

## **Short summary**

South Africa has made some strides in recognizing women's rights in this country. However, women in the rural areas have not benefitted from most of the developments. They are still exposed to cultural practices that are dehumanising. I explore how these practices are linked to gender based violence.

There are also well-articulated policy frameworks and laws aimed at the protection of women. However, gender-based violence (GBV) remains very high in the country and can lead to death. GBV has been understood from a western perspective with limited attention to the traditional perspective. Perhaps the controversies in the legal and policy framework are a reflection of an application of a Western perspective on cultural African beliefs. In this lecture, I present these contrasting views in the legal framework.

The lecture aims to advance an understanding of African customs linked to GBV. It is a timely lecture in view of the drive towards Afrocentric psychology. The available literature has focused extensively on cultural aspects related to mental illness and therapy with a limited focus on cultural aspects linked to GBV. Finally, interventions that take cognisance of the dynamic nature of cultural beliefs and practices are highlighted. In conclusion, it is indicated that we must choose to adhere to cultural practices that are not discriminating against women.

**Keywords: Gender-based violence, African beliefs, equality**