

ARTICLE

Intimate Partner Femicide–Suicide in Eswatini: Offenders, Victims, Incident Characteristics and Sociocultural Contexts

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Abstract

The current article reports the results of a systematic study of 42 intimate partner femicide–suicides with 91 fatal casualties in Eswatini, Africa, from 2009 to 2022. The study used a media-surveillance methodology to identify the 42 cases from a major local online newspaper. Information on all identified cases was subjected to careful criminological analyses. Six of the cases involved seven collateral, or corollary, homicide victims. Results indicate that assailants and victims were generally of lower socio-economic background; assailants tended to be older than their victims; stabbing with a knife, shooting with a gun and slashing with a machete were the dominant homicide methods; ingestion of weevil tablets and other poisons, hanging and shooting with a firearm were the predominant suicide means. The results further show that femicide incidents overwhelmingly involved overkill, with the assailant using inordinately high levels of aggression against the victim. Male sexual jealousy, rage over the female partner's abrogation of the relationship, and interpersonal disputes of variable origin were the major precipitants. It is recommended that deterrent sentences should be used to teach wife assaulters and would-be assaulters that society does not tolerate assaultive behaviour within intimate relationships. More resources should be provided for women who are victims of domestic violence. This should include legal aid, financial resources and refuges for women in danger and their children. Measures should be taken to control the proliferation of firearms in society.

Keywords femicide; femicide–suicide; intimate partner homicide; homicide–suicide; femicide–suicide

INTRODUCTION

Intimate partner homicide–suicide refers to the lethal victimization of a current or former intimate partner, followed by the suicide of the perpetrator. The professional homicide literature shows that in terms of scope, intimate partner homicide–suicide constitutes a major form of intrafamilial violence in many societies around the globe (Adinkrah 2014; Cavlak et al. 2023; Daly and Wilson 1988; Dawson 2005; Eastaerl 1994). Research on intimate partner homicide–suicide further demonstrates that

women are more likely than men to be the homicide victim in these dyadic deaths (Adinkrah 2014; Cavlak et al. 2023). In light of this finding, the literature on lethal violence currently employs the term intimate partner femicide–suicide to denote intimate partner homicide–suicide cases in which the homicide victim was female.

The past decade especially has witnessed burgeoning scholarship on intimate partner femicide–suicides (see Cavlak et al. 2023; Dayan 2021; McPhedran et al. 2018; Richards, Gillespie, and Givens 2014; Solinas-Saunders 2022; Sorrentino, Cinquegrana, and Guida 2022; Zimmerman, Fridel, and McArdle 2023). The vast majority of these studies have focused on countries in the global north, including Australia, Canada, Italy and the United States (Banks et al. 2008; Cavlak et al. 2023; Dawson 2005; Dawson and Carrigan 2021; Eastaer 1994; Koziol-McLain et al. 2006; Krulewitch 2009; Lund and Smorodinsky 2001; Morton et al. 1998; Solinas-Saunders 2022; Sorrentino et al. 2022; Zimmerman et al. 2023). Concomitantly, intimate partner femicide–suicide events elsewhere have received comparatively little attention in the professional literature, with the effect that a great deal is currently unknown about the issue, particularly the impact of sociocultural factors on the scope and patterns of the crime. Indeed, a diligent search of the professional literature located only a limited number of publications on intimate partner femicide–suicides in non-Western societies – Ghana (Adinkrah 2014) and South Africa (Matthews et al. 2008). The dearth of research on intimate partner femicide–suicide in non-Western societies leaves intimate partner femicide–suicide uninterrogated in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Oceania, where most of the world’s population is currently domiciled. It is estimated that the low-income countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America account for 80% of the world’s population and represent 99% of global population growth (Population Reference Bureau 2020).

The current study was fuelled by two objectives: (1) to help fill the acknowledged gap in the literature on intimate partner femicide–suicide in the global south; and (2) to extend scholarship on the subject by examining intimate partner femicide–suicide in Eswatini, an African country, as a case study. To the author’s knowledge, the current study is the third to examine intimate partner femicide–suicide in a non-Western society. The overall impetus is based on the presumption that the incorporation of diverse geographical and cultural areas into the study of intimate partner femicide–suicide will lead to a richer understanding of the issue and assist in the development of more robust and culturally appropriate programmes for the control of this tragic form of violence.

BACKGROUND

A review of various media sources on fatal and non-fatal suicidal behaviour in Eswatini society reveals that intimate partner femicide frequently occurs in the country. Indeed, a September 2020 op-ed article published in the local daily newspaper, *Eswatini Observer*, described women’s murder as “Eswatini’s Other Epidemic”, about femicide ranking next to suicide and HIV/AIDS as Eswatini’s other major social and public health issue (Shabangu 2020). In some of these intimate partner femicides, the homicidal assailant subsequently died at his own

hands. Additional review of over 450 newspaper articles relating to homicide and suicide demonstrated that concerned citizens and public officials frequently fulminated against the frequency of violence in connubial relationships (Hlatshwayo 2020; Mamba 2019; Shabangu 2020) and suggested the need for scholarship to identify the underlying factors in order to formulate appropriate remedies for addressing the issue. For instance, in response to a gruesome femicide–suicide incident involving a collateral child murder victim, local clinical psychologist Ndo Mdlalose opined that “people had resorted to killing as an easy way out”. She said: “The value of life was no longer considered by most people”, adding that “people think that life is just something you can take and throw away anyhow” (Hlatshwayo 2020).

Despite the clarion call from stakeholders to address intimate partner femicide–suicide through research, there is currently a paucity of scholarship on homicide, suicide and homicide–suicide in Eswatini. The present study focused on these cases of homicide–suicides, also known in the literature as dyadic deaths (Du Plessis and Hlaise 2012). These were 42 intimate partner femicide–suicide cases that occurred in Eswatini during 2009–2022. Among the issues explored were: (1) the sociodemographic characteristics of victims and offenders; (2) victim–offender relationships; (3) spatial and temporal features; (4) methods of homicide perpetration; (5) suicide means; (6) situational elements surrounding the events, including motives and triggering factors; and (7) public reactions/community responses to the femicide–suicides.

The current research on intimate partner femicide–suicide in Eswatini is particularly timely given intimations there that the problem is worsening. In July 2022, gender violence activists in Eswatini – including politicians, traditional authorities and women rights advocates – petitioned the office of the Deputy Prime Minister to declare gender-based violence an epidemic and a national crisis. A spate of intimate partner femicides and intimate partner femicide–suicides triggered this. Since then, the plea has been recurrently issued with the persistence of gender-based violence and the government’s continued refusal to declare the problem an epidemic (Dlamini 2023; Times of Eswatini 2022).

PRIOR RESEARCH

Research suggests that intimate partner femicide–suicide is a statistically rare and extraordinary crime (Adinkrah 2014; Cavlak et al. 2023; Matthews et al. 2008). The total volume and rate per 100,000 represent a small fraction of the total number of homicides and suicides that occur in a particular jurisdiction during a particular year (Cavlak et al. 2023; Mathews et al. 2008). For South Africa, Matthews et al. (2008) reported an intimate partner femicide–suicide rate of 1.7 per 100,000. Despite their infrequency, intimate partner femicide–suicide constitutes a significant percentage of all homicide–suicides (Adinkrah 2014; Cavlak et al. 2023; Sorrentino et al. 2022). Indeed, intimate partner femicide–suicide is reportedly the most common form of homicide–suicide, accounting for approximately one in four (Cavlak et al. 2023; Richards et al. 2014).

Despite its limited prevalence, intimate partner femicide–suicides tend to garner substantial media attention and public interest. Existing research indicates that

homicides followed by suicide events are more likely to receive coverage in the news media than suicide events not preceded by homicide (Jamieson, Jamieson, and Romer 2003). This is partly because of the multiple victims typically involved – including collateral or corollary murder victims. Intimate partner femicide–suicide events are often multicides, involving not only the couple themselves but one or more of the couple’s children. In some cases, the femicide victim’s new intimate partner, who happens to be nearby at the time of the femicide, is also killed (Dobash and Dobash 2012; Meyer and Post 2013; Smith, Fowler, and Niolon 2014). Another reason for widespread public interest in intimate partner femicide–suicide is the heinous nature of the crime. Most femicide–suicides are characterized by extreme brutality and violence (Adinkrah 2014; Browne, Williams, and Dutton 1999).

The existing literature indicates that intimate partner femicide–suicides are characteristically carefully planned acts. Despite the seemingly spontaneous nature of these crimes, close analysis of patterns of intimate partner femicide–suicide events reveals that many are meticulously planned acts, demonstrating deliberation and intentionality conjoined with systematic planning and execution of the crime (Adler 1999; Banks et al. 2008; Dawson 2005; Koziol-McLain et al. 2006; Matthews et al. 2008). Cavlak et al. (2023) observed from their study of intimate partner femicide–suicide in Türkiye that approximately 67% of the incidents were planned. In a prior study, Dawson (2005) compared intimate partner femicides that involved the suicide of the perpetrator of femicide with cases without suicide and observed that intimate partner femicide–suicide cases involved greater degrees of premeditation. Relatedly, Adler (1999) found robust evidence of premeditation in intimate partner femicide–suicides in Chicago during 1875–1990. Evidence from the latter study demonstrated that in many cases, men who lethally assaulted their lovers and subsequently committed suicide cogitated carefully on their actions – they threatened their victims, stalked them, and expended considerable amounts of time procuring weapons and writing suicide notes before executing their crimes. Some perpetrators reportedly declared their intents and plans far and wide long before executing their deadly deeds.

Prior studies have attempted to identify the motivations for intimate partner femicide–suicides. The research shows that male sexual jealousy – a man’s suspicion that his female partner is involved in a sexual relationship outside of their relationship – is one of the leading precipitating factors of intimate partner femicide–suicide. The literature is replete with examples of studies that reported male sexual jealousy as a precipitant of intimate partner femicide–suicide. Indeed, across the globe, several studies of intimate partner homicide have concluded that women accused of sexual infidelity, whether the accusation was real or imagined, faced a substantial risk of lethal victimization, with or without perpetrator suicide (Adinkrah 2021; Aldridge and Browne 2003; Browne et al. 1999; Daly and Wilson 1988; Daly, Wilson, and Weghorst 1982; Dayan 2021; Kivisto 2015; Matthews 2008).

A woman’s decision to terminate the relationship is another major reason for intimate partner femicide–suicides (Adinkrah 2014; Dawson 2005; Dayan 2021; Solinas-Saunders 2022). Existing research shows that many male partners in intimate partner femicide–suicides stalked their estranged partners. When they located them, they harassed, assaulted, raped and killed them out of revenge or to

prevent them from consorting with other men. Then, they took their own lives shortly after the femicide. Some analysts posit that male proprietary attitudes and behaviour are associated with a cultural and individual mindset that perceives women in intimate relationships as the property of husbands and non-marital male partners. The men in these situations felt emasculated and aggrieved when “his woman”, translated as “his property”, displayed the audacity to leave or contemplate leaving him. The lethal violence in these cases is fuelled by an “abandonment rage” that some men feel is justified (Hough and McCorkle 2020).

Previous research has shown that femicides in intimate partner homicide-suicides tend to be associated with extreme levels of violence and brutality (Adinkrah 2014; Dayan 2021). This aspect of the crime is known as “overkill” (Adinkrah 2021; Browne et al. 1999) and is used to connote homicide in which the victim suffered “two or more acts of stabbing, cutting, shooting, or a severe beating” (Browne et al. 1999:73). Intimate partner femicide is an expressive homicide, and expressive crimes are generally characterized by violence that far exceeds what is required to commit the crime. Expressive crimes are ones that are motivated by rage, frustration, jealousy and hate (Miethe and Regoeczi 2009). In these cases, offenders are motivated by jealousy, proprietariness, envy, frustration and rage – expressive motivations deriving from the perpetrator’s sexual jealousy and rage over the woman’s decision to depart the relationship through separation or divorce.

Other research efforts have found that murderous incidents in intimate partner femicide-suicides are often committed with a firearm. In many instances, the post-homicidal suicide is committed with the same weapon used for the murder. Research further finds that in countries with liberal gun laws, the vast majority of intimate partner femicide-suicides are committed with guns (Adler 1999; Banks et al. 2008; Dayan 2021; Koziol-McLain et al. 2006; Lund and Smorodinsky 2001; Morton et al. 1998; Salari and Sillito 2016). In an Italian study, Sorrentino et al. (2022) found the use of a firearm “a significant predictive factor for intimate partner femicide-suicide”, reporting that “55.5% of perpetrators used a firearm as a weapon for intimate partner femicide-suicides”. Cavlak et al. (2023) also found firearm ownership as an important risk factor for intimate partner femicide-suicide in Türkiye, accounting for 84.1% of the cases studied. The authors, therefore, recommended legislation to restrict access to firearms in the country.

In many intimate partner femicide-suicides, the murderous rampage includes the lethal victimization of persons other than the intimate partners (Dayan 2021; Dobash and Dobash 2012). The term “collateral victim” or “corollary victim” refers to “deaths of non-intimates that come about from an intimate partner homicide” (Hough and McCorkle 2020:84). These include the couple’s children and other relatives found in the vicinity of the primary victim. In some instances where the femicide victim was estranged from the perpetrator, the femicide victim’s current partner was also targeted for lethal victimization.

The extant research suggests that a disproportionately high volume of intimate partner femicide-suicides occur in conjugal relationships where one of the partners, usually the male, is significantly older than the other partner by generations (Adinkrah 2014). Gerontogamous marital relationships generally tend to be less stable than marriages where the age differential between couples is small (Knoss 2017). Relatedly, offenders in intimate partner femicide-suicides tend to be older

than the femicide victim (Adinkrah 2014; Cavlak et al. 2023; Sorrentino et al. 2022). Based on their analysis of homicide data from the United States, Breitman, Shackelford, and Block (2004) concluded that the risk of intimate partner homicide was substantially elevated for couples with a large age differential – or where the man was at least 16 years older than the woman, or the woman was at least 10 years older than the man. They further observed that this risk pattern persisted regardless of whether the homicide offender was male or female.

In sum, research has examined the nature and patterns of intimate partner femicide–suicides in several societies. The current study expands current research on intimate partner femicide–suicide by examining the phenomenon in Eswatini, a society in which femicide cases have been hitherto unexamined.

ESWATINI: THE RESEARCH SETTING

Known as Swaziland until April 2018, Eswatini is a small landlocked African country in the continent's southern region. In 2022, Eswatini had an estimated population of 1,202,000. Of these, 49.25% were male, and 50.75% were female. Life expectancy for females and males was 63.5 and 58.9 years, respectively. In 2022, the gross domestic product per capita for the country was listed as US\$3,639 (Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini 2022). In 2018, the literacy rate for the population at or above 15 years was 88.5% for females and 88.3% for males. Eswatini's population is vastly rural, with an estimated 71% of the people living in communities of less than 5,000 persons. Agriculture is the mainstay of the country's economy, with sugar and wood pulp constituting the major foreign exchange-earners. An estimated 75% of the population engages in small-scale agriculture, producing maize, millet, citrus fruits, pineapples, tobacco, cotton, rice, sorghum and peanuts (Lawrence 2017). Many adults in the society struggle with unemployment and poverty. In 2021, approximately 59% of the people were estimated to be living below the national poverty line of US\$1.90 a day, and 20.1% were said to be living in extreme poverty (Motsa 2022; UNICEF 2021).

Eswatini is a multiracial, multilingual and multireligious society. The two largest ethnic groups are Swazi (84.3%) and Zulu (9.9%), with Tsonga (2.5%), Indian (0.8%) and Pakistani (0.8%) forming smaller segments of the population. About 3% of the population is defined as White, mostly of British and Afrikaner descent, with a smaller minority of Portuguese migrants from Mozambique who migrated to Eswatini following Mozambique's independence from Portugal. Regarding religious affiliation, 90% of the population belongs to various Christian denominations (Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Jehovah's Witness, Church of Jesus Christ), and about 2% is Muslim. The remaining 8% belongs to other religions, including Baha'i, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and indigenous African religions (Lawrence 2017). It must be stressed, however, that in Eswatini, conversion to Christianity, Islam, or any other religion does not mean abandoning traditional African religious beliefs, as many hold these beliefs simultaneously and practise them concurrently (Lawrence 2017).

World Health Organization data rank Eswatini among countries with high suicide mortality in Africa. One author (M Adinkrah unpublished results) recently

employed a media surveillance methodology to study 250 fatal and non-fatal suicidal acts in Eswatini during 2009–2022. The study's findings showed that 69.2% of the acts were committed by males and 30.8% by females. Suicide victims were mostly 11 to 40 years old, and the dominant suicide methods were hanging, ingesting weevil tablets (aluminium phosphide), self-immolation, consuming liquid agrochemicals or pesticides, and shooting with firearms. The major precipitating factors for suicides included financial challenges, positive HIV/AIDS status, dispute with spouse over spousal infidelity, unilateral decision by one of the spouses to terminate the relationship, and for prepubertal children and youth, unrequited love, relationship failure, rejection, sexual abuse, unplanned pregnancy and examination failure. Eswatini retains the death penalty, and persons convicted of murder can be sentenced to death. However, Eswatini has not executed a convicted murderer since 1983 (IRIN News 2000).

The Status of Women in Eswatini

Eswatini is a patriarchal society. Women occupy a subordinate position in nearly every realm of society. There is a cultural preference for sons. Cultural expectations for males and females are vastly different. Males are expected to be adventurous, courageous, active, forceful and aggressive, while females are to be nurturing, domestic, sentimental and emotional. Men are still expected to be the primary income earners of their families, even if their wives are employed outside the home. Men feel deeply stigmatized and emasculated if they cannot provide for their families financially. In the domestic arena, women are responsible for childcare, cooking, cleaning and laundering clothes. Polygyny, or the marital arrangement where a man is married to two or more women simultaneously, is culturally permitted. Gerontogamy, a marital form where one of the partners in the connubial union is significantly older than the other spouse, also occurs frequently. In the overwhelming majority of instances, the husband is the older partner (Ndlela 2010; Times of Swaziland 2022; Tsabedze 2011). Eswatini is a pronatalist society with a high premium on marriage and having children. Divorce is frowned upon and rare, although separations are tolerated and commonplace.

Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is a major social and health problem in Eswatini, with most victims being women and girls. Data collated by Eswatini police demonstrate that 11,081 cases of gender-based violence were reported in 2018. Of these, women were victims in 72.6% or 8,043 cases. Physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence, mainly affecting women, children and persons with disabilities, are the leading forms of gender-based violence in Eswatini society. The Eswatini Violence Against Children Survey of 2007 reported that nearly one in three girls experienced sexual and emotional violence during childhood; approximately one in four females experienced physical violence. The data further revealed that boyfriends and husbands were the most frequent perpetrators of sexual violence. Male relatives were the most frequent perpetrators of physical violence. The physical chastisement of wives and other female intimate partners is also prevalent. Women are often

beaten based on husbands' suspicions of infidelity and for failing to demonstrate deference to the husband. They are also assaulted for their unilateral decision to leave the connubial or dating relationship. Some of these physical chastisements result in lethal violence.

Until 2021, no shelters, sanctuaries or refuges for women fleeing male-perpetrated abuse existed. Women victims who seek refuge in their natal homes are stalked; when found, they are harassed and, in some instances, killed. Incidentally, Eswatini opened its first and second shelters for victims of domestic violence in July and September 2021 with the assistance of the United States Center for Disease Control (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2021). There is evidence that sexual offences against females are severely underreported due to the widespread societal tendency to challenge the veracity of the victim's story of abuse. Victim blaming presents another barrier to the reporting of sexual victimization. Many victims of partner violence stay in abusive relationships due to their dependency on the batterer for economic support (The Bridge 2022).

RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA SOURCES

For the current study, "intimate partner femicide-suicide" refers to a man's killing of his current or past female intimate partner, followed by the perpetrator's suicide. Currently, reliable police data on lethal violence – suicides, homicides and homicide-suicides – are unavailable in Eswatini. The current study, therefore, employed a media surveillance methodology, utilizing the content analysis of femicide-suicide cases identified from an electronic database of a major national newspaper. A systematic search was initially conducted of all published suicide case reports that appeared in the electronic database of the *Times of Swaziland*, the leading newspaper in Eswatini, from 2009 to 2022. The search yielded 6,137 news reports relating to fatal and non-fatal suicidal behaviour. A subsequent analysis yielded 358 cases in which a person engaged in fatal or non-fatal suicidal behaviour.

Further review and analysis of these data revealed 42 cases where a person's fatal suicidal act was preceded by the murder of a current or former female intimate partner. Each identified case report was read several times to obtain information pertinent to the crime. Information collected from the content analysis consisted of: (1) sociodemographic characteristics of offenders and victims such as age, gender and occupation; (2) relationship between the assailant and victims; (3) collateral or corollary victims and their sociodemographic attributes; (4) spatial and temporal aspects of the crime; (5) *modus operandi* and type of weapon used for the homicide and suicide; (6) circumstances surrounding the offence and triggering or precipitating factors; and (7) motives for the femicide and suicide.

The *Times of Swaziland* is one of only two newspapers in Eswatini. Founded in 1897, it is the oldest newspaper published in the country. It is also the leading newspaper with a higher national circulation rate than its rival newspaper, the *Swazi Observer* (now *Eswatini Observer*). The newspaper's official website describes *The Times of Swaziland* as "an independent publisher of Swaziland local news". "The print edition is printed daily with a circulation of over 300,000", a remarkable readership for a country of 1.2 million people (Times of Swaziland 2023). News

stories about intimate partner femicide–suicide appearing in *The Times of Swaziland* typically included names, ages and occupational statuses of perpetrator and victim, date and time of occurrence, location of the incident, the relationship between the victim and the assailant, the *modus operandi* and weapon used, as well as such background information as a history of domestic violence between the couple and triggering events of the homicide–suicide.

The use of data from electronic news sources to study homicide, suicide or homicide–suicide is not unprecedented (Adinkrah 2014; Cavlak et al. 2023; Richards et al. 2014; Solinas-Saunders 2022; Sorrentino et al. 2022). Given the paucity of official law enforcement data on the phenomenon in many societies, it is recognized as an acceptable methodological alternative. A growing body of research on intimate partner femicide–suicide has involved the use of such methodology and data sources (Adinkrah 2014; Cavlak et al. 2023; Dayan 2021; Solinas-Saunders 2022; Sorrentino et al. 2022). To illustrate, in a study comparing intimate partner femicide–suicide with intimate partner femicide without suicide, Solinas-Saunders (2022) relied on information obtained from “Italian news reports available online”. Similarly, Cavlak et al. (2023) used electronic news sources to study intimate partner femicide–suicide in Türkiye, while Dayan (2021) utilized a similar methodology to study the phenomenon in Israel. Media surveillance methodology has particular advantages for global research, particularly in societies where systematic collection, collation and dissemination of such information is often absent or erratically practised. This includes many African countries where newspapers are among the most widely used data sources on suicide, crime, deviance and delinquency. Such phenomena garner substantial public interest and are considered particularly newsworthy by most news media outlets in countries throughout the continent.

RESULTS

Extent or Scope of Intimate Partner Femicide–Suicides

The study identified 42 intimate partner femicide–suicide cases during the study period. It is impossible to know if this reflects the true magnitude of intimate partner femicide–suicide cases in Eswatini during the study period. There is a strong possibility that not all cases were covered by the newspaper. Even then, the finding of 42 intimate partner femicide–suicides during 14 years is significant given Eswatini’s current population of 1.2 million and intimate partner femicide–suicide as a generally rare crime.

Public Reaction to Intimate Partner Femicide–Suicides

The study examined societal responses to intimate partner femicide–suicide. The data show that intimate partner femicide–suicide cases typically garnered considerable media attention and public interest. Several cases were simultaneously covered by both the *Times of Swaziland* and the *Eswatini Observer*. Published photos of the crime scenes accompanying the crime stories recurrently showed a mass of curious observers standing near the crime scene to obtain information about the femicide–suicide incident. People were horrified or curious about the

slayings. Many citizens expressed bafflement, shock and horror, unable to fathom reasons behind the intrafamilial lethal victimizations – the murder of the focal victims, occasionally conjoined with the fatal assaults on corollary victims and culminating in the eventual self-murders of the perpetrators. Others were enraged by the ruthlessness with which the crimes were perpetrated and expressed condemnation of the perpetrator of the femicide. When the killer's deceased body had not been discovered, communities were apprehensive about their fate in the face of a wandering murderer. In Case 5, it was reported that "the incident has shocked the community of this area". In Case 6, until the assailant's deceased body was found, "the community [had] been living in fear following the gruesome murder in their neighbourhood". In Case 12, "onlookers, including other police officers and people who had come to the crime scene, were left shocked". Case 13 reportedly "caused panic and fear to the residents of the sparsely populated area". In Case 15, it was reported that "the gruesome murder and suicide [had] left the local residents shell-shocked on the incident, especially in the manner in which it happened".

Regarding social policy, many wondered what could be done to stem the tide of femicides and other forms of intimate partner violence directed at women. Some of the cases generated letters to the editor and feature stories in the local newspapers about the horrors of spousal violence, including intimate-perpetrated murders by men in the society and ways of curtailing it (see Hlatshwayo 2020; Mamba 2019; Shabangu 2020). Some news coverage of femicide–suicide incidents contained statements made by mental health professionals and domestic violence advocates about what was needed to prevent future incidents.

Sociodemographic Characteristics of Victims and Offenders

The current article examined the sociodemographic characteristics of the offenders and victims, such as their age, gender and employment status. Femicide perpetrators in case stories were identified as business owners, army officers, senior police officers, retired police officers, taxi men/taxi drivers, university employees, correctional officers (warders), farmhands, herders, labourers, farm supervisors, football players and civil servants. Femicide victims included a textile worker, a business owner, a university graduate trainee, a soldier, a cleaner, an employee of a photography studio, a police officer, an employee at a hair salon and an emergency medical technician trainee.

The study identified the ages of 24 of the 42 femicide victims. Table 1 presents information about the ages of the perpetrators and victims. These victims ranged in age from 16 to 57 years old, with a mean age of 30.6 years and a median age of 29 years. Two of the victims were pregnant at the time of the femicide–suicide.

The study identified the ages of 26 of the 42 femicide perpetrators. They ranged in age from 22 to 64 years old and had a mean age of 35.3 years and a median age of 32 years. In all but one case, the femicide perpetrator was older than the victim. Age differentials between perpetrator and victim, such as 14 years, 17 years, 22 years, 13 years and 10 years, were found in Case 13, Case 24, Case 25, Case 26 and Case 15, respectively.

Table 1. Perpetrator and Victim Age

	No.	%
Victim's age (years)		
10–20	4	9.5
21–30	10	23.8
31–40	5	11.9
41–50	3	7.1
51–60	1	2.3
Not reported	19	45.2
Total	42	100.0
Offender's age (years)		
21–30	10	23.8
31–40	10	23.8
41–50	2	4.8
51–60	2	4.8
61–70	1	2.4
Not reported	14	33.3
Total	42	100.0

Victim–Offender Relationship

The study examined the relationship between the victims and offenders in all 42 cases. The data show that femicidal attackers killed 17 (40.5%) current or estranged wives, 18 (42.9%) current girlfriends or lovers and seven (17.9%) ex-girlfriends or lovers. The data show that the duration of the relationship appeared to have no impact on femicide–suicide. In Case 9, the victim and the assailant had been married for 20 years. In Case 21, the assailant and the victim had been in a relationship for only four months, and the unmarried couple in Case 24 had been together for 10 years.

Collateral or Corollary Victims

There were collateral or corollary victims in six (14.3%) of the 42 cases examined in this study. In one case, there were two collateral victims. In all, there were seven corollary victims and a total of 91 fatal casualties in 42 intimate partner femicide–suicide events. In Case 1, the assailant killed the primary victim and the victim's 26-year-old daughter. In Case 9, the collateral victim was the primary victim's mother or the assailant's mother-in-law. In Case 11, the assailant slew the focal victim's male lover. In Case 12, the collateral victim was the femicide victim's four-year-old son. She and her son “were stabbed and their throats slit open”. In Case 28, the killer murdered the couple's four-year-old son. In Case 29, the assailant lethally stabbed

the femicide victim to death and committed suicide by ingesting poison, but not before feeding the couple's two children with some of the poison. In Case 33, the assailant hacked the focal victim to death with a machete. After the assailant's 13-year-old son intervened to save his mother, the assailant proceeded to stab the boy non-lethally in the stomach.

Spatial and Temporal Aspects

The current article examined the spatial aspects of the crime, including geographic location and crime scene. The data show that 18 (42.9%) of the 42 incidents occurred in the homes shared by the couple; nine (21.4%) occurred in the femicide victim's apartment; seven (16.7%) occurred in the natal home of the femicide victim, locally described as her "parental homestead" where she had been staying following estrangement from the assailant; six (12.8%) incidents occurred in public places (e.g. in the parking lot of a courthouse; in the assailant's taxi parked near a forest; one kilometre away from the victim's school; near a shopping mall; near the victim's employment); one incident occurred in the assailant's apartment; and one occurred in a "guest house" or motel.

The temporal aspects of the crime were not consistently reported in media reports, and such information was available in only 21 of the 42 cases. The data show that the time of the homicide event varied widely from case to case, suggesting that in Eswatini, a femicide–suicide event could occur at any time. To illustrate, Case 1 occurred at 2:00 a.m.; Case 2 at 2:00 p.m.; Case 3 at about 6:30 a.m.; Case 5 at around 6:30 p.m.; Case 7 just after 6:00 p.m.; Case 9 at 10:00 p.m.; Case 13 at 10:00 a.m.; Case 14 at 4:00 a.m.; Case 27 "at night"; and Case 28 at 9:00 p.m.

Modus Operandi

Men who killed their female intimate partners before committing suicide used various weapons and *modus operandi* (see Table 2). In 42 cases, the most common homicide method was stabbing with a knife (15 cases; 35.7%). This was followed by shooting with a firearm (11 cases; 26.2%), slashing with a machete (four cases; 9.5%), chopping with an axe (two cases; 4.8%), burning (two cases; 4.8%), forcing the victim to ingest poison (e.g. weevil tablets or aluminium phosphate fumigant tablets) (two cases; 4.8%), stabbing with a spear (two cases; 4.8%), beating with a bodily weapon (like hands, feet, etc.) (one case), hitting a nail into the skull (one case) and hitting with an iron bar (one case). While these were the primary methods of killing, in some cases, the perpetrator used both a primary and a secondary method to commit the crime. In Case 23, the femicidal killer attempted manual strangulation before finally stabbing the victim. In Case 24, the assailant hit the victim's head with an iron bar before ultimately lethally stabbing her with a knife.

Post-homicidal suicides were accomplished through a variety of means (see Table 2). The most common suicide method in 42 cases was hanging (13 cases; 31.0%). This was followed by shooting with a gun (nine cases; 21.4%), ingestion of weevil tablets (eight cases; 19.0%), self-stabbing (three cases; 7.1%), ingestion of liquid herbicide (one case) and self-immolation (one case). In six cases (14.3%), the suicide methods were unreported in the data.

Table 2. Homicide Method and Suicide Means

	No.	%
Homicide method		
Stabbing with knife	15	38.5
Shooting with firearm	11	26.2
Slashing with machete	4	9.5
Burning	3	7.1
Chopping with axe	2	4.8
Forcing to ingest poison	2	4.8
Driving nail into skull	1	2.4
Stabbing with spear	1	2.4
Not reported	2	4.8
Total	42	100.0
Suicide method		
Hanging	13	31.0
Ingesting weevil tablets	9	21.4
Shooting with firearm	9	21.4
Self-stabbing	3	7.1
Ingesting liquid herbicide	1	2.4
Self-immolation	1	2.4
Not reported	6	14.3
Total	42	100.0

Four femicides committed with firearms involved the use of service weapons by current or former military and law enforcement officers. In Case 8, the assailant was a soldier working as a member of the local defence force. He used a gun to shoot his lover and then himself. In Case 11, a senior police officer used his service pistol to gun down the mother of his child and her male companion, who was in her company at the time of the femicide. He used the same gun to lethally shoot himself. In Case 13, a 64-year-old retired police officer shot his 50-year-old wife but committed suicide by ingesting weevil tablets. In Case 20, the assailant stole his father's service gun and used it to kill his lover. The father was the private secretary of a former government official. He was said to be asleep when the assailant "borrowed" the gun to commit the killing.

Elements of Premeditation

Premeditation connotes an intent to violate the law formulated before the activity, in other words, choosing to commit a crime, planning the crime and executing the plan (Gibbons 1992). Of the 42 femicide–suicide cases examined in the current study, 29

(69.0%) evinced clear evidence of premeditation and prior planning. Evidence of premeditation can be established through the suicide note left by the assailant prior to the femicide and subsequent suicide. The data show that assailants in 10 (23.8%) femicide–suicide cases left suicide notes before engaging in murder and suicide. In Case 1, the assailant left a suicide note apologizing for his actions and leaving instructions about what should happen to his children.

Premeditation was in evidence in many cases where the femicide was preceded by stalking and harassment of the primary victim. In Case 1, “four days after she had left, he tracked her to her parental home where he stabbed her more than six times while she was asleep with her daughter” (Ndlela 2009b). In Case 10, the assailant armed himself with an axe before breaking into his estranged wife’s house in the middle of the night. He hacked her to death with the axe after he found her sleeping. In Case 14, the taxi-driver assailant claimed that he had discovered text messages on his wife’s phone, which purportedly established evidence of sexual infidelity. He ostensibly picked her up in his taxicab for some errands but drove her to “a nearby forest and [lethally] assaulted her” (Mavimbela 2018). In Case 16, the assailant tracked his estranged girlfriend to her parents’ home, where he lethally shot her. Before killing himself, he left behind two suicide notes, one of which contained an apology to his father for stealing and using his gun for the shootings. He also apologized to the femicide victim’s father for killing his daughter, stating that he loved her. In the second suicide note, he requested his deceased girlfriend’s family to bury him and her together in the same coffin at a specified burial ground (Nhleko 2009b).

Evidence of Overkill

Most femicidal killings involved extreme violence, consistent with findings in the extant literature. Case 9 was a particularly gruesome crime. The assailant used a slasher to slit open his wife’s stomach and that of his mother-in-law. He then went on to cut their breasts and further stabbed them numerous times. His wife “had nine stab wounds while his mother-in-law had five gashing wounds”. In Case 18, the 23-year-old assailant lethally stabbed his 19-year-old girlfriend six times before committing suicide. In Case 22, a jilted husband stalked his estranged wife until he cornered her at a remote location near a shopping mall. He stabbed her 15 times before cutting her throat. In Case 24, the victim’s body “was found with a stab wound above her left breast and also seemed to have been hit on the head with an iron rod”. In Case 26, the assailant “hacked [the victim] several times before committing suicide”. In Case 27, “the husband allegedly stabbed her multiple times with the knife in the upper body”; her “body had multiple stab wounds”. In Case 28, the assailant “brutally axed his wife and their 3-year-old son”. In Case 29, the assailant “stabbed the victim several times in the head”. In Case 30, the victim received 40 stab wounds on her body. One stab wound was “a massive gash around the stomach, which was so wide that her intestines almost protruded”. In Case 31, the 25-year-old man stabbed his 18-year-old cohabiting girlfriend 31 times with a knife before hanging himself from the rafters of his *spaza* shop (small informal shop).

In Case 32, the assailant fatally shot the victim six times before lethally shooting himself with the same weapon. In Case 33, the assailant reportedly “hacked the

Table 3. Homicide Motives

	No.	%
Unspecified relationship problems	12	30.8
Victim's decision to leave relationship	12	30.8
Male sexual jealousy (suspicion of infidelity)	8	19.0
Dispute over child support/maintenance amount	2	4.8
Miscellaneous reasons	2	4.8
Dispute over the paternity of children	1	2.4
Wife's sexual refusal	1	2.4
Other types of disputes	4	9.5
Total	42	100.0

victim all over the body with a bush knife” until she died. Case 35 was another case of a macabre killing. The assailant used a claw hammer to drive a 6-inch industrial nail into the victim's skull. Before doing so, he reportedly “stuffed her mouth with clothing so that she could not scream, tied both her hands and legs before he reached out for the claw hammer and nail”. In Case 36, the assailant reportedly “stabbed his wife countless times, killing her in the process, before hanging himself”. In Case 39, the assailant hacked the victim “several times all over the body with a bush knife, mainly on the head”.

Motives

One of the difficulties of establishing the motive in homicide–suicide cases is that the parties most directly involved are both deceased. Unless a suicide note is left behind, it is difficult to determine motivation. Even in the case of a suicide note, one only learns about the killer's perspective about triggering factors for the incident; the victim's side of the story is missing. In several cases where there was a suicide note, the police took the note without disclosing the content to the press. When the deceased's family found the suicide note, they were reluctant to share it with the police or the media, considering it a private matter that should remain private. Homicide motives are listed in Table 3.

“If I Can't Have You, No One Can”

Male partners' refusal to accept the victims' decision to abrogate the relationship was the leading cause of marital femicide–suicide, accounting for 12 (28.6%) of the 42 cases. In these cases, the assailants stalked the victims, typically finding them taking refuge in their natal home, then lethally assaulted them, killing them by stabbing, axing, shooting or setting their homes alight. In Case 4, a 29-year-old woman told her husband she no longer loved him. Enraged by her decision to leave the relationship, he choked her and forced her to ingest weevil tablets. He forced her to drink a deadly concoction when she was not dying fast enough. He then hanged

himself in the same room (Ndlela 2009a). In Case 5, a 31-year-old man with two girlfriends doused one of his female partners with petrol and set her alight. He later committed suicide by hanging himself from a tree. The female victim had ended the relationship with the assailant two weeks previously. She told him she no longer loved him because he had deserted “her when she was sick recently”. In response, the man, who had a duplicate key to the victim’s apartment, entered her apartment when she was away, bringing a two-litre container filled with petrol with him, then left, only to return to pick a quarrel with her. He then lit a fire that engulfed the woman in flames. He then fled the scene, retreating to his second home where he was living with another woman and his two children, grabbing a rope on his way out. A search party later found his deceased body dangling from a mango tree (Nhleko 2009a).

Case 7 was also a case of an assailant’s violent response to relationship termination; a 39-year-old man fatally assaulted his former girlfriend and committed suicide shortly after. The couple had been in a cohabiting, non-marital relationship for two years. During that period, the assailant physically assaulted the victim numerous times, causing the victim to be hospitalized on one occasion. The assailant was described as a jealous, possessive man who barred the victim – a primary school teacher – from talking to any other man. The assaults raised the ire of the woman’s relatives, who expressed fear for her life.

Consequently, extended family members of the couple met over the man’s regular abuse of the victim and advised the couple to end the relationship. The victim subsequently relocated with her natal family. The assailant was disgruntled over the decision of the two families and continued to stalk the victim. Case reports show that he once assaulted the victim and then vandalized her car over her refusal to return to him. He was fined four cattle by the traditional authorities for both offences but had not paid the fines at the time of the fatal assault. On the day of the lethal attack, he concealed himself behind a vehicle parked in the victim’s homestead. When a child exited the apartment to fetch water, he pushed himself into the apartment and stabbed the victim with a spear which he carried to the murder scene. When the victim exited the apartment, he pursued her and continued to spear her ruthlessly. The victim’s screams alerted neighbours, who attempted to come to her aid, but they were repulsed by the assailant, who threatened to spear anyone who came closer to him. He continued to spear the victim until she died. His body was found seven kilometres away from the crime scene. He had ingested the contents of a bottle of weevil tablets which he had brought to the crime scene.

In Case 18, a 23-year-old man killed his 19-year-old student girlfriend after she broke off the relationship because of his abusive and violent behaviour towards her. After breaking up with the assailant, she confided in friends that she feared for her life. The assailant told his friends that the victim had broken up with him to date another student. Unwilling to accept the breakup, he began stalking her repeatedly. On the day of the murder, he dressed in the same uniform as male students at her school and showed up there, pretending to be a newly enrolled student. He lethally stabbed her six times with a knife about a kilometre away from the school. In Case 24, the 29-year-old femicide victim was an intern just months from graduating as a certified emergency medical services officer. She was also pregnant at the time of her murder. The assailant was employed as a correctional officer. The victim had been

in a relationship with the assailant for 10 years before the femicide–suicide. She terminated the relationship when she discovered that he was married. He was infuriated when she refused to return to him. In Case 32, the assailant lethally shot the victim “shortly after she ended a love relationship with him”. The assailant had previously accused her of cheating on him with a neighbour. In a strikingly similar case, the victim in Case 33 was slain after “she dumped the assailant”. In Case 34, the assailant, before murdering the victim, telephoned and confided in a friend that “he could not bear to lose the victim after she jilted him because she knew too many of his secrets”.

Male Sexual Jealousy

Male sexual jealousy, or a man’s suspicion that his intimate partner had been sexually unfaithful, was the second dominant motivating factor in eight (19.0%) of the 42 cases. In case after case, the victim denied the allegations. Accusations, denials and counteraccusations invariably led to her murder. In the heat of arguments over infidelity accusations, the assailants beat, strangled, shot or set the victim alight before taking their own life. In Case 21, a 25-year-old man murdered his 16-year-old wife after she allegedly admitted to spending a night with another man. He lethally stabbed her in the chest with a “Rambo knife” in their bedroom before hanging himself from the rafters of the ceiling in the same room. The assailant in Case 23 killed his police officer wife in his car via strangulation. He accused her of infidelity with several men, some of whom he purported to know. In the suicide note he left behind, he mentioned the names of some of the men he alleged she was having affairs with. He further claimed that he was privy to a litany of intimate texts that the victim received from the alleged paramours. In his suicide note, he claimed that “he could no longer handle it anymore”. On the day of the incident, he called his wife from work under the pretext of meeting her to discuss their marital problems. When he arrived at her workplace, he strangled her to death while she was seated beside him inside his car. The pathologist’s report concluded that the victim’s death was due to pressure on the neck. In Case 34, the assailant accused the victim of “cheating on him with a neighbour”. Case 36 also involved an assailant’s allegations of adultery against the victim. In Case 37, the assailant told friends before committing the femicide–suicide that he “caught his lover with another man”.

Conflict Over Child Support or Maintenance Amount

Conflict over child support payments was a factor in two (4.8%) of the 42 cases examined. In Case 10, the assailant accused the victim of “financially abusing him by using their minor (2 ½ years) child” as a pawn. “He accused the victim of squandering his money by claiming that she wanted to use it to maintain their child, yet she was allegedly using it for her own benefit.” Enraged over her purported actions, he broke into her house in the middle of the night, where he found her sleeping. He hacked and beheaded her with an axe (Shange 2014). In Case 11, the victim and the assailant went to court for proceedings over the economic maintenance fee for their minor child. The assailant was furious that the victim had

requested an increment over the amount previously set by the court. She requested the court to raise the previously set maintenance amount to US\$150 a month. The magistrate set the amount at US\$110 monthly. Enraged by the increment, he accosted the victim and her current partner in the courthouse parking lot and used his service pistol to shoot both lethally. He then drove home and shot himself dead.

Wife Sexual Refusal

The victim in Case 1 endured chronic physical and sexual abuse at the hands of her husband. She finally left the marital home. Four days following her departure, he traced her to her natal home. He broke into the house at night and lethally stabbed her six times with a knife while she slept with her daughter. He later committed suicide by hanging himself in an adjacent thicket. The precipitating events in the femicide–suicide centred on disputation over sex. Just weeks before the murder–suicide, the couple had gone for HIV/AIDS testing. The wife tested negative, while the husband tested positive. They were counselled to use condoms for sex. The assailant, however, refused to acquiesce to the recommendations. Each time she refused him unprotective sex, he beat her. On other occasions, he would call his ex-girlfriend and tell her how wonderful a sex partner she was to spite his wife and make her jealous. After weeks of enduring physical and mental anguish, the woman complained to their Christian church. According to surviving relatives, the victim endured physical and mental abuse. She left the matrimonial home. Four days later, the assailant walked over seven kilometres to her natal home to kill her. Arriving at 2 a.m., he broke into the house and fatally stabbed her while she slept. When the victim's sister responded to her screams and went to her aid, the assailant stabbed her, too, before finally bolting from the scene and committing suicide.

Miscellaneous Reasons

In Case 13, a 64-year-old retired police officer fatally shot his 50-year-old wife over paternity issues regarding their children. He later poisoned himself. He claimed three of their seven children were not biologically his own. In Case 31, a 25-year-old man stabbed his 18-year-old lover to death. According to the case report, the assailant, a businessman, had been cohabiting with the school-age girl in his family homestead. His family disapproved that he was living with a young school-going girl. On the day of the incident, he was berated by the family for his intransigence in continuing to cohabit with his teenage lover. He is said to have woken up the following day angry with the teen lover for an undisclosed reason. He stabbed her 31 times with a knife he kept in his bedroom. When she died, he hanged himself from the rafters of his bedroom.

Child Secondary Victims of Intimate Partner Femicide–Suicide

One tragic aspect of intimate partner femicide–suicide is the loss of both parents to homicide and suicide for surviving children. Even more tragic is when children witness the murder and suicide of their parents. In Cases 1 and 2, the couples' children were nearby and directly witnessed the murder of one parent and the suicide of the other. In Case 1, the victim had left her husband over his physical

mistreatment, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. The assailant travelled over seven kilometres to reach her natal home, where she had sought refuge from the assailant. He broke into the apartment at 2:00 a.m. and stabbed her six times in her bed, where she lay sleeping next to her young daughter. The victim's sister went to her aid but was non-lethally stabbed in the head by the assailant. In Case 2, the assailant lethally shot his 57-year-old wife and their 26-year-old daughter. The couple's son was sleeping in another room and, upon hearing the gunshots, "found both his mother and sister lying in a pool of blood". The assailant fled the crime scene with the murder weapon, fatally shooting himself only when the police closed in on him. In Case 7, the victim was "in one of the family houses in her natal home with her children and other relatives when the assailant attacked her". He stabbed her 20 times with a spear (Shaw 2014).

In Case 35, a three-year-old boy witnessed the particularly gruesome murder and suicide of his parents. The media report states, "A terrified three-year-old boy who had just opened the main door to his parent's house cried hysterically and raised the alarm after he came across his father dead, hanging from the rafters." The toddler also saw his mother, who had been murdered and shoved into a corner, with a six-inch industrial nail and part of a claw hammer protruding from her head. Her body had been wrapped in a sleeping mattress, and the floor and her clothing were covered in blood (Dlamini 2017). Children who observed the murder or suicide, or both, of their parents are likely to be negatively impacted by the violence. Such children need counselling to stem the onset and development of post-traumatic stress disorder.

Children Left Behind by the Deaths

In Case 1, the assailant left a suicide note detailing what should happen to his children after the demise of both parents; there was no mention of the number of children involved. In Case 10, the deceased left behind two children aged seven years and 14 years. In Case 13, the couple left behind 11 children. In Case 15, the assailant was said to be "survived by several children, all not born from the murdered lover". In Case 20, the victim was described as being "survived by a young child". The victim in Case 24 was pregnant at the time of her murder.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The current article has examined offender attributes, victim characteristics, patterns, situational contexts, motives, and public reactions to intimate partner femicide-suicides in Eswatini. The findings are congruous in several important respects with results reported in the existing literature: (1) as elsewhere, in Eswatini, intimate partner femicide-suicide is a rare and extraordinary crime; (2) incidents garner tremendous public and media attention; (3) many episodes were premeditated acts, deliberately planned and carefully executed; (4) a small but significant number involved corollary or collateral victims; (5) many incidents involved extreme levels of violence, fitting the criminological label of overkill; (6) male sexual jealousy and male partner's rage over the female partner's decision to unilaterally abrogate the relationship featured prominently among the homicide motives.

A few findings of this research require commentary. First, reviewing the tome of media information utilized for this research, it is impossible to deny the extensive impact of intimate partner femicide–suicides on society. In a society such as Eswatini, where an extended family system is strong and robust, homicide–suicides create many secondary victims concerning both the victim and the perpetrator in these cases. The situation is magnified for a small society of tightly knit communities like Eswatini, where the population is small, where primary relationships are dominant, and where many people know each other and share a primary familial or kinship relationship.

The relatively high rate of intimate partner femicide–suicide in Eswatini society appears to be influenced by contemporary features of the society. First, the suicide rate in Eswatini is exceptionally high. There is a resort to suicide to deal with personal problems. The high rate of suicide has an impact on the femicide–suicide rate; assailants who kill their intimate partners are more likely to commit suicide when they commit a crime. Second, domestic violence and wife battery rates are also high. Men beat their wives in response to suspicion of infidelity, wifely sexual refusal, and the wife’s demand that husbands wear condoms before sexual intercourse. Given the high frequency of suicide and lethal and sublethal male-perpetrated intimate partner violence in the society, it is unsurprising that some conflicts will escalate into confrontations where the female partner suffers lethal victimization. Third, Eswatini has many serious economic problems. Many people are unemployed, underemployed and indigent. Indigent people have problems paying for rent, food and clothing. Economic hardship makes people easily frustrated and raises levels of despair. With frustration comes the resort to violence to deal with problems, including family conflicts that may lead to domestic violence against wives and children. There is also the high availability of weevil tablets in the country, creating a gateway to suicide (Times of Swaziland. 2009).

Limitations of the current study include the incompleteness of the data in several areas. For instance, the media reports did not state some information on the victim’s and offender’s age and occupational status. In many African societies, birth dates do not have the same social, political and economic significance as in Western industrialized areas and often go unrecorded. The absence of age estimates is therefore understandable. Also missing from media reports was information about the perpetrator’s mental health and substance use and abuse (e.g. alcohol and marijuana). Existing research indicates that the abuse of alcohol and recreational drugs is a risk factor in intimate partner violence (Hough and McCorkle 2020). Incidentally, media reports on Case 8 mentioned that at the time of the homicide–suicide, the perpetrator, described as a normally violent person, had just finished consuming *dagga* and became extremely violent before the crime. In Eswatini, *dagga* is a variant of marijuana and is widely believed to induce violent behaviour among users (Dlamini 2015).

For the present study, it is recommended that deterrent sentences should be used to teach wife assaulters and would-be assaulters that Eswatini society does not tolerate assaultive behaviour within intimate relationships. Moreover, more resources should be provided for women who are victims of domestic violence. This should include legal aid, financial resources and sanctuaries for women in danger and their children. Measures should also be taken to control the proliferation

of firearms in the society. Suggestions for future research include recommending scholars replicate the current research in Eswatini with data beyond 2022 to determine if the current findings will hold. Second, law enforcement authorities in Eswatini should collect, collate and disseminate information concerning suicide, homicide, and homicide followed by suicide. This will assist criminologists, suicidologists and other scholars interested in studying such phenomena in the country. This information will also help create awareness about the nature and prevalence of the crime. Third, countries should collect, collate and disseminate information on homicide, suicide and murder–suicide. The availability of such data will make criminological studies easy, and researchers will then publicize their findings and make crime control and prevention more possible. Finally, I invite lethal violence scholars to help extend intimate partner femicide–suicide research by examining the phenomenon in other countries, particularly Africa, where there is a dearth of intimate partner femicide–suicide research. A thorough understanding of intimate partner femicide–suicide requires that researchers conduct studies of the phenomenon in as many geographical regions and cultural areas as possible.

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TRANSLATED ABSTRACTS

Abstracto

El artículo informa los resultados de un estudio sistemático de 42 feminicidios–suicidios de parejas íntimas con 91 víctimas fatales en Eswatini, África, de 2009 a 2022. El estudio utilizó una metodología de vigilancia de los medios para identificar los 42 casos de un importante periódico local en línea. La información sobre todos los casos identificados se sometió a cuidadosos análisis criminológicos. Seis de los casos involucraron a siete víctimas de homicidio colateral o corolario. Los resultados indican que los agresores y las víctimas eran generalmente de nivel socioeconómico más bajo; los agresores tendían a ser mayores que sus víctimas; apuñalar con un cuchillo, disparar con una pistola y cortar con un machete fueron los métodos de homicidio dominantes; la ingestión de tabletas de gorgojo y otros venenos, el ahorcamiento y el disparo con un arma de fuego fueron los medios de suicidio predominantes. Los resultados muestran además que los incidentes de feminicidio involucran abrumadoramente una matanza excesiva, con el agresor usando niveles extraordinariamente altos de agresión contra la víctima. Los principales desencadenantes fueron los celos sexuales masculinos, la ira por la abrogación de la relación por parte de la pareja femenina y las disputas interpersonales de origen variable. Se recomienda que se utilicen sentencias disuasorias para enseñar a los agresores de la esposa y a los posibles agresores que la sociedad no tolera el comportamiento agresivo en las relaciones íntimas. Se deben proporcionar más recursos para las mujeres que son víctimas de violencia doméstica. Esto debe incluir asistencia legal, recursos financieros y refugios para mujeres en peligro y sus hijos para garantizar su seguridad. Se deben tomar medidas para controlar la proliferación de armas de fuego en la sociedad.

Palabras clave feminicidio; feminicidio–suicidio; homicidio de pareja íntima; homicidio–suicidio; feminicidio–suicidio

Abstrait

Le présent article rapporte les résultats d'une étude systématique de 42 féminicides-suicides de partenaires intimes avec 91 victimes mortelles à Eswatini, en Afrique, de 2009 à 2022. L'étude a utilisé une méthodologie de surveillance des médias pour identifier les 42 cas d'un grand journal local en ligne. Les informations sur tous les cas identifiés ont fait l'objet d'analyses criminologiques minutieuses. Six des cas concernaient sept victimes collatérales ou corollaires d'homicide. Les résultats indiquent que les agresseurs et les victimes appartenaient généralement à un milieu socio-économique défavorisé ; les agresseurs avaient tendance à être plus âgés que leurs victimes ; poignarder avec un couteau, tirer avec une arme à feu et taillader avec une machette étaient les principales méthodes d'homicide ; l'ingestion de comprimés de charançons et d'autres poisons, la pendaison et le tir avec une arme à feu étaient les principaux moyens de suicide. Les résultats montrent en outre que les incidents de féminicide impliquaient de manière écrivante une surpuissance, l'agresseur utilisant des niveaux d'agression excessivement élevés contre la victime. La jalousie sexuelle masculine, la rage suscitée par l'abrogation de la relation par la partenaire féminine et les conflits interpersonnels d'origine variable étaient les principaux facteurs déclenchants. Il est recommandé que des peines dissuasives soient utilisées pour enseigner aux agresseurs et aux agresseurs potentiels que la société ne tolère pas les comportements agressifs dans les relations intimes. Davantage de ressources devraient être fournies aux femmes victimes de violence domestique. Cela devrait inclure une aide juridique, des ressources financières, et des refuges pour les femmes en danger et leurs enfants afin d'assurer leur sécurité. Des mesures doivent être prises pour contrôler la prolifération des armes à feu dans la société.

Mots-clés féminicide; féminicide-suicide; homicide par un partenaire intime; homicide-suicide; féminicide-suicide

抽象的

当前文章报告了对 2009 年至 2022 年在非洲埃斯瓦蒂尼发生的 42 起亲密伴侣杀害女性自杀事件的系统研究结果, 其中 91 人死亡。该研究使用媒体监视方法从当地一家主要在线报纸上识别出 42 起案件。所有已确定案件的信息都经过仔细的犯罪学分析。其中 6 起案件涉及 7 名附带或必然的杀人受害者。结果表明, 袭击者和受害者的社会经济背景普遍较低; 袭击者往往比受害者年长; 刀刺、枪击和砍刀砍杀是主要的杀人方式; 服用象鼻虫药片和其他毒药、上吊和用火器射击是主要的自杀方式。结果进一步表明, 杀戮女性事件绝大多数涉及过度杀戮, 袭击者对受害者使用了异常高水平的侵略。男性的性嫉妒、对女性伴侣解除关系的愤怒以及起因不同的人际纠纷是主要的诱因。建议使用威慑性判决来教育殴打妻子的人和潜在的殴打者社会不容忍亲密关系中的攻击行为。应为遭受家庭暴力的妇女提供更多资源。这应包括为处于危险中的妇女及其子女提供法律援助、财政资源和庇护所, 以确保他们的安全。应采取措施控制枪支在社会上的扩散。

关键词 : 杀戮女性; 杀女-自杀; 亲密伴侣杀人案; 杀人自杀; 杀女自杀

خلاصة

تشير المقالة الحالية إلى نتائج دراسة منهجية لـ 42 حالة انتحار لشريك حميم مع 91 ضحية قاتلة في إسواتيني، إفريقي، من 2009 إلى 2022. استخدمت الدراسة منهجية مراقبة وسائل الإعلام لتحديد 42 حالة من صحفية محلية لعبى على الإنترنت - خضعت المعلومات المتعلقة بحميم الحالات التي تم تحديدها لتحليلات جنائية دقيقة. وشملت ست من هذه الحالات سبع ضحايا جرائم قتل جانبية أو جانبية. وتشير النتائج إلى أن القتل والضحايا كانوا عمومًا من ذوي الخلفية الاجتماعية والاقتصادية المنخفضة؛ والقتلة يميلون إلى أن يكونوا أكبر سنًا من ضحاياهم؛ والطعن بالقتل. كانت طرق القتل السائدة هي السكين، وإطلاق النار بمسدس، والقطع بالمنجل؛ وكان تناول أقراص السوسة والسبب الأخرى، والتعذيب، وإطلاق النار بسلاح ناري هي الوسيلة السائدة للانتحار. وأظهرت النتائج كذلك أن حوادث قتل الاناث تنطوي بشكل كبير على القتل المفترط، مع استخدام المعتدي مستويات عالية بشكل غير مباشر من العدوان ضد الضحية. الغيرة الجنسية للذكور، والغضب من فسخ الشريك الأنثى للعلاقة، والخلافات الشخصية ذات الأصل المتغير كانت من الأسباب الرئيسية للقتل. يوصى بوضع عقوبات الإيثار التي ينبغي استخدامها لتعظيم المعتدين على الزوجات والمعتدين المحتملين أن المجتمع لا يتسامح مع السلوك العدواني في العلاقات الحميمة. يجب توفير المزيد من الموارد للنساء ضحايا العنف المنزلي. وينبغي أن يشمل ذلك المساعدة القانونية واللاجئين للرجل المعرض للخطر والأطفال لضمان سلامتهم. يجب اتخاذ تدابير للسيطرة على انتشار الأسلحة النارية في المجتمع.

الكلمات المفتاحية: قتل الاناث؛ انتحار الاناث؛ قتل الشريك الحميم؛ القتل والانتحار؛ قتل الاناث؛ الكلمات الدالة

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