



Ending gender-based violence: A statement by the Psychological Society of South Africa

30 November 2020



PsySSA is the professional body representing psychology professionals in South Africa. PsySSA has, since its inception, been dedicated to making a significant contribution to solving the pressing human development problems in South Africa. PsySSA is committed to the transformation and development of South African Psychology to serve the needs and interests of all South Africa's people. PsySSA advances psychology as a science, profession and as a means of promoting human well-being (<https://www.psytssa.com>).

Statement

As we approach yet another 16 days of activism against gender-based violence during what has been a very difficult year, especially for women and gender non-conforming persons, we as the Sexuality and Gender Division of the Psychological Society of South Africa express our continued commitment to raising awareness and continuing our work to end discrimination and gender-based violence.

Despite the enormous challenges of 2020 we know that every single year is a bad year for South African women and gender non-conforming persons who bear the brunt of men's violence against them. We need to begin to challenge the widespread, yet everyday misogyny, sexism, sexual entitlement, homophobia and transphobia if we are ever to make any inroads in ending gender-based violence. It is also essential that we build and raise consciousness about gender-based violence and how it is linked to everyday and systemic sexism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, and transphobia.

We call for:

- Sustained media campaigns on gender-based violence – not episodic campaigns around women's month or the 16 days of activism but continued media campaigns with the express purpose of education and awareness raising
- The media needs to steer clear of episodic reporting on violence - we need thematic reporting that includes detailed, contextualised, grounded stories on gender-based violence
- Reporting ethically and with the intention of raising awareness and building consciousness on violence also means that media reporting should include reporting on the types of violence that are usually silenced – these include reporting on intimate partner violence (where the victims and perpetrators are not celebrities or politicians) and more detailed reporting on the pervasiveness of sexual harassment across the many institutions in our society
- In reporting more generally, the media needs to show up instances of sexism and misogyny in society, but they must also take the lead in challenging stereotypes and biased reporting
- We must hear victims' voices in media reporting on violence – we cannot promote public understanding and shift consciousness about violence if we don't

The mission of the Sexuality and gender Division (SGD) of the Psychological Society of South Africa is to promote a psychological understanding of the fields of sexuality and gender. The SGD addresses this mission through the advancement of scientific research, clinical practice, continuing professional development and being responsive to related national, continental and international issues and concerns.

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