. This fact will further be analysed in the section on the mobilization and other strategy’s theme.

The motivation to use the hashtag with the #TTS was to monitor the momentum of the movement as there was consensus that in the past hashtags were used to create awareness of GBV, like #RememberKwezi and #NotInMyName, and were very powerful tools in leveraging social media. Mundt, Ross, and Burnett support the use of hashtags in mobilising people creating activism on social justice issues (Mundt, Ross, & Burnett, 2018).

Further hashtags were often used in crisis situations which according to the participants interviewed, was the case in #TTS because of the high incidences of GBV in South Africa that had reached pandemic proportions. Dwarakanath went further in stating that not only are hashtags used in crisis or emergency situations but that they are effective in social media mobilization as people can voice their opinion on social issues (Dwarakanath, 2014).

The literature review in chapter two reflects numerous examples of the use of hashtags in crisis situations like #FeesMustFall, and #RhodesMustFall not only in South Africa but globally, #BlackLivesMatter and #DelhiGangRape. Hashtags also allowed activists to migrate to other forms of social media like Twitter, Instagram, and Telegram. These findings are supported by Budree, Fietkiewicz and Lins who suggest that despite Facebook being popular, a more integrated approach using Twitter, Instagram and other forms of social media is more effective in citizen activism (Budree, Fietkiewicz, & Lins, 2019).

From an activist point of view the leveraging of social media allowed for the voices of women to be heard and their silence broken in respect of GBV. This platform allowed women to share their stories and through their collective voices draw attention to the problem of GBV. Collective action is facilitated leveraging social media especially Facebook and the use of hashtags allowing sharing of experiences of GBV (ElSherief, Belding, & Nguyen, #NotOkay, 2017).

The disadvantages of leveraging social media were echoed by most of the co-ordinators that leveraging social media required time, the influx of members who joined the platform required constant attention and the #TTS did not have the necessary resources to deal with all the issues, especially issues which required psychological support.

Furthermore, social media lacked the inter-personal relationship that face-to-face interaction allowed. These criticisms were voiced by Vetten, who claimed that this caused conflict within the movement as members did not build solid relationships because of the use of social media (Vetten, 2021).

The research revealed that many members interviewed felt that there were no interpersonal relationships that were developed because of the use of Facebook and other forms of social media as a medium of communication. According to Vetten “the tenuousness of links forged through social media by women who did not know one another” also contributed to these conflicts (Vetten, 2021 p 22). This also played out in the debates around the issue of men joining the march and the feminist ideology of the movement as members interpreted feminism differently.

Bowen, Gordon and Chojnacki also question if online interaction is as effective as face-to- face relationships in social movements as levels of trust are necessary to build collective campaigns (Bowen, Gordon, & Chojnacki, 2017).

The leveraging of social media by the #TTS had its advantages and disadvantages, but as a tool it did play a powerful role in influencing the GBV policy environment with the Presidential summit and policy on GBV. Through the successes highlighted in chapter four above, the #TTS was able to influence the policy environment through the policy documents that followed the Presidential Summit, like the National Strategic Plan of Action for GBVF and other policy initiatives of the Interim Steering Committee, together with more recent legislation on GBV mentioned under the conclusion in chapter four above.

On the one hand leveraging social media allowed the #TTS to successfully mobilise women nationally to march to government institutions in different provinces, but on the other hand, the disadvantages of leveraging social media were that this vehicle could not reach certain sectors of society, for example those in rural areas.

The profound effect of leveraging social media in influencing social media was also realised on the 28th of January 2022 when President Cyril Ramaphosa assented to laws that will strengthen the Gender Based Violence machinery with a victim centred approach. These legislations, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act Amendment Bill; the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Bill,

and the Domestic Violence Amendment Bill are a direct result of the National Strategic Plan of Gender -based violence and femicide called for at the 2018 Presidential summit against GBVF.

These legislations are significant as they address the 24 demands of the #TTS, which was captured in the Emergency Response Plan to address GBVF, those related to expanding the scope of the national register of sex offenders and several other demands made.

In essence these legislations protect victims of GBV and clearly reflects how demands of citizens can influence changes in the Law.

5.3 Composition and structures of the #TotalShtDown Movement.

The background of the co-ordinating committee members were gender activists who already had a presence on social media, especially Facebook. The composition of the #TTS was predominantly young black women, most of whom were student activists. Some of the members interviewed were also victims and survivors of GBV and therefore were very passionate about the cause. From a theoretical perspective according to the resource mobilization theory, women normally join social movements

because they have been marginalised (Kandermans, 1984) but today, the motivation to join social movements is because of activist ideals and the ability to influence or achieve social change with identifiable goals (Jenkins, 1983, Tilly, 2004).

The main structures of the #TTS was the national co-ordinating committee comprising of 23 members with sub-committees of such as communications and media, funding, stakeholder committees. The creation of these committees was dependant on the needs of the national committee and the identification of the key areas that co-ordination was required, like media and communication and the stakeholder committees which drove the mobilization of women nationally and provincially.

On a provincial level this structure was replicated, although the co-ordinating committees were much smaller, about 5 to 6 members, and the sub-committees were not the same and differed according to the needs of the province. In some provinces there was a need for a researchers committee, which was the case in the Northwest province. These structures were very fluid, and, in most instances, it was members

who made themselves available for certain committees and because there were insufficient members the existing members had to multitask.

There was also representation from national in each of the provincial co-ordinating committees which allowed for communication and guidance, although the provinces were given the autonomy to make their own decisions on aspects that affected their individual province.

Structurally the #TTS was not a hierarchical structure as there was resistance from some of the younger national co-ordinating committee members who wanted a flat structure as they felt that this would even out the power relationships within the movement.

This is supported by the social movement theory which refers to horizontal structures (Soares & Joia, 2015) which impacts on the movement internally and externally and has created new forms of leadership (Chen & Liao, 2014). This did impact on the decision making of the #TTS as consensus had to be reached, which was challenging, as the members came from different backgrounds especially in respect of intersectionality, feminist approaches and different ideologies (Vetten, 2021).

It is important to note that the composition and structure of the #TTS did drive the narrative of the movement as it embraced intersectionality and had a strong feminist approach which shaped the outcome of the 24 demands drafted by the #TTS. The issue

of intersectionality and feminist ideologies did also pose challenges within the movement as within #TTS there were participants from different backgrounds that had different interpretations of feminism which did result in debates around feminist approaches especially in the finalizing of the 24 demands. This caused conflict within the movement and did affect the long-term sustainability of the movement as although the Facebook page still exists, the members of the co-ordinating committees have not maintained the national and provincial structures that were created by the #TTS.

The ultimate objective of the #TTS was to ensure that the collective voices of women are heard and acknowledged, and this multi-sectorial approach captures the collaborative input of women from all sectors of the community. Although the composition and structure of the #TTS was not perfect it supported a multi-sectoral approach except for the rule against men marching. This further created divisions in the movement as some women identified as men and felt that this rule was contradictory to the aims of the #TTS which was to be inclusive of all sectors of the GBV space.

5.4 Mobilization strategies and other strategies of the #TotalShutDown movement.

The social movement theory discussed in chapter two is relevant to this discussion as it supports the shift into the technological era and the use of social media which has revolutionised social activism and especially in respect of resource mobilization, has facilitated easy access not only to resources but also mobilising people on these platforms through the ease of connectivity.

The social movement theory supports that mobilization strategies have shifted because of globalization and the use of technology from universities and coffee shops to internet mobilization through Facebook and other forms of social media (Lopes, 2014).

The mobilization strategy did not only involve the leveraging of social media and other forms but went further to include for example the stakeholder committee which looked at linkages to civil society, faith-based organisations, universities. The use of community radio stations and leaflets and posters and T/shirts further contributed to the mobilisation strategy. This was an effective mobilisation strategy as #TTS was able to maximise the reach of the movement through a multi-pronged approach which also took into consideration provincial dynamics like rural areas and where women did not have access to social media.

It is important to note that the mobilization strategy of the #TTS was organic and evolved as the needs of the movement arose and was also dependant on the resources and skills of the members of the committee. This is also why the social media platform was more effective as it was adaptive and allowed the members to develop their mobilization strategies in real time. This allowed for the flexibility of strategies both on a national and provincial level as members interviewed testified to this.

This mobilization strategy was able to mobilise more than 100 000 women not only in South Africa but also from New Zealand, Australia, Lesotho, and other Southern African countries.

The urban / rural divide did have an impact on the mobilization strategy of the movement. Although there was an integrated approach in the mobilization strategies there were challenges in respect of the financial support needed to reach rural communities. This prompted the #TTS to involve civil society movements like churches, unions, universities, NGOs, and CBOs in their mobilization strategy which allowed them to reach more women. This allowed for coalition building, which was supported by Mundt, Ross, and Burnett as they allowed for mobilization of internal and external resources (Mundt, Ross, & Burnett, 2018).

The strategy to use different forms of social media such as Twitter, Telegram, Instagram, and other platforms, was critical to the mobilization strategy of the #TTS. Besides social media, other traditional forms of mobilization strategies were also used like newspaper, and radio. This was because the #TTS acknowledged that the use of social media alone would not reach women in different sectors of our society, like women in the rural areas. This was supported by Louden in his study of the TAC which broadened the scope of accessibility to the movement (Loudon, 2010).

Not only did the #TTS use social media to mobilize women, but also traditional forms of mobilization like radio stations, and on the ground campaigns in various provinces where access to social media was limited.

The strategy involved civil society organisations, unions and faith-based organisations which assisted the #TTS to mobilize women from many different sectors of society. This is supported by the resource mobilization theory which strategically involves mobilization of money, people and organisations and the use of social media (Edwards & Kane, 2014).

This multifaceted approach to mobilization allowed the #TTS to increase the participation of women, not only through leveraging social media, but by other more

traditional methods used by movements to mobilize, like face- to- face interaction (Vetten, 2021).

Smaller campaigns on the main Facebook page like black and red Wednesday and #IWillMarch further mobilised women to join the march. This broadened the mobilization strategy and did, to some extent reach women in the rural areas although #TTS was criticised for having an urban bias (Vetten, 2021).

For the march and the presentation of the 24 demands the strategy was to target the highest administrative authority in the country, namely the President's office at the Union Buildings, the House of Parliament in Cape Town, and in respect of the administration of Justice, the Constitutional Court. The strategy was to ensure that these demands should be delivered to the highest authority to ensure that the #TTS was taken seriously and that there was direct communication with government.

The strategy of the march was to march to the centres of power in the provinces; this might be the police stations or the municipal offices. In total there were 21 marches in all the provinces to the seats of power and the presentation of the 24 demands.

The 24 demands were a collaborate document which allowed women all over the country to submit their demands, which was curated by a team of experts within the national co-ordinating committee. From the thousands of demands received, they were narrowed down to 24 demands representing the 24 years of democracy which had failed the women of South Africa in respect of GBV issues. These demands incorporated a feminist approach and further considered the rights of the LGBTQIA sector. The terminology used in the drafting of the 24 demands reflects the spelling of women as "womxn" as contained in demand three of the #TTS. Feminist organisation around 2010 started using this terminology to exclude the word men from womxn. Demand 12 focuses on the LGBTQIA sector and calls for more diversity training on this issue. The use of feminist language is reflective of the feminist approach used.

Strategically the #TTS was well placed, as the march which took place on the 1st of August 2018 was just seven months before the national government elections, and therefore it would have been very difficult for the African National Congress (ANC) government to ignore the voices of young, black women, many of whom were previously actively involved in the #FeesMustFall campaigns. These political dynamics were recognised by Vetten as the proximity to elections was too close for the ANC government politically to ignore (Vetten, 2021).

5.5 Influencing Gender Based Violence (GBV) policy

The South African Constitution,1996 encourages public participation in our democracy. This open, responsive, and transparent relationship between government and citizens creates a channel of communication which allows citizens to hold government accountable. Toscana describes this channel of communication as a two- way communication (Toscana, 2019).

Public participation motivates government to be more accountable and transparent in their decision-making process. Zhao and Lin supported the links between communication and public participation using social media (Zhao & Lin, 2018). In this research, communication through the internet was easily facilitated because of the ease of access and the use of different web- based tools could be developed to support public participation. #TTS campaign as reflected in chapter 4 used the social media platform via Facebook to communicate and to mobilize resources and women in the participation of the national marches and the development of the 24 demands.

Toscana further recognises that public participation through leveraging social media is a legitimate tool in the decision-making process (Toscana, 2019). Toscana discusses the power of social media and how citizens can participate in the decision- making process of government using social media. There is also an acknowledgment that internet communications encourage collaboration and information sharing and therefore allows for participation in the decision-making process. These internet communications were used both by the national and provincial co-ordinating groups of the #TTS to create a link on Facebook for the 24 demands which allowed women nationally to contribute to this process which subsequently led to the drafting of the policy documents after the Presidential summit.

The leveraging of social media as a tool enabled the #TTS to participate in the policy environment and thus influence policy changes on GBV. This was evident in January 2022 when President Ramaphosa signed into law three legislations on GBV in South Africa, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Bill, the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Bill, and the Domestic Violence Amendment Bill. These legislations bear testimony to the struggle of women to influence the policy environment.

The document analysis reveals that the drafting of the 24 demands by the #TTS leveraging social media and other traditional methods was instrumental in influencing the policy environment on GBV issues as these 24 demands guided the drafting of the Emergency Response Plan 2020. This is also evident in the subsequent reports like the National plan for GBVF and others that have resulted in the recent GBV legislation assented to by President Ramaphosa on the 28th of January 2022, as mentioned above.

The main aim of the 24 demands of the #TTS was to hold the government accountable and effect changes to the Criminal Justice system in respect of GBV issues. The hosting of the Presidential summit by the Justice Department in November 2018, was as a direct result of the presentation of these demands to the President calling for a Summit. This Summit was responsible for the drafting of the Summit Declaration on Gender Based Violence and Femicide (GBVF), the establishment of the Interim Steering Committee and the drafting of the Emergency Response Plan and National Strategic Plan were also a follow through of this process as they were part of the 24 demands. Subsequently the creation of the GBV fund supported by corporate in South Africa and a few other changes within the Justice sector.

This public participation process saw different role players, government, justice, civil society and corporate. This process was reflective of the Presidential Summit in 2018 which brought together these role players to discuss and debate issues around GBV which culminated in the Presidential Summit Declaration, the setting up of the Interim Steering Committee which was responsible for the drafting of the Emergency Response Plan for GBVF and the National plan of Action for GBVF.

These processes reflected a “multi-layered” and “multi-sectoral” approach which allowed for a broader public participation process outlined above (The GBV Femicide Declaration, November 2018). This was facilitated through the participation of civil society and government who were involved in the discussions and debates at the Summit and the inclusion of non- conforming gender participants.

A very important aspect of these demands involved social and cultural norms of society that impact negatively on GBV. There was an acknowledgement that not only must there be policy changes and proper implementation, but further cultural norms in society need to be changed for a holistic approach to GBV issues.

5.6 Conclusion

Vetten believes that the #TTS created political space for women who did not previously engage with the “politics of violence” (Vetten, 2021). Through the leveraging of social media and other forms of media, the #TTS was able to influence public policy through their participation in the marches nationally and the presentation of the 24 demands to the seats of power in each province. This reflects the power of a social media movement with the right composition, structures and mobilization strategies that can influence the policy environment through the leveraging of social media.

The resource mobilisation theory highlights this concept in chapter two of this research report as the use of both internal and external resources to mobilize. The mobilization of internal participants of the movement with certain skills and expertise and the external use of social media are part of some of the strategies that were used by the #TTS.

Although there were many challenges experienced by the #TTS in respect of funding, internal politics, feminist ideologies and intersectional approaches, the overall marches, and the submission of the 24 demands was a huge success, especially as the timing was right.

The study revealed that leveraging of social media by the #TTS in all its forms was not the only method used to mobilise women to join the social movement. There was a necessity to use more traditional forms of public participation like face- to- face campaigns, posters, rallies at malls and taxi ranks, and radio stations to maximise their mobilization strategy. Further strategies around resource mobilization like funding and specialist expertise were insufficient to sustain the needs of the movement.

The internal structures being horizontal and composition of the #TTS being predominantly student activists with differing ideologies on feminism and intersectionality had an impact on the leadership of the movement as decision making was difficult and created conflict amongst the different interests within the movement. This phenomenon is evident in the social movement theory as there is a recognition of a more horizontal structure which negates the role of a leader. Chen and Liao (2014) argue that this has created new forms of leadership within social movements, but this

is still a challenge within social movements as it is difficult to make decisions and reach consensus on issues.

The challenges of the #TTS were not only internal but external, as was evident in the conflict with the Interim Steering Committee, which had representation from the national co-ordinating committee of the #TTS. These former members were accused of not being accountable to the movement. Politically, the movement was also challenged by the ANC women's league who wanted to participate in the march using ANC regalia which the #TTS refused to allow. Strategically the movement wanted to focus on the main issues of GBV and to ensure a safe space for women. They therefore were not prepared to allow politics to detract from the main objective of the movement, which was the issues of GBV.

Contextually, the researcher acknowledges the challenges facing the GBV space and the impact of politics in this space cannot be ignored. The dynamics within this space has always been challenging and in some instances are capable of derailing processes.

Historically the shift of power between government and civil society is constantly changing and is reflected in Vetten's argument on the national legal framework on gender in South Africa and the challenges it faces. The divisions within the women's movements and government politics have shaped the changes or in some instances stagnated the processes of addressing GBV issues in South Africa (Vetten, 2021). Vetten acknowledges that there are various forces within society that can influence the policy environment and that the power of these stakeholders does shift depending on the political environment and the resources available.

Vetten argues that the #TTS, in celebrating its victory at the Presidential Summit, did not consider that "disruption and instability have become the hallmark of state led responses to GBV" (Vetten, 2021, p 18). There has always been criticism of processes undertaken by government as some of the processes are not followed through, and there is often a total lack of co-ordination between policy mechanisms and existing structures. Vetten describes this as a dysfunctional approach by government.

Vetten (2021) criticised the processes of government in the GBV space that came before the #TTS campaign and the lack of co-ordination and continuation of some of

these processes. According to Vetten (2021) these dysfunctions were also criticised by civil society organisations.

The data analysis reflects using social media as an advocacy tool how the #TotalShutDown campaign leveraged social media in influencing public policy and further that the strategies and mechanisms used by the campaign to moblise woman both nationally and provincially effectively impacted on the policy environment.

In conclusion this case analysis revealed that leveraging of social media can be a useful tool in influencing public policy, although a more holistic and collaborative approach needs to be adopted in influencing public policy on GBV in South Africa.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The primary objective of this research was to determine, using a case study analysis, how the #TTS leveraged social media in influencing public policy on GBV in South Africa. Bowen, Gordon, and Chojnacki spoke about the use of social media by social movements, making institutions more responsive in influencing public policy (Bowen, Gordon & Chojnacki 2017). Social media according to Bowen, Gordon and Chojnacki allowed citizens to interact and to collaborate in real time which facilitated collective action. It was also much easier to advocate and arrange campaigns and petitions.

The fourth industrial revolution has forced a shift in public participation strategies and opened new ways of engaging in the policy environment. This is supported by the social movement theory which recognises the shift of social activism from traditional ways of public participation to more effective use of social media (Langman, 2005).

The significance of this study was that although social movements had leveraged social media in the past to influence public policy, there is little understanding of the internal strategies and mobilization mechanisms used by these social movements to mobilise people within the GBV space.

This study noted that social movements leveraging social media can achieve their objective of influencing public policy in the GBV space when their mobilising strategies work and the mood and timing is right, but that there are also several challenges facing social movements in leveraging social media both internally and externally as was the case in the #TTS. Internally the movement had to deal with the different ideological backgrounds that brought the women together, the lack of certain skills and resources to deal with the influx of participants joining the Facebook page and sharing their stories and responding to those needs. Externally, funding was a huge problem as there was insufficient funding available and the use of social media was only able to reach a certain section of the community whereas other mobilization strategies were

needed, like reaching out to faith- based organisations and face- to- face interaction and mobilization at taxi ranks and shopping malls.

6.2 Problem statement

Although South Africa has a good Constitution, and a comprehensive legal framework on GBV, the incidence of GBV cases has escalated to pandemic proportions. Traditional methods of public participation on their own have not always achieved the desired goal and in some instances provided little success in advocating for changes in the policy environment of GBV. Although there have been many efforts in the past of GBV organisations that have advocated changes in the policy environment, none of these initiatives can compare to the success of the #TTS.This is evident in the external documents of the Presidential Summit Report 2018 and other policy documents, like the Emergency Response Plan 2020 and the National Strategic Plan 2020 that specifically mention the success of the #TTS as there is an acknowledgement that although the efforts of #TTS was part of a broader struggle, the #TTS was able to leverage social media much more effectively. It is important to understand that these traditional methods of public participation in the past have contributed to the build-up of the #TTS campaign. Therefore, we cannot see these efforts in a vacuum.

Vetten (2021) in her article talks about the existing gender machinery and the structures and strategies existing in the GBV space, for example in 2012 the launch of the National Council of Gender Based Violence and in 2013 the South African Integrated Programme of Action addressing Violence Against Women and Children. Vetten acknowledges the existence of these gender machinery but questions the effectiveness of these legislations in combatting violence against women.

The presence of these legislative frameworks has always existed, yet violence against women is still a problem in our society and civil society organisations and social movements like #JusticeForTebogo and others have questioned the effectiveness of existing legislations in combating the incidences of GBV. Therefore, there needs to be a more co-ordinated and holistic approach to ensuring that the existence of gender machinery alone cannot address the issues of GBV.

The study thus explored the perceptions of the national and provincial co-ordinating committee members of the #TTS using a semi structured interview process. This process addressed the question of how the #TTS leveraged social media and the main mobilization strategies that they used. Although the mobilization strategies used were effective in influencing public policy there was still a need to use traditional forms of public participation methods. This was because not all participants could access social media and further, a more integrated approach maximised the reach of the #TTS.

6.3 Purpose of the research

The purpose of this research was to determine how the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign used social media as a tool in influencing public policy on GBV by investigating the leveraging of social media as a tool used by the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign and to determine the internal strategies, mechanisms and structures used by the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign to mobilise women nationally and provincially.

In studying the perceptions of the co-ordinators, the researcher was able to contribute to the knowledge base of how social movements leveraging social media were able to effectively influence public policy on GBV in South Africa.

6.4 Literature reviewed

Literature was reviewed in terms of the key concepts of this research, public participation and its importance in a democracy, social movements, and the use of traditional forms of public participation, social movements, and digitization in the 21st century, which focused on the evolution of social media and lastly the use of social media in GBV advocacy.

Public participation is the cornerstone of any democracy and allows citizens to actively participate in the collective political processes which can add public value (Mafihlo P. , 2015). There are many traditional strategies used for public participation processes in the past that have had some impact on public policy, but with the new technological era the strategies have shifted to the online digital platform allowing connectivity in real time (Bowen, Gordon, & Chojnacki, 2017). Because of the importance of public

participation in any democracy this shift has enabled citizens to have direct access to government and more importantly by using a public platform which demands accountability of government.

The rise of movements together with the digitization in the 21st century has redefined the roles of social movements and made them more visible in the public space. These popular and collaborative spaces created, especially on Facebook, using the hashtag, which has influenced and encouraged both policy makers and social movement advocacy movements to directly influence policy (Gupta K, 2018).

The ability of social media to mobilize large numbers and through collective activism influence policy changes (Bornman, 2018). This is especially true for social movements who have been able to effectively mobilise participants forming coalitions like #BlackLivesMatter (Mundt, Ross, & Burnett, 2018).

The specific use of social media in the GBV space has revolutionised the use of social media. The #MeToo movements which became a global movement is evidence of this, creating powerful agency for women through the adoption of intersectionality and feminism in addressing issues of GBV (O'Donnell & Sweetman, 2018).

The theories selected for this research were the resource mobilisation in respect of the mobilization of resources and the challenges faced both internally within the movement and externally. The Social movement theory allowed the researcher to understand the shift between “collective action” and “connective action” and the advantages of the use of social media especially for activist social justice movements.

6.5 Research findings in the study

The #TTS was influential in changing the relationship between government and civil society through the leveraging of social media which resulted in the march on the 1st of August 2018 and the presentation of the 24 demands to President Ramaphosa at the Union buildings.

This process also had a direct impact on the Presidential Summit that was hosted by the Justice Department and the policy documents that were drafted on GBV like the Summit Declaration and the National Plan of Action and others. This multi-sectorial approach of the #TTS movement created the space to find solutions for GBV issues.

The #TTS was a watershed movement that has changed the mindsets of people. This is evident in the terminology currently used by the President and others in their official addresses to the people. It is commonplace for the President to mention issues of GBV in his address to parliament like the recent SONA address which highlighted the plight of women. Further, other members of parliament, like the Minister of Police and the Minister of Justice, also make frequent reference in their public addresses to issues of GBV. The GBV issue is central to many public discourse and debates, and more especially during the Covid-19 lockdown period, there was an awareness of the impact and effect on GBV cases.

Intersectionality was a major issue within the #TTS campaign and although the movement had an intersectional approach there were issues around gender identity, especially the decision taken not to allow men in the march as some participants did identify as men. Power dynamics and politics did play a role in this regard and the issue of intersectionality will always be a challenge until we confront these issues openly and allow collaborative and multisectoral public debate and discussions to allow for a more inclusive process.

The Presidential Summit and the tabling of the 24 demands addressed the failures in the criminal justice system. This process led to the influencing of policy on GBV, whether it was in respect of prevention, support, research or financial, it re-orientated the legal landscape of GBV in South Africa. The question that needs to be answered is how many demands have been realised since the presentation of these demands on the 1st of August 2018.

Until recently, not many of the 24 demands of the #TTS were realised, but on the 28th of January 2022 the President signed into law three GBV legislations that have effectively addressed some of the 24 demands. The three legislations are the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act Amendment Bill; the Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Bill, and the Domestic Violence Amendment Bill. They are part of the deliverables of the National Strategic Plan of GBVF March 2020, which was part of the demands called for at the 2018 Presidential summit. The outcome of the summit was the Presidential Summit report and the Summit Declaration which spoke to the 24 demands of the #TTS.The Presidential Summit was followed by the establishment of the Interim Steering Committee which

was responsible for the drafting of the Emergency Response Plan of GBVF and the National Strategic plan of action. These policy documents were instrumental in influencing further legislation through the commitment given by the President at the Summit and the work of the National Assembly which undertook to consider the three Bills in Parliament. These legislations addressed some of the recommendations made at the summit in 2018.

To mention some of the highlights, the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, for example expands the scope of the National Register for sex offenders to include particulars of all sex offenders. The primary goal of this legislation is the prevention of sex crimes. The Criminal and Related matters amendment Bill focuses on vulnerable persons, especially to reduce secondary victimization in court. The Domestic Violence Amendment Bill seeks to protect victims of domestic violence with online applications for protection orders.

Although these changes will contribute to addressing the issues of GBV, there still needs to be constant monitoring to ensure implementation of all the demands through the Legislative framework of GBV.

Internal conflict within the movement was always an issue, especially power dynamics between the young and the old. This was reflected in the March 6th of 2020 Facebook post where a conflict arose between the #TTS and the Interim Steering Committee (ISC) which comprised of some former members of the national co-ordinating committee. The issue of accountability and transparency of these former members were questioned. This resulted in “gaslighting” on social media from former members who were now members of the Interim Steering Committee. “Ageism, classism, transphobia” were some of the personal threats made. Vetten has referred to these conflicts as “politics of bad blood”; some of the concerns she has is that these conflicts are “powerfully divisive” in this sector (Vetten, 2021). The former national co-ordinating members of the #TTS now on the ISC were accused of gatekeeping. There will always be power dynamics within movements which does impact on the long-term sustainability of the movement.

The #TTS was criticised for its “class, urban and social media bias” (Benya, 2018). This was the disadvantage of leveraging social media, although there was evidence

within the #TTS that the mobilization strategies did include on the ground mobilization as well.

The funding challenge, like other movements, was a huge challenge for the #TTS which impacted on their mobilization strategies. Therefore, one of the main reasons to leverage social media was due to this lack of sufficient funds as this tool allowed the #TTS to mobilize women nationally using the different forms of social media.

Despite the challenges facing the GBV space this research did focus on the leveraging of social media by the #TTS in influencing the policy environment.

The research did reveal that there were challenges, especially funding, internal politics of the movement and power dynamics, but the #TTS using social media did achieve its objective of influencing public policy.

The advantage of the #TTS is that they were able to communicate directly with government which was unlike initiatives of other movements. Further, the impetus of the movement was driven by the mood of the women at that period. In this way, through the sharing of experiences, the #TTS was able to mobilize large numbers of women to participate in the marches.

The leveraging of social media was very effective in holding government accountable as the platform was public, which forced government to be more responsive to the voices of women in the movement.

There is no doubt that the #TTS has been successful in the marches, presentation of the 24 demands to administrative authority, the Presidential Summit, the ISC creation of the National Strategic Plan and the establishment of sexual offences courts throughout the country. Further, Tinker spoke of the continued support of women who post messages on the Facebook platform of the #TTS (Tinker, 2019).

On the other hand, there are challenges experienced by movements in respect of funding and politics and slow changes in policy. This was reflected in the 24 demands of the #TTS in respect of sentencing, provincial sex registry, which is not national, and generally the lack of proper enforcement of sexual offences legislation (Tinker, 2019).

This research has proven that influencing the public policy environment, especially in respect of GBV issues, has challenges with the social movements advocating for change and the political manoeuvring within government.

6.6 Recommendations

The ideology of the movement was controversial as they did not want men to join the movement or to participate in the march. This rule impacted on the LGBTQIA community as women who identified as men would then be excluded from participating. The dominant voice within the #TTS prevailed, and men were not allowed to participate as the argument was to create a safe space for women (Benya, 2018). Firstly, issues of intersectionality need to be openly discussed and dialogues need to address the conflict within the GBV space to encourage a deeper understanding of a more inclusive approach to issues of GBV. Secondly the discourses around feminist approach in the # TTS movement needed to be more broadly embraced as there was conflicting interpretation of what constitutes a feminist approach, which impacts on the movement, as there is uncertainty on fundamental issues.

Thirdly, long term sustainability of movements on GBV need to be re assessed in terms of mobilizing women beyond the main objectives of the movement. As in the case of the #TTS, although the Facebook page still exists, none of the co-ordinating committees are active today. This has also impacted on the follow through of the implementation of the 24 demands as there has been a slow process with very little feedback to the #TTS.

Fourthly, one of the main recommendations of this research is that for real change within the GBV space, it is not only the policy environment that needs to be looked at, but also a more holistic approach to social, economic, and cultural changes. This is especially relevant given the patriarchal society we live in, which is deeply influenced by our colonialist history. Tinker's research conducted on organisations involved with the survivors of sexual violence accessing justice, focused not only on the law, but the social norms that impact negatively on the survivors of violence (Tinker, 2019).

Toxic masculinity in South Africa has encouraged and contributed to GBV and is further exacerbated by economic inequality of women in South Africa. There needs to

be a more intensive educational programme on social and cultural norms in society on every level of our society.

Finally, this research did revolve around strategies used and the effectiveness of these strategies in influencing the policy environment. For the #TTS the leveraging of social media, mobilization and other strategies did bring them short term success in the marches and the 24 demands of the movement which did result in the Presidential Summit and other mechanisms that followed which influenced policy. Therefore, in the long term there is a need for more collaboration and holistic approaches to combating GBV cases with a deeper understanding of the political environment that does impact on the GBV machinery. The #TTS did state that changing policy is not sufficient, more needs to be done to change mindsets and attitudes for real change in GBV cases. This is also reflected in the policy documents discussed above, like the Emergency Response Plan for GBVF.

Tinker supports this statement by acknowledging that actions of movements within the GBV space need to be challenged, not only through law but also social, economic, and cultural issues, that contribute to the inequalities experienced by women (Tinker, 2019).

6.7 Conclusions

This research has drawn conclusions from the analysis and interpretation of the data presented in chapter four and five respectively. This study further provides recommendations for both government and civil society in addressing issues of GBV and public participation.

Ultimately, the objective of GBV movements is to ensure accountability of government and afford women protection not only through policy changes, but also to change social norms in our society. A more co-ordinated approach by GBV stakeholders needs to be established to avoid political manoeuvring and stalling of processes because of lack of funding or political will. Access to justice in the GBV space requires a broader understanding of intersectionality and holistic strategies to combat the scourge of GBV in South Africa.

A reflective report on the first year of implementation of the National Strategic Plan on Gender Based Violence and Femicide (NSP on GBVF) outlines the achievements in respect of the six pillars of the plan. To highlight a few achievements, Pillar 1 on Accountability, Coordination and Leadership, the GBVF Response Fund launched by the President, the establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Committee and the Parliamentary Oversight Framework. Rapid Response Teams established in Kwa- Zulu Natal and Eastern Cape. Pillar 2 on Prevention and Rebuilding Social Cohesion, drafting of a national GBVF prevention strategy. Pillar 3 on Justice, Safety and Protection, the three GBVF legislations assented to by the President, The Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Bill of 2020, Domestic Violence Amendment Bill, Sexual Offences and Related Matters Amendment Bill, Criminal and Related Matters Bill being considered by parliament and the sexual offences courts. Pillar 4 on Response, Care, Support and Healing, a draft Victim Support Services Bill, and an expansion of psychosocial support services. Pillar 5 on Economic power, 40% of public procurement to women owned businesses and the launch of a Women's Economic National Assembly. Pillar 6 on Research and Information management, the 4th Femicide survey is underway and a Femicide Watch system.

These achievements can be traced back to the #TotalShutDown:24demands campaigns 1st demand which called for the Presidential Summit on GBVF. This Summit then led to the establishment of the Interim Steering Committee who were responsible for the drafting of the National Strategic plan. Through the leveraging of social media, the #TotaShutDown campaign was able to influence the policy environment as is reflective in the above report.

In conclusion a more united co-operation between organisations in civil society and government in addressing issues of GBV is needed to consolidate their efforts, share good practices and strategies that have worked in the fight against GBV in South Africa. This research supports that leveraging social media as a tool can play a positive role in influencing public policy on GBV in South Africa.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: Individual interview guide sheet: National #TotalShutDown movement.

Questions for the National members of the #Totalshutdown:24DemandsCampaign (# TTS)

Historical background and Objectives:

1. What is the historical background of the #TTS?
2. Explain the composition and structure of the # TTS?
3. What was the aim and objective of setting up the #TTS platform?

Strategies of the National # TTS

1. What were the main GBV issues that the platform identified?
2. What was the motivation to use the social media platform?
3. Why did you use the #hashtag and the Facebook platform?
4. What were the advantages and disadvantages of using this platform?
5. What was the strategy of your social media campaign?
6. How did you leverage social media in achieving your objective?
7. Besides social media were there any other methods used to influence government to change policies?
8. What strategy/s did you use to mobilise members nationally?
9. What strategy did you use to engage with the provinces?
10. In your opinion do you think that the #TTS achieved its objective? Explain why?

Appendix 2: Individual interview guide sheet: Provincial #TotalShutDown movement.

List of questions for individual interviews in the provinces.

Historical Background and objectives

1. Explain how the Provincial #TTS were formed?
2. What was the aim and objective of the provincial # TTS?
3. Explain the composition and structure of the provincial # TTS?

Strategies of the Provincial # TTS

1. Explain the overall strategies used in the province and was it different to the national strategies?
2. Explain the provincial strategies to mobilise women?
3. What were some of the challenges you faced in mobilising women in your province?
4. What were the main issues on GBV in the province?
5. Did you also use the social media platform? Why?
6. How did the co-ordination work between national and the provincial # TTS?
7. In your opinion do you think that the #TTS has achieved its objective of influencing public policy on GBV in the province?

Appendix 3: Consent forms: Interviews

Title of project

SOCIAL MEDIA'S INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC POLICY IN GENDER BASED VIOLENCE.

Name of researcher: Nalianee Naidoo

I, **Mariam Mangera**, agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve. I agree to the following:

(Please circle the relevant options below).

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous	(YES)	NO
I agree that the researcher may use anonymous quotes in his / her research report	(YES)	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded	(YES)	NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used anonymously after this project has ended, for academic purposes by other researchers, subject to their own ethics clearance being obtained.	(YES)	NO



(signature) Mariam Mangera (name of participant) 26 October 2020 (date)

…. ..... (signature)
…. ..... (Name of person seeking consent)
…. ..... (date)

Appendix 4: Consent form: Founder of #TotalShutDown movement.

Title of project

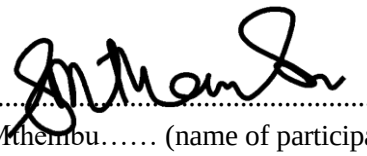
SOCIAL MEDIA'S INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC POLICY IN GENDER BASED VIOLENCE.

Name of researcher Nalianee Naidoo

I, …Sibongile Sibs Mthembu., agree to participate in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve. I agree to the following:

(Please circle the relevant options below).

I agree that my participation will remain anonymous	YES	NO
I agree that the researcher may use anonymous quotes in his / her research report	YES	NO
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded	YES	NO
I agree that the information I provide may be used anonymously after this project has ended, for academic purposes by other researchers, subject to their own ethics clearance being obtained.	YES	NO



… .....(signature)
…S Mthembu…… (name of participant)
…13August 2021… (date)

… .....(signature)
… .....(Name of person seeking consent)
… .....(date)