Working with Sexualized Violence Against Women in Post-Conflict Societies: A study of local NGOs in Sri Lanka

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Dedication

This thesis is wholeheartedly dedicated to my husband, William, for all his unconditional love and support. He has been a source of inspiration and strength to be throughout the research process.

My friends Rammiya and Sofia, for taking their time to offer help and advice whenever I needed it.

Arumugam, for being so kind as to be my cultural advisor prior to my travels to Sri Lanka. His advice helped me greatly when preparing for my fieldwork.

A big thank you to my tutor, Kjersti Lohne.

Abstract

Following the establishment of the UN and the Declaration of Human Rights, as well as the International Crime Court (ICC) and the Rome Statute, international guidelines have been developed on how to prosecute and punish crimes against humanity. During the tribunals following the Rwandan genocide, sexualized violence against women during times of conflict has been considered a crime of war. During UN's 68th session of the General Assembly there was a resounding commitment to protect women from violence, including egregious sexual violence that is being perpetrated in too many conflicts around the world. The resolve of the international community was exemplified by the endorsement by 122 countries of a historic 'Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict'. This research sets out to discover whether local NGOs in the Global South, focusing on Sri Lanka, succeed in adapting international guidelines set by major global organisations such as the UN when working with survivors of sexualized violence post-conflict, in a local and national context. The study was conducted while doing fieldwork in Colombo, using semi-structured interviews and focus groups. Analysing the findings thematically, the main challenges for the NGOs interviewed were revealed to be the stigmatisation regarding sexualized violence as well as the fear of re-victimisation. The NGOs expressed that living in a patriarchal society is the root cause of these challenges, and that the solution presents itself only in form of better education of young boys as well as older men. Despite the changes in laws and policies, the NGOs express that a change in attitudes is what is truly needed.

Key words:

Sri Lanka, sexualized violence, NGOs, post-conflict, global criminology, victimology, development.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

"It is important to have an international guide [on how to respond to sexual violence]. But a homegrown response is the best response. Misogyny and sexism are Global issues but perhaps not as hidden in Sri Lanka as in the West. International responses are helpful, yet pointless if not adapted locally. "
- Govardhan, 12.10.18.

In 2018, the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the Nobel Peace Prize to Denis Mukwege and Nadia Murad for their efforts to end the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict. The committee declared that "both laureates have made a crucial contribution to focusing attention on, and combating, such war crimes […] Each of them in their own way has helped to give greater visibility to war-time sexual violence, so that the perpetrators can be held accountable for their actions […]" (The Nobel Peace Prize, 2018). Their work upholds UN's Resolution 1820 (2008), which determined that the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war and armed conflict constitutes both a war crime and a threat to international peace and security. This is also set out in the Rome Statute of 1998, which governs the work of the International Criminal Court, and establishes that sexual violence in war and armed conflict is a grave violation of international law. Finally, the committee declared that a peaceful world can only be achieved if women and their fundamental rights and security are recognised and protected in war (The Nobel Peace Prize, 2018). The 2018 Nobel Peace Prize highlighted the importance of recognizing the massive scale of sexual violence against women during times of conflict.

During the Sri Lankan civil war, lasting from 1983-2009, an unknown number of minority women experienced sexualized violence by the majority Sinhalese army (International Human Rights Association, 2013). Investigations of the horrors occurring during the Sri Lankan civil war were given a “substantial disregard of the matter by international institutions”, accompanied by the “disappearance” of the massacre of the Tamils from the attention of international media (International Human Rights Association, 2013). Crimes such as genocide and other state crimes, occurring in Sri Lanka as well as other countries, have not only traditionally been neglected by international media, but by global criminology itself

(Aas, 2010). The emergence of globalisation also changes how we think about (criminal) justice (Benhabib, 2004). Only a few decades ago, sexualized war violence was underreported and under analysed; however, today it is a vast and growing field of research (Houge, 2015). Campaigning and awareness on the topic of sexualized violence against women, both in conflict and in times of peace, has been on the increase since the 1990s. Globalisation has offered empowerment and opportunities to nationally marginalised groups, providing new forms of political and social action (Benhabib, 2004).

The 2018 Nobel Peace Prize award highlighted that there is still, as much as ever before, a pressing issue in need of both attention and further research. Following high-profile conflicts in Rwanda and former Yugoslavia, international law has incorporated more protection for the survivors of sexualized violence. There has been a spread of modern forms of criminal justice, which follows the colonising logic of Western modernity (Agozino, 2003). Agozino raises questions about how these new forms of justice are transferred to be used in local contexts, which is what will be further explored in this thesis as well. Globalisation of penal policies need to be contextualised and seen in a specific local context (Agozino, 2003).

In my research, I set out to study how these Non-Governmental organisations (here forth referred to as *NGOs*) incorporate these newly developed international initiatives into their work in Sri Lanka; a post-conflict society in the Global South. These initiatives include UN's Resolution 1820 (2008) declaring rape a weapon of war, stating: "rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity or a constitutive act with respect to genocide" (*Rape: Weapon of war,* no date). They also include UN's declaration to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the establishment of International Crime Courts (IIC). The UN initiatives as well as the courts and their creations will be further discussed in section 1.3 of this chapter.

My main intentions for this research are to gather information about how local NGOs describe their work with helping and supporting to women who are survivors of sexualized violence, as well as how they work towards preventing future sexual violence from taking place. With the use of semi-structured interviews and a thematic analysis, I compared their point of views as support services in relation to guidelines encouraged by global actors and organisations. This thesis will explore whether NGO employees in the Global South, specifically Sri Lanka, consider global initiatives such as the UN's Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, to be appropriate to adapt into specific communities with different social

and cultural backgrounds than the international, usually Western, organisations who develop most of them. As the criminal law is society's primary means of condemning conduct as wrong—with "the stigma associated with a finding of guilt, the censure inherent in sentencing, and the hard treatment of punishment" (Ashworth and Zedner, 2014), it is also interesting to consider how the development of these new international guidelines affect the general attitudes of the people.

The primary research question is: how do local NGOs in Sri Lanka work with survivors of sexualized violence in a post-conflict society?
Two sub-questions in addition to the primary question are:
a) To what extent are these NGOs successful in incorporating international guidelines on how to work with survivors of sexual violence into their own work?
b) What are the main challenges working with survivors of sexual violence in a post-conflict society?

My interest in these topics, is due to that while there is substantial information about international responses to sexualized violence against women, there seems to be knowledge gaps when it comes to information on a local level. Koos (2017) calls for more empirical studies to discover individual motives for rape during conflict. In addition to this, he brings attention to how most social science research has been interested in the causes and functions of wide-spread sexual violence during war. Houge (2015) also brings attention to how research is yet to address how perpetrated-induced traumas are dealt with in post-conflict societies, especially where the perpetrator has not been prosecuted. These known research gaps inspired me to research the consequences sexualized violence in conflict, and how these consequences are dealt with locally following the end of the conflict.

In order to gather primary information on this topic, I travelled to Sri Lanka to conduct fieldwork. I interviewed three different local NGOs who offer support services, education and job opportunities to women in different parts of the country, in order to support and empower them. Whilst the NGOs interviewed provide help and support to all kinds of women, not primarily victims of sexual abuse, the issue of sexual violence post-conflict is what I chose to focus on during my interviews, and their work related to these issues is what is relevant for my study. Using semi-structured interviews, I researched their different ways of working, as well as their different beliefs in relation to the international community's standards of working with sexual violence. I chose Sri Lanka due to their recent civil war, ending in 2009.

This allowed me to study how a recent armed conflict impacts the work of the NGOs and the options available to women in need of support. Following this introduction, I will present some relevant literary background information about the Sri Lankan civil war, development of NGOs and sexualized violence in conflict. The reason I chose to expand on these topics, is because I believe them to be particularly relevant to my research. Together, they create a complex inter-connected basis on how NGOs conduct their work in Sri Lanka today.

1.1. The Sri Lankan civil war

In 2015, the United Nations rejected Sri Lanka's offer to set up a truth and reconciliation commission to address the grievances from the 26-year civil war (Cumming-Bruce, 2015). Instead, they called to set up a special court, including international judges and lawyers, to investigate what it called "horrific" abuses committed by both sides. Mr al-Hussein said in a statement accompanying the report: "Our investigation has laid bare the horrific level of violations and abuses that occurred in Sri Lanka, including extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearances, harrowing accounts of torture and sexual violence, recruitment of children and other grave crimes," (Cumming-Bruce, 2015). Sri Lanka's criminal justice system "is not yet ready or equipped," it said, to conduct a credible investigation that would deal with the legacy of anger and scepticism left by the previous government, as well as the sheer scale and gravity of the violations committed during the war.

The report documents widespread killings by security forces and Tamil Tiger rebels during the civil war, along with the disappearance of tens of thousands of people, including large numbers who were never seen again after surrendering to government forces at the war's end (Cumming-Bruce, 2015). A particularly shocking finding, the United Nations report says, was "the extent to which sexual violence was committed against detainees, often extremely brutally, by the Sri Lankan security forces" during and after the conflict, with men and women victimized. Torture by the security forces was widespread, systematic and premeditated, particularly in the aftermath of the conflict, the report says, describing centres equipped with metal bars for beating, barrels of water for waterboarding and pulleys for suspending victim-survivors (Cumming-Bruce, 2015).

The UN's High Commissioner for Human Rights revealed evidence "strongly indicating" that war crimes were committed in Sri Lanka in the closing phases of its civil war, and called for the establishment of a special "hybrid" international court to investigate individuals

responsible for the worst atrocities (Burke and Perera, 2015). The report also says "there are reasonable grounds to believe the Sri Lankan security forces and paramilitary groups associated with them were implicated in unlawful killings carried out in a widespread manner against civilians and other protected persons [including] Tamil politicians, humanitarian workers and journalists were particularly targeted during certain periods, but [also] ordinary civilians" (Burke and Perera, 2015). It details "brutal use of torture by the Sri Lankan security forces, particularly in the immediate aftermath of the armed conflict when former the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) members and civilians were detained 'en masse'". It goes on to say that there are "reasonable grounds to believe that rape and other forms of sexual violence by security forces personnel was widespread against both male and female detainees, particularly in the aftermath of the armed conflict".

The report also criticized the LTTE for recruiting children, "a pattern of abductions leading to forced recruitment of adults" and for stopping civilians fleeing the conflict zone to government-controlled areas. Pressure for an international investigation grew when it became clear that domestic inquiries set up by the then government of Sri Lanka were partisan and ineffectual. The recommendations of a "Lessons learned and reconciliation committee" went largely unimplemented (Burke and Perera, 2015). An aide to Sirisena said the president agreed a hybrid system was necessary "because we do not have any kind of judicial process in the past that has heard cases on war crimes", but said he was "of the view that he will not agree to anything beyond foreign advisors and technical participation in any such court or commission" (Burke and Perera, 2015). However, both former president Rajapaksa and incumbent Sirisena have rejected the idea of a hybrid court, arguing such cases are better to be handled domestically. Both presidents have made many promises to the Tamils about rebuilding their lives and forging a new constitution (ucanews.com, 2019).

The decades long Sri Lankan civil war was waged between the Sri Lankan state and most latterly the Tamil guerrilla group, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (hereby referred to as the "Tamil Tigers") (Thiranagama, 2011). The country's ethnic conflict had been ongoing since their independence from the British in 1948, but large-scale violence between armies in the Northern and Eastern minority areas became a more everyday reality in the mid-1980s. The war involved the destruction of physical and human infrastructures, the permanent displacement of hundreds of thousands of people, the pitting of majority against minority ethnic groups, and the rise of insurrectionary groups who have turned from "heroes" to

oppressors (Thiranagama, 2011) Sri Lanka has a multi-ethnic population of more than 20 million people. The Majority is the Sinhalese community, with a Tamil minority based in the North and East, Tamil-speaking Muslims, Indian-origin Tamils, the Burgher people of European descent, and Veddas (aboriginal people) (Mohan, 2014). Between the 16th century and 1948, the Dutch, the Portuguese, and the British successively colonized the country. In the wake of the Indian independence in 1947, the British left Sri Lanka in 1948, leaving behind fractured ethnic communities (Mohan, 2014).

The 26 year long civil war (1983-2009) left up to 100 000 dead (though this could be a gross underestimation) and displaced several hundred thousand people, as well as stunted the island nation's economic growth and intensified pre-existing ethnic hatreds (Mohan, 2014). The Sinhala Buddhist majority took reigns of the country after independence and had long resented the British bias towards the Tamil during colonial times. Due to this, they began implanting discriminatory policies against minorities (Mohan, 2014). ID cards with names written in Tamil made people targets for things like kidnappings (Mohan, 2014). Every wave of battle meant that Tamil families expected misfortune. Many made attempts to fit in as Sinhalese.

Even within the Tamil communities, there are different castes which determines your social standings, i.e. plantation Tamil vs Jaffna Tamil (Mohan, 2014). In 1983, Sinhalese mobs were furious about Tamil politicians demanding that a separate nation was to be carved out from Sri Lanka. This started something Mohan refers to as a ping-pong match of murder; attacks and counterattacks in the north turned into mass killings in Colombo. The mobs targeted Tamils who lived along Sinhalese (Mohan, 2014). In most of the cases, the police were mute spectators or even collaborators. Today, there is still the question of how Sri Lankan Tamils can imagine a future in Sri Lanka when still in 2011 there has been little attempt by the Sri Lankan state to institute real processes of reconciliation after the defeat of Tamil Tigers. One of the most concerning issues is the lack of resources for mental health, given the high rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). No programme has been designed to deal with it, and doctors assigned to Tamil regions do often not speak the language, whilst their patients do not speak Sinhala (McCall, 2016). Thus, Tamils still suffer the consequences of the war, without the help of neither the national nor international community.

1.2 Development NGOs

Since the mid-1940s, Nongovernmental Development Organizations (NGDOs) have been dedicated to promoting long-term economic, social, and political progress have proliferated across the world (Edwards and Fowler, 2011). Most NGDOs are located in developing countries. Over the last twenty years, their numbers, reach, and profile have expanded dramatically. The formation of the UN in the aftermath of the Second World War provided both the label and a formal starting point for what today are known as NGOs; the new UN structure included a forum—the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)—dedicated to debate on economic and social issues (Edwards and Fowler, 2011). At first, the formal label of "NGO" was applied only to entities working internationally, which is no longer the case. Many organizations that are understood and legally defined as NGOs are domestic in their intentions and relationships. Whether gaining consultative status or not, NGOs were preoccupied with social and economic issues that, with the advent of foreign aid some fifteen years later, gained the additional attribute of being formally "developmental" (Edwards and Fowler, 2011).

Koffi Annan famously described NGOs as the conscience of humanity; as the voices of global civil society and democratic change (Tvedt, 2002). On the other hand, Nelson Mandela was more critical due to NGOs stance on government, and he worried they often carry out the political agendas of foreign interests. However, his critique is often overlooked (Tvedt, 2002). Over the last decade or so, NGOs have generally been described as a force of democracy, a movement of "advanced by a planetary citizen alliance known as civil society". Korten (2000) questions if NGOs are becoming a new global superpower of consciousness. In reality, it is all much more mundane and complex. We cannot understand developments without criticising ideological generalizations (Korten, 2000).

Research literature often overlooks the negative types of NGOs; the stories of them have tend to be only about the "good", the "Progressive" and the "humanitarian". The main challenge to NGO research at this stage, is to develop research designs that are able to analytically integrate both the homogeneity and heterogeneity of the NGO scene, as well as its political role and potential within an agency/structure perspective, while at the same time to identifying more systematic conflicts and power relations affecting the arena (Korten, 1987). In order to understand the role of NGOs in transforming societies and the world, it is crucial to establish less-normative conceptual tools and concepts that can objectify the research

object. Comparative research on NGOs requires deep questioning of whether the key concepts and measurement tools are relevant and appropriate in different historical and social contexts (Tvedt, 2002). To date, most mainstream research on NGDOs have not been very interested in the issue of power. Attempting to understand power mechanisms within this field, the role of NGDOs within it, and the system's relation to its externalities, raises particular problems (Tvedt, 2002).

One of these problems in question is that the aid system's basic legitimacy will be regarded by most people as morally just and a system that ought to be furthered. Research on power relations within this policy field confronts the task of having to unravel the complex relationship between its equalitarian justification and its hierarchal structure. There is not always value consensus among NGO activists and between NGOs and official donors (Tvedt, 2002). However, there is something referred to as "NGO speak"; a language that has functioned as a "symbolic order" within the whole system. It is a rhetoric code with two values: "Good" development and "not good" development. The symbolically powerful NGO language may change over time, but always serve as an identity marker for the system vis-à-vis the external world. The system is extremely dependent on how the rest of society perceives it, and thus dependent on their own image management and image production (Tvedt, 2002).

The NGO system is maintained through the way in which system members express themselves as actors within the system and in relation to the wider world. Within just a few decades, thousands of NGOs have been established across Europe, America, Asia, Africa and Latin America (Tvedt, 2002). They share the same development language that has been adopted by donors. Discussions and research on the role of NGOs that miss this aspect, will in turn underplay the aid channels role as a transmission belt of a dominant discourse tied to Western notions of development downplay that this arena is a site of struggle between different development paradigms, ideologies, and NGOs. By analysing NGOs as part of a broader system of power, accountability, image management and organizational survival, it is necessary to address ordinary system mechanisms at play, from the maximization of organizational self-interest to the law of oligarchy (Tvedt, 2002).

The term global civil society downplays the fact that most influential organizations are financed by the state and working in accordance with regulations issued by individual states or the international state system. The notion of a global civil society disregards the role of the state in funding and influencing NGOs (DiMaggio and Anheier, 1990). The development aid

system is a global system but cannot be called global civil society because the NGO system in aid is donor led. Many of the most influential NGOs are influenced by states' donor policies instead of what is going on locally or nationally (DiMaggio and Anheier, 1990). It is crucial to combine domestic and international structures in an analysis. The domestic and national context affects the nature of the NGOs and of the NGO-government relationship. The aim must be to understand how national and global civil societies have been impacted and shaped by different forces: corporate capital; local and global protest movements and authorities; and by a new but powerful international social system – the aid system (Tvedt, 2002).

NGO's rely on effective strategies to make maximum use of the sources of power they hold and to capture institutional power to advance their objectives (Nelson and Dorsey, 2008). International NGOs are, or can be, political actors as well as rational organizations. Any NGO's behaviour may require an integrated perspective that brings together complex efforts to exercise political power with equally complex organizational dynamics (Nelson and Dorsey, 2008). The strategies of any NGOs have to be understood from the perspective of the organisation and its desire to survive, grow, and manage risks. Some NGOs have adopted what Nelson and Dorsey refer to as a "new rights advocacy", which embraces the ESC rights among human rights activists, and adopts human rights-based approached in the developmental field. One organisation which has adopted a rights-based approach is CARE International, which was the organisation that helped found Chrysalis in Sri Lanka, whose representative I interviewed for this study. The growth of new movements and organisations that link human needs issues to social and economic rights standards is another new component of the new rights advocacy (Nelson and Dorsey, 2008). As such organisations have grown at global levels, they have often been led and even challenged by national NGOs in poor countries, with agendas already dedicated to Economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights. This include the Indian Tamil Nadu Network for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Nelson and Dorsey, 2008).

As political actors, NGOs are seeking to counter neoliberal development models and to embrace the standards and assertion of human dignity and human rights (Nelson and Dorsey, 2008). Politically, the rights-based approach involves commitments to equalitarian strategies, and to addressing the causes of poverty and exclusion. Nelson and Dorsey (2008) express concern for the independence of NGOs. International NGOs have been drawn deeper into an aid system dominated by donors and major industrial governments, which leaves their identity as independent, or even "nongovernmental", to sometimes be called into question (Nelson and

Dorsey, 2008). The lines of accountability become confused and ambiguous. Donors and governments exert the most powerful claims through reporting requirements, contracts and legal powers (Nelson and Dorsey, 2008). The new rights advocacy represents a significant shift towards a more complex relationship between international NGOs and government in the Global South, where international NGOs often support and cooperate with national authorities. The choices made by NGOs and other agencies, will be visible in patterns of policy and practice, that shape the prospects of the world's poorest and vulnerable people (Nelson and Dorsey, 2008). NGOs are not all politically equal, even if they are internationally oriented; they need to be able to tailor their efforts to varying situations (Wong, 2012). Only a select few NGOs in human rights command attention from policymakers in multiple states, which is likely to make them more successful and prominent in promoting their agenda work (Wong, 2012).

1.3 Sexualized Violence in Conflict

When working with topics such as sexual violence, it is important to have some understanding of *why* it occurs, in order to find a solution to this global problem. Within criminology and social sciences, there are several different theoretical approaches that hope to gain an understanding of why sexual violence is committed during times of conflict, as well as times of peace. Essentialism is a theoretical approach carrying a number of basic assumptions about human nature; it treats sexual violence as an inevitable aspect of fighting. This approach considers sexual violence as a natural part of war, simply a "normal thing to do"; it is merely a tool to reaffirm patriarchal hierarchies (Leatherman, 2011). Women are at a greater risk of sexual violence during war, when men are granted a "licence" for rape. Men commit sexual violent crimes not just to exercise power about women, but also about belonging to the most powerful ethnic, religious or political group (Leatherman, 2011).

Sexual violence in warfare is often argued to be a central "weapon of war" in those armed conflicts where aggressors aim to supplant peoples of a certain cultural identity (Gaca, 2011). If an enemy aim is to destroy a culture, the women are prime targets because of their cultural importance to the family structure. Some view war and peace alike as works as a primal act of conquering and colonizing women as people. The dominant attention given to current and recent instances of sexual violence in war, leaves many questions unanswered (Gaca, 2011). Sexual violence against women and girls were an integral and prominent part of the historic modes of warfare as well. When warfare is predatory or parasitic, the centrality of taking

women and girls as captives is indisputably primary, with the purpose of turning these women and girls into brutalized sex object, and exploitable subalterns (Gaca, 2011). When the sexual violence in war is retaliatory, meaning when the initial victims return the violence, sexual violence against enemy girls and women is still central to warfare, but for different reasons. Females on the opposing side need to be maltreated to gain payback, as a form of gruesome sadistic glee on the part of the attacker (Gaca, 2011).

Warfare in its expansionist or imperialistic mode is more diverse, with girls and women taken as wives, concubines, prostitutes and slaves is central. In these cases, enemies take them for the purpose of exploiting their indigenous knowledge and their capacity to reproduce or perform other labour (Gaca, 2011). This historical knowledge and awareness have helped international human rights activist stand to become better informed in their efforts to relegate these persistent norms of second-phase warfare strictly to the past (Gaca, 2011). However, international criminal tribunals' prioritization of sexual violence is yet to be attended to in a fully satisfying way, despite recent developments and efforts, and international NGOs still "calls for a prioritization of further and stronger criminalization, in particular with regard to sexualized violence" (Houge, 2015). Thus, although we may have learned from history, there is still somewhat of a long way to go.

During conflict, many government military forces face well-armed and equipped rebel forces, as seen in Sri Lanka with the LTTE. At the height of their power, they counted among their resources a field army equivalent to three brigades, armed with artillery, armour, radios with encryption devices and light aircraft used for bombing, which changes in global patterns of war (Leatherman, 2011). Krisjon Rae Olson claimed that: "The truth of war is always worse than what is expected" (Leatherman, 2011:90). With very few safe havens, there are risks to safety everywhere. During the Sri Lankan civil war, parents forced young girls into marriage, believing it would protect them against increased sexual vulnerability during the 30-year insurgency that pitted the government against the LTTE. Girls sometimes also join militias or marry soldiers because they believe it will allow them to escape forced marriages and abductions; it would be safer being the girlfriend of a soldier (Leatherman, 2011). Captors attempting to escape from sexual enslavement may not always be able to return home, as they may not be accepted by husband or family, a pregnancy even by rape might be illegal, and other similar factors (Leatherman, 2011). The type of sexual violence in war can take many forms, and can be component of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Rape can

become tool of ethnic extermination, used as a larger strategy against women and their ethno-religious community, i.e. Bosnia and Rwanda (Leatherman, 2011).

Rape can also be used as a weapon to spread HIV/AIDS. An UN report estimate that between 2500 and 500 000 women and girls were raped in Rwanda, with 70 % of these survivors are believed to be HIV positive (Leatherman, 2011). Hutu women from all segments of society were part of carrying out rape against Tutsi women. This shows how women also played leading roles in some ethnic cleansings for political reasons, in an attempt to ruin Tutsi culture (Skjelsbæk, 2001). Many forms of abuse and torture accompany rape, such as genital mutilation. Women are not the only targets, as seen in Serbia when about 4000 Croat male prisoners sexually tortured in Serb detention camps (Leatherman, 2011). Torture of Tutsi women included amputation or mutilation of the victim-survivor's breasts, vaginas and buttocks. Women are very often badly injured by multiple rapes, resulting in a medical condition known as traumatic fistula; the occurrence of a rupture (fistula) between a woman's vagina and her bladder or rectum, which causes women to lose the ability to control their bladder or bowels (Leatherman, 2011). As a result, they are often divorced by husbands, shunned by their communities, and unable to work. Mutilation of body parts, like rape, communicates the enduring political power of the perpetrator over the victim-survivor.

Other kinds of violations include dismemberment, cutting open pregnant women, removing the foetus and violating it too. On the other hand, sexual violence against men often included castration of prisoners (Leatherman, 2011). Children born of rape become a way to continue stigmatization for the mother and her family, as it is a constant reminder of the rape. Runaway norms are conceptualized in terms of the intended targets of violence, such as the raping and mutilating of pregnant women, breastfeeding women and the elderly. The high status and respect of elderly in certain societies makes their violation all the more reprehensible (Rubin, Pritt and Kim, 1994). Survivors tend to experience the loss of neutrality and safe spaces. Runaway norms disregard claims to neutrality, and as political authority fragments, it becomes more complicated and challenging to get aid to civilian survivors. The definition of safe space varies culturally, and may change throughout the course of war and its aftermath (Farr, 2003).

In Human Rights discourse, the victim-survivors' perspective cannot be seen in isolation from the perspective of various organs in society (Van Boven, 2009). Survivors following the end of armed conflicts often find themselves in vulnerable situations of neglect and abandonment and are in need of care. The Former Director-General of UNESCO, at the 20th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights stated: "The groans and cries to be heard in these pages are never uttered by the most wretched victims. These, throughout the ages, have been mute. […] There have been – there still are – multitudes of men, women and children who, as a result of poverty, terror or lies, have been made to forget their inherent dignity, or to give up the efforts to secure recognition of that dignity by others. They are silent. [...] "(Van Boven, 2009:19-20). Since the 1990s, sexualized violence has drawn international attention as particularly gruesome, widespread and systematic in many conflicts (Copelon, 2011). There are very few conflicts where rape and sexual violence have been absent or effectively sanctioned. This form of violence overwhelmingly targets women and girls. Women are sometimes considered a kind of booty of war (Copelon, 2011). In other cases, sexualized violence is a core tactic of war and/or genocide designed to destroy women both physically and mentally. It is a tool which expel, stigmatizes and marginalizes women as accepted members of their familial, social and cultural circles (Copelon, 2011).

There has been a push for global community to end impunity for rape in war, and a need to address survivors' need for justice and reparations. A series of UN World Conferences in the 1990s enabled women right activates to come together from many parts of the world; organized collectively, advancing women's issues as human rights issues (Copelon, 2011). The response of most states has been lacklustre; only 36 countries have drafted national action plans. The ICC in The Hague framed war rape as similar to slavery and argued for the role of UK as an abolitionist force. Sexual violence as weapon of war, is used by perpetrators as a tactic of terror in pursuit of wider aims; usually economic or political. The exclusive focus on military actors neglect the high levels of civilian and intimate partner violence in conflict settings (Kirby, 2015). Since the establishment of international criminal tribunals in 1990s, legal scholars, human rights experts and policy makers have debated the significance of international prosecution not only in meting out punishment to grave human rights violations but also achieving "restorative justice" (Totani, 2011). Current reparation trials have their own limitations but appear to have some success regarding restorative justice. It has become a more inclusive process than the earliest trials following World War II. By "inclusive", it is

meant that trials now focus more on survivors rather than perpetrators, allowing survivors of sexual violence to have far greater degree of control over the trial process (Totani, 2011). This point, of listening to the victim-survivors themselves, is also relevant for how the NGOs in this study work, which will be further explored in later chapters.

1.4 Final remarks of introduction

In my introduction, I provided a brief summary of the Sri Lankan civil war, setting the context for how NGOs today work with sexualized violence against women in a post-conflict society. I also introduced some theoretical background on sexual violence in conflict as a global phenomenon, including some prevalent challenges with research and the international communities' efforts to prosecute these kinds of crimes. Following the end of this introduction, the next chapter will focus on the methodology behind my research. This includes preparation and challenges related to my fieldwork, as well as how I decided on semi-structured interviews and why I chose to conduct one of them as part of a focus group. I also explain why I chose to analyse these interviews using thematic analysis. I will then move onto the analysis itself, where five different main themes emerging in the interviews are identified. These themes and my findings are discussed further in the second to last chapter. Finally, there is a conclusion, summarising the main arguments of my thesis, as well as answering the thesis questions. Here, I will also provide suggestions for further research. Throughout my thesis, the discussion and analysis will be framed by theory on global criminology and global development, in order to best contextualise the problem. The power of criminal sanctions in changing the attitudes of the people will be considered during the analysis and discussion. As my thesis focus on providing help and support for victims, the theory applied throughout the discussions has a basis of victimology rather than theories on offending. I apply the gender-politics model of victimology to my analysis and discussion chapters. This is a feminist perspective which explain abuse of women as attempts by men in general to maintain their power of all women (Potter, 1988).

Chapter 2

Methodology

My primary interest with my research was to discover how local organisations work with women who are survivors of sexual violence during – and post-conflict. I sought to interview individuals working for selected organisations who aims to help and support women in vulnerable and difficult situations. Supported by the theory from the previous chapter, I have approached my interviews and the gathered data in a qualitative fashion, analysing it thematically. In this upcoming chapter, I will describe the process of recruiting participants, and a description of my final selection. I will then proceed to explain how I prepared for fieldwork in Sri Lanka and developed interview questions (*see appendix*) suitable for the sensitive subject of discussion. I then describe the interview data collected and consider how thematic analysis is used to analyse and relate the information. I go on to present some of the ethical challenges of working with sensitive topics and experiences, as well as doing research in the Global South. Ethical considerations may be particularly important when conducting fieldwork in the Global South, as the power dynamics between the researcher and participants might be very different and obvious. Finally, I will discuss the limitations of my methods, affecting everything from the recruitment process to the data analysis. It is important for me as a researcher to recognise the limitations of my study, as this undoubtedly impact the results and conclusion of my research. This chapter serves as a look into each step of my research process and explains why I made the decisions I did throughout it. Conducting fieldwork in the global South requires considerations of cultural differences, respect, and constraints related to both money and time. I aimed to make considerate and smart decisions that best benefited my research, as well as the participants kind enough to take part of it. Decisions made in the early process of the research will also ultimately impact the analysis and results, which will be further considered in chapter 3, 4 and 5.

2.1 Recruitment

As I began the recruitment process, I had a few specific criteria for the people I would reach out to in hope of recruiting to take part of my research. The participants had to be:
(1) working with an NGOs, (2) Sri Lanka-based, preferably near the Colombo area so it would be easier for me to access them all when I came to visit, without needing to travel too

far away from my base location, and (3) in some way working with issues related to women and sexual violence.

As I was reaching out to organisations located in another country, I did expect some barriers to arise. This includes both language barriers and difficulty with access. As I do not speak Sinhalese, and all the Sri Lankan people I know in Norway are of the minority Tamil-speakers and thus could not help me translate, it was necessary for me to contact representatives who could communicate in English.

Some organisations were listed on various websites, but I could find no online contact information for them available. A couple of organisations were eliminated due to similar contact issues. My next step was to email the Norwegian embassy in Sri Lanka and request information about relevant organisations. Whilst they were helpful and provided me with contact information, not all the potential participants responded to my request. The lack of response might have occurred for different reasons; I mostly assumed it was due to lack of time or a lack of interest in the research. Language might also have been an issue, if the contact person did not feel comfortable communicating in English. I was prepared for this to happen and did not let it demotivate me. Some potential participants made initial contact only to stop replying after a short period of time. Again, I did not speculate much as to *why* this was, but simply respected their decision not to involve themselves in my project further.

2.2. Description of participants

Before arriving in Sri Lanka, I had scheduled a meeting with three different NGOs. These were Mothers and Daughters of Lanka, Chrysalis, and Grassrooted. All the participants agreed to the name and background of their organisations being acknowledged in my final thesis. With their permission, I will present a brief introduction to the three organisations. The network Mothers and Daughters of Lanka (MDL) was established in 1989. It is a coalition of women's organisations in Sri Lanka, fighting to end injustice against women in all parts of the country. Their Facebook page describe their efforts as such:

"MDL consists of women's organizations working at the community level - in the Free Trade Zones, plantations, semi urban and rural sectors and in conflict affected areas. Among its constituency are women from diverse ethnic communities and religious backgrounds. The coalition has been involved in campaigns that oppose political violence and violence against

women; and supported peace and a political solution to the conflict in Sri Lanka. It has also been actively involved in campaigning for women's political representation and to increase women's presence at decision making level. "
(Mothers and Daughters of Lanka, 2017).

Chrysalis started off as a sub-division to Care International in 2000. In 2016 they branched out into their own organisation, although they are still affiliated with Care. They offer services focused on improving the lives of women and youth through access to skills, resources and equal rights, which enables them to transform their lives and reach their full potential. They design and manage result-oriented projects which focus on strengthening gender equality and the voices of women and youth (*Chrysalis Catalyz*, no date).

The Grassrooted Trust work with health and physical education teachers to help them more effectively implement the existing government curriculum. They also design Relationship Education components that can be used to supplement and support existing curricula on sex, reproduction and prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (*Grassrooted*, no date). They also conduct workshops on topics such as Gender Based and Intimate Partner Violence, and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. These workshops are conducted in schools, among out of school youth, and with community-based organisations and corporate entities

The exact number of participants was unclear until the time of the actual interviews, due to a lack of direct communication between the participants and me. I communicated with only one representative from each NGO, who was unsure up until the actual day how many people would actually be able to participate. In the end, I ended up with seven participants. Five of these were members of different organisations affiliated with MDL. I met one representative from both Chrysalis and Grassrooted. Due to wanting to keep it as anonymous as possible, I did not gather information such as the participant's age (other than the fact that they were over eighteen years of age) or ethnicity. Their names have also been anonymised and are completely fictional for the purpose of this thesis. Finally, the participants were mostly women, with only one of them being a man.

2.3 Fieldwork

When I decided to conduct fieldwork, I knew fieldwork needed to be done with purpose and for a reason (Jackson, 1987). I wanted to set out for fieldwork with a specific answer as to *why* fieldwork is necessary. New techniques and forms of enquiry, as well as new geopolitical contexts of explanation, refocus the ethnographic accounts and explanatory potential of fieldwork (Campbell, 2014). Fieldwork experience has constantly reiterated the discovery of perspectives on locality that were not always previously apparent. For my research, I wanted to speak directly to the NGOs working with victim-survivors of sexual violence in a post-conflict country, to gather primary information on the subject. Whilst I could perhaps have done surveys by Email or Skype, I felt it was better to travel to speak face-to-face with my participants. I chose this due to the sensitive nature of the topic, as well as because I felt I was more likely to achieve better results in terms of participation if I actually met the participants. Had I only relied on online responses, I might not have received much feedback. Travelling to conduct fieldwork felt like the surest and most respectful way to conduct the study.

Doing fieldwork may be expensive, especially when going abroad to do it. Whilst some institutions support western researchers, I was not one of those to receive any funding (nor did I apply) (Guneratne, 2014). The lack of funding did cause some restraints on my research, which will be discussed in the limitations section of this chapter. Another obvious challenge to conducting fieldwork is language, which may prove to be a barrier to understanding. However, a more subtle challenge is culture and the social position of the researcher and the subject (Guneratne, 2014). When I arrived in the field, I was a relatively powerful and influential outsider, despite my own vulnerability in being alone in a country foreign to me. The resources at my command were likely to be associated with wealthier and more powerful people in the local society, and this divide could potentially erect further barriers (Guneratne, 2014). If this relationship was not overcome, then I would be likely to come away with a skewed picture of the social life that I was meant to observe. I did have some moments of feeling like an outsider when I was walking around the city, such as people who stopped me to take photos. Though this made me feel more vulnerable, like a target, than it did powerful. I did not feel afraid, as the people speaking to me were always kind, but it was uncomfortable for someone who is not used to standing out in a crowd. The interview participants were however good at making me feel welcome and comfortable. I allowed them to speak quite freely, and hopefully made them feel like their knowledge on the topic of discussion was much appreciated. I was after all there to hear their point of views and learn about their work.

Staying humble and appreciative was my attempt at eradicating any potential power differences between us.

To even out this divide, there is also the benefit of having a local intermediary, or an organization. Many anthropologists are only able to do fieldwork depending on the hospitality shown; people must be *willing* to talk to you (Guneratne, 2014). The identity of the ethnographer may determine how people see you, i.e. do people have positive associations to your country? As Norway was particularly involved in trying to reach ceasefire in Sri Lanka during the Civil War, I was interested to see how people would react to hearing where I was from. Most Sri Lankans I encountered seemed to have a very positive view of Norway and Norwegians, and their smiles would often widen when they heard where I was from.

As anthropology is the art of making the strange familiar and the familiar strange, *the stranger* must be made familiar first (Guneratne, 2014). We must travel outside our own society to truly appreciate that it is only one among innumerable other ways of being; another reason why I chose to travel to conduct my research. In academic literature, there has been a question of whether field sites become conceptualized as "political locations" rather than "spatial sites". It becomes a liability when notions of "here" and "elsewhere" are assumed to be features of geography, rather than sites constructed in fields of unequal power relations (Gupta and Ferguson, cited in Scheyvens and Storey, 2003). "The field" becomes a "social terrain" where there is considerable overlap between the realms of the personal and the political. Overall, I could not foresee all possible challenges but the best I could do was to prepare for fieldwork as thoroughly as possible. There is a variety of desirable personal traits that make good fieldwork possible, but most importantly perhaps is the importance of an open mind and continually reflecting upon our reactions to local customs and the people we meet (Scheyvens and Nowak, 2003).

2.4 Considerations before leaving for the field

As I decided to do fieldwork research, I first needed to settle the matter of site selection. Naturally, it is important to choose a site that is likely to give appropriate data (Murray and Overton, 2003). Since I had decided to focus my research on organisations working in Sri Lanka, I only contacted NGOs based there. I focused primarily on Colombo, as I did not have enough time or resources to travel much around the country. One concern before leaving, was

the issue of language and cultural issues. Murray and Overton (2003) suggests having a cultural mentor who may help educate you on social norms. I had the help of my best friend's father, Arumugam, a Tamil who escaped Sri Lanka during the civil war in the 1980s. Arumugam prepared me for the cultural aspects of my travels; how to dress, the appropriate way to greet someone, how to ensure that food was safe to eat etc. We spoke for several hours of these and similar issues. I also had prior contact with key informants, who were my main contacts within the three organisations interviewed. Finally, I made sure to have the appropriate immigration clearance before travelling.

I wanted to ensure I was properly prepared for the different perspectives of fieldwork. Establishing contacts in the field is a process it is best to begin as early as possible. Thanks to new developments of global communications, it has now become infinitely easier to reach people living in the Global South (Nash, 2000; Leslie and Storey, 2003). Although issues may sometimes arise due to bad internet servers and emails easily being ignored or lost. Whilst I did personally experience some of my emails going unanswered, there did however seem to be reliable internet connection in Colombo. Thus, communication with those who wished to reply to me was very easy. However, not all NGOs have access through email (Leslie and Storey, 2003). Sometimes there is a need to use an intermediary, like a consulate or embassy, to get you in contact with someone relevant or use emails to "snowball" to other relevant contacts. As previously mentioned, one of the first things I did was to contact the Norwegian embassy in Sri Lanka. I did not expect a flood of responses to my emails; sometimes people will be busy, or simply not have an interest in your project. However, this is not a reason to feel discouraged, and I kept rearching out until I felt I had enough representatives from NGOs willing to meet with me.

Before travelling to do field work, it is important to take certain health preparations (Leslie and Storey,2003). The main health preparation I did, was to contact my GP in order to gather information about local health risks and receive the necessary vaccinations. He also advised me on what kinds of precautions to take, such as not eating unwashed fruit or food you do not know who was prepared by. I also obtained travel insurance. When researching a sensitive topic or visiting somewhere vastly different from your home country, you might also need to prepare yourself mentally for what you may face in the field (Leslie and Storey, 2003). Part of this includes to realistically evaluate the degree of danger you may be exposed to in the field. As a woman travelling alone, I discussed potential safety risks with my supervisor, and developed a health and safety plan in coherence with our notes and the country's travel

advisories (*see appendix*). Women researchers are generally encouraged to take note of the guidelines for women travellers routinely discussed in travel guidebooks and academic literature and avoid areas or situations where sexual assault is commonplace (Leslie and Storey, 2003). Taking this advice into account, I ate dinner at my hotel in the evening, and did not go out after dark. When booking transportation for my travelling within Colombo, I always used the hotel taxi service. During the day I did explore the city when I had time, though only known tourist areas where I felt quite confident of my safety.

Scheyvens and Nowak (2003) note that a researcher undertaking fieldwork for the first time will lack experience, but instead brings with them a fresh perspective. Venturing into the unknown brings unique experiences for each individual. Our behaviour and attitude may affect those we interact with; hence, our planning must include the well-being of others and not just ourselves (Scheyvens and Nowak, 2003). It was important to me to always be respectful to everyone I met, and not unintentionally do something to offend anyone. Arumugam was very helpful in terms of educating me on social norms and how to make sure I made a good first impression when meeting my participants and other locals. In order to create a good impression on the people you meet, you should show you are knowledge about issues in the country and localities you are studying (Nash, 2000, Scheyvens and Nowak, 2003). For example, it was important for me in Sri Lanka to discuss issues surrounding the civil war and woman's position in society. My pre-existing knowledge came through in the questions I asked during the interview, and also during our casual conversations. I did this by engaging in literature on the subject area, which included a broad range of issues relevant to Sri Lanka, including customs, social structure, and their political economy. I wanted to be able to impress upon others that my research questions are worthy of investigation and their time (Scheyvens and Nowak, 2003).

2.5 While in the field

As mentioned, Scheyvens and Nowak's note the importance of preparing for the field as someone who is new to fieldwork. I knew I should engage myself in review of literature on the subject area, as well as literature on a broad range of issues such as customs, the social structure and political economy of your host country. Displaying a knowledge of my subject would help impress upon others that my research questions are worthy of investigation (Scheyvens and Nowak, 2003). It was important to me that I presented myself as a professional, which includes making an effort to be knowledgeable. Mannerisms are

important, including polite behaviour and being a good listener when I interviewed my subjects. In order to create a good first impression, I should practice patience and discretion (Scheyvens and Nowak, 2003). As a researcher I should also be tolerant, despite the possibility of meeting people with different values to my own. Finally, when conducting fieldwork, I knew I had to be determined and know how to overcome periods of self-doubts. Researchers should always be emotionally prepared for rejection (Scheyvens and Nowak, 2003). Before leaving, it was somewhat of a concern of mine if anyone would show up to my meetings and if my interviews would provide me with any useful information. I was worried my trip to Sri Lanka would all be for nothing. However, my fears were unfounded, and by the end of the fieldwork I was relieved I had not let my self-doubt keep me back.

Good research requires an open mind and a willingness to learn, which is important when reflecting on the people and their culture we are in contact with. I was aware I must regularly reflect on what I observed and experienced, as well as monitor emotional responses and examine whether these are warranted or not; it is encouraged to keep a field diary, which I did (Scheyvens and Nowak, 2003). I was prepared to feel isolated and lonely, though because of the short period of my stay, I did not have time to experience any feelings of homesickness. I did however doubt my ability and worth of my work, as well as experience discouragement, which I was also luckily prepared for and knew to be a normal part of the research process (Devereux and Hoddinott 1992). I also experienced some stress of introducing myself to strangers and strange organisations (due to social anxiety this is always quite stressful to me), and stress of always being careful with how I behave and what I say. It is important to remember the society I was visiting has its own history and traditions, and to remember my own responsibility to act in a respectful manner according to these local ethical codes (Nash, 2000). As briefly mentioned, I was very worried I would be unintentionally offensive or present myself as ignorant in any way, but I think my prior research before the fieldwork experience helped prepare me in such a way that I avoided any awkward situations.

2.6 After the field

When writing up and publishing my research, I was forced to make clear decisions about how the people and places we visited are represented (Cupples and Kindon, 2003). I learned that it is common to feel sense of loss related to the shift in routine from being a researcher in the field to going back to university as a graduate student with a different set of interactions,

expectations and behaviours. Fieldwork is different from other forms of travel because you need to spend a substantial amount of the following months writing up the result (Cupples and Kindon, 2003). I did not struggle much with a shift of routine, as I only spent a week in Sri Lanka conducting my research. However, the months following my fieldwork experience were certainly spent mainly thinking, writing, and discussing the data I had gathered. It is also common to feel overwhelmed by quantity of data collected and experience anxiety about how to make sense of it (Cupples and Kindon, 2003). This is something I personally experienced in a bigger sense. The amount of data collected was at times hard to make sense of. Whilst all conversations I had with the interview participants were very interesting, not all answers were as relevant as others. Sometimes it was difficult to separate what was interesting comments in general from what was actually relevant to my topic of research. In the period after doing fieldwork, it becomes important to develop good study habits, such as developing timetables and arrange regular meetings with supervisors is critical (Cupples and Kindon, 2003). A motivator may be to set deadlines for yourself and need to hand in new chapters or paragraphs for your supervisor. Personally, it really helped me to have deadlines throughout the writing process, especially when I knew I would have to discuss my progress with my supervisor or my peers during group discussions. These deadlines make sure you always have something smaller to work towards and weekly or monthly goals to make.

Writing is not just the last stage of a study, but an integral part of fieldwork from the outset (Anderson, 2006). I needed to critically examine my motivations in researching particular people and communities, which is an integral part of respectful scholarship. The writing process provides an opportunity in which these motivations can be examined (Cupples and Kindon, 2003). Documenting of experiences through writing field notes is important, which is why keeping a diary and writing fieldnotes is so highly encouraged. Even after interviews, it was encouraged to write down and sort through notes as quickly as possible, in order to make as much sense of it as you can. I wrote down notes during the interviews instead of recording them, which means I had no need to transcribe, as my rough notes were already done. I did however go through them later in the day with the interviews fresh in mind, in order to reflect on the tone and context of how some things were said. In addition to this, I wrote down my thoughts, feelings, and impressions immediately after the interviews, in order to remember the whole atmosphere and experience of it. Theoretical insights emerge from engagement with the data in field notes (Anderson, 2006). The goal is to make sense of the experience and understand how people make sense of their world. I knew I had to relate my findings to

literature; it may be beneficial reading what other sociologists had to say about similar issues and my own assessment agree or disagree with theirs (Anderson, 2006). I had already written my literature review before leaving for the field, which meant I had a good theoretical understanding of previous work already. I feel like this was part of what helped me prepare and develop my own interview questions.

In the field of Criminology, we sometime encounter different terminologies when describing the same phenomena. When I began writing my thesis, I made a conscious decision what terminologies felt the most appropriate to adopt. Throughout my research, I refer to those who have experienced sexualized violence as "survivors" instead of "victims". This is due to the controversial stigma attached to the label of "victim". Some feminist researchers have argued this reduces the survivor to someone with no agency of their own; someone who was made passive by their own victimisation. It has been argued that the label of "victim" is insulting due to the strength it takes to overcome and process sexualized violence (Papendick and Bohner, 2017). I do also at times refer to survivors as *victim-survivors*; either when the sexual violence has been accompanied by other violent victimisation, or during times where simply using the term survivor does not sufficiently describe what I am referring to, i.e. when it might appear confusing in the middle of a sentence (Papendick and Bohner, 2017). I have also chosen to use the term the "Global South", rather than the "Third World," as the latter is commonly considered an outdated and incorrect term, even xenophobic. The Third World term suggests a homogeneity across all the countries that are meant to comprise this class, as well as an obvious hierarchy that is not simply restricted to some ranking of progress in development indicators, but is attached to real people and by association, their ethnicities (Marsha, 2009).

2.7 Semi-structured Interviews

As I began developing the interview questions, there were several things to be aware of. Firstly, the topic of sexual violence is understandably a very sensitive one. I wanted my interview questions to mirror the sensitive nature of the research, in showing both respect and professionalism as well as empathy (Scheyvens et al, 2003). Secondly, it might also be uncomfortable for participants if you ask the hardest and most sensitive questions straight away. To avoid any sense of discomfort, I wanted to first ask more general questions related to the organisations and their work. Questions more directly linked to sexualized violence and

the Sri Lankan ethnic conflict was asked towards the middle/end part of the interviews. The interview questions can be found in the appendix of this dissertation. The interviews were carried out in a location of the organisations' choice. It was important to me that they felt comfortable and at ease in the setting of the interviews. All three organisations had offices in Colombo, and these became the natural meeting place. The atmosphere was light-hearted, which was almost a surprise considering the seriousness of the research. Particularly the focus group with MDL, left me feeling like I had just had lunch with five friends. It probably helped the atmosphere in the focus group that they were all already familiar with each other and could play off on this dynamic. The one-and-one interviews with Chrysalis and Grassrooted had a more professional feeling to the but were still very relaxed at the same time.

To have a focus group with the women of MDL was an in-prompt decision, as I was originally supposed to interview the five women individually. However, not all women felt fully comfortable in their abilities to speak English with me. One of the founding members of MDL, who was also present, offered to be a translator for the group. I made the decision that it would work out better to carry out the focus group, so she would not have to spend hours translating my individual interviews with the other women. The results I got from the focus group were naturally different than those I would probably get had I gone on to interview them individually; for both good and bad. The women bounced off each other and helped each other remember specific cases and were quick to add on something others might have left out. However, one negative aspect was that a lot of the discussion among themselves happened in Sinhalese, with the translator eventually summarizing it in English. Therefore, I am not sure what thoughts and ideas I missed out on that was not deemed important enough to be summarised for me.

I do however think it was a good decision to change it to a focus group, as the women seemed more comfortable and at ease with this. It provided me more information than I think I would have gotten had I stuck to doing individual semi-structured interviews (Harding, 2013). The reason I had decided to do semi-structured interviews, was because interviews are often assumed to be the "gold standard" for qualitative research. Harding (2013) believes they provide an opportunity for the researcher to listen to the views and experiences of one respondent for an extended period and to ask probing questions to explore ideas further. He goes on to list some areas in where interviews are particularly helpful, including how they examine people's beliefs and perceptions, identifies motivations for behaviours, and determines meanings people attach to their experiences (Harding, 2013).

In addition to this, interviews may also examine people's feelings and emotions, extract their personal stories, and be a natural way to cover sensitive issues. Interviews may however at times lack some specific advantages of other techniques, as being less "naturalistic" than observation and not providing the same opportunities to explore collective understandings offered by focus groups. Sadly, there was not an opportunity to do any natural observation of the NGO's work available. They travel a lot when reaching out for women or conduct workshops and education programmes, and it was not included in my budget to travel to any other cities in Sri Lanka. Due to the language barrier, it would not be very beneficial for me to observe any of the workshops anyway. Some of the women might also feel uncomfortable with me as a researcher observing them in what may be considered a vulnerable situation. I did however, as mentioned, get the chance to conduct a focus group as well as one-and-one interviews. I did take notice of the collective understandings mentioned by Harding (2013), as the answers in the focus group were often given as a unanimous decision following a discussion between the five women.

When I carried out the interviews, I thought a lot about how I presented myself to the participants. Through both my choice of clothes and my use of language, I wanted to appear professional yet humble. It was important to me to present the topics in a way that showed I had done previous research, as well as showing my genuine interest in my studies. This was both for my own benefit, in being taken more seriously, but also to show respect for the people giving me their time and knowledge as they took part of my study. When conducting fieldwork, there is a process of self-making required. This involves becoming a persona given shape and characteristics from response with field conditions and relationships dynamics (Khan, 2014). As an example, Khan (2014) asks if one would be able to break vegetarianism to accept traditional food. During the focus group, one of the women were kind enough to go out and buy all of us a nice Sri Lankan lunch. Despite being a vegetarian, I did accept the meat dish served to me, as I really appreciated the kind gesture of receiving food (which I had not expected), as well as enjoyed the chance to try local cuisine. I would have felt quite rude to reject this act of kindness, and I feel like it would have a negative impact on the relationship I had built with these women.

As previously mentioned, when conducting the interviews and the focus group, I was also aware that some of the participants might have a specific view on Norwegians, as we did have quite a prominent part in peace negotiations during the Sri Lankan civil war. I was curious to whether this would affect how my identity was an ethnographer was defined. However, I only

received positive comments on my Norwegian identity. For example, the person I communicated with from Chrysalis was especially fond of Norwegians and mentioned our nice chocolate which she had tried during a previous visit. As a gift of appreciation for their time, I brought her a few Freia chocolate bars, which she seemed to highly appreciate. Even such small gestures like that, felt like it helped me build a positive relationship with the participants.

2.8 Methods and Analysis

Some practical challenges and barriers I faced included the issue of language. I already mentioned that due to not feeling comfortable expressing themselves in English, my planned one-on-one interviews with MDL was turned into a focus group, where one of the founding members translated what was being discussed. Whilst her summaries were always solid and detailed, I still do not know what smaller details I might have missed in the discussion happening in Sinhalese. Though language might be an obvious a barrier to understanding, more subtle barriers include those of culture and social position. Having an intermediary, like an organization or key informant, might prove beneficial, as they might help make arrangements as to where to stay and where to conduct the research. I experienced this first hand, as I would have had no idea where a good location would be to host a meeting or interviews in a city I have never been to before. Instead, my key informants who I contacted before leaving, made all the arrangements for where and when the interviews would take place. I understand I was only able to conduct my fieldwork because of the hospitality shown to me. In order to conduct good research, people had to be willing to talk to me. Luckily, I experienced my contacts as all very generous and welcoming, both prior to and during my stay.

In terms of analysing my data, I chose to do a thematic analysis. Thematic analysis attempts to identify ideological themes which underpin the stories we are told (McNeill and Chapman, 2005). Distinguishing the different themes that were present through the interviews is a vital part of this. I do this by reading through the answers given by each group/participant and pick out the similarities in them. Once the themes are identified, I will compare the different themes and the answers I learned from all the different interview participants. The constant comparative method includes making a list of similarities and differences between the first two cases to be considered. The next step is to amend this list as further cases are added to the analysis (Harding, 2013). Finally, I can identify research findings once all the cases have been

included in the analysis. Conceptual themes are likely to be drawn from different sections of the interview transcripts and to use codes taken from the analysis of different illustrative issues (Harding, 2013). They may not be referred to directly but involve a greater element of interpretation. Conceptual themes may not be spotted in the first reading of the transcript; identifying and analysing themes illustrate the need for the researcher to return to their data. The use of conceptual themes is likely to achieve the most difficult aim of thematic analysis, i.e. examining the relationship between different elements of the data (Harding, 2013). Finally, identifying conceptual themes enabled me to move beyond identifying findings to building theory. There are four steps of analysing conceptual themes (Harding, 2013). The first one is identifying the conceptual theme and creating a category; bringing together codes from different illustrative issues into the category. I created sub-categories to reflect different elements of the conceptual theme. Then, I used the conceptual theme to explain relationships between different parts of the data, before finally building my theory, which is the last step.

2.9 Ethical challenges

One of the biggest challenges when conducting fieldwork in a different country, is that you may experience a clash of cultures. Culture is here defined as "a system of symbols that enables human beings to apprehend and give meaning to the world and by doing so, act on it" (Guneratne, 2014). Even within the same country, the culture may sometimes vary. For instance, the culture of urban, English-speaking middleclass people in Sri Lanka is very different from the monolingual Sinhala-speaking farmers. The urban middleclass Sri Lankans can be as uninformed about rural life as the foreign anthropologist arriving in Sri Lanka for the first time (Khan, 2014). An ethical dilemma of whether to do fieldwork in the Global South may relate to the power gradients inherent in events such as a relatively privileged Western researcher travelling to a country in the Global South to study people who live in poverty (Scheyvens and Storey, 2003). This is sometimes referred to as "academic tourism" or "research travellers".
Fieldwork might expose the researched to greater risk and be more intrusive than more traditional research methods. Development discourse constructed so as to legitimate the voices of "Western experts" while undermining those of local people.

There is also a need for a greater consideration of the role of the "self", a researcher's positionality (gender, age, sexuality etc, may influence the data gathered (Scheyvens and

Storey, 2003). There is sometimes a suggestion that research between Western and people in the Global South is inherently exploitative, which in turn suggests people living in the Global South have no power. Power is best understood at existing along a continuum; the reality is that the researchers rarely hold all the control in the research process and that individuals and communities may well be very effective in forms of "research resistance" (Scheyvens and Storey, 2003). For instance, respondents can withhold information or refuse to answer, or use language as a means of controlling responses. Those studies in the Global South should not simply be considered a source of data through which a researcher can further their career; rather, it should be a two-way process of interaction. Issues such as how well informed, politically aware and sensitive the researcher is to the topic in question and the local context, should be factors which help determine how suitable they are to conduct such research (Scheyvens and Storey, 2003).

When in the field, "professionalism" should match "humanism"; in other words: our study among the "poor, marginalized and powerless" should contribute to their empowerment. However, there is no definite answers to ethical questions; one must think of them in practical and theoretical terms. Ethical principles should inform all stages of research, from the inception of a research project through to writing up results (Scheyvens et al., 2003a). As a researcher, I aimed to build a mutually beneficial relationship with those I meet in the field. This required me to always act in a sensitive and respectful manner. Ethical research should not only "do no harm", but also have the potential to "do good", and to involve "empowerment" of people and communities (Madge, 1997). Throughout the research process, it was important to me to ensure the participants' dignity, privacy and safety. I also felt a political commitment to empower those individuals and communities needing help (Scheyvens et al., 2003). This is because I could tell how important their work was to them; they were all passionate and hardworking, with a fire to really make a change for victim-survivors of sexual violence. I felt a responsibility to let their voices be heard and portray them in a respectful manner.

"The individual anthropologist must be willing to make carefully considered ethical choices and be prepared to make clear the assumptions, facts, and issues on which those choices are based"
(the American Anthropological Association, quoted in Scheyvens et al., 2003a).

In other words, fieldwork must be concerned with ensuring the research will not have negative implications for the participants. Good practices include respect for culture, traditions and knowledge of the local community, as well as consultation with the local community and the return of knowledge and information to the community (Scheyvens et al., 2003a). Throughout my research, I communicated with my participants, making sure they were comfortable with the questions I prepared for them before meeting. If they wish, I will also send them a copy of my thesis once it is finished, in order to offer them a chance to read what I learnt from them and see the final results of my academic research. It is important to consider different ethical issues throughout the entire research process, as research should be about soliciting positive change for the people, not necessarily the researcher (Denzin, 1997). I also had other ethical considerations, such as ensuring all participants were provided informed consent. My university follows the standards of Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata (Norwegian Centre for Research Data, here forth known as NSD). We are required to inform NSD of our research and our participants, and how we aim to protect their identities and provide them with informed consent. I had to submit my consent form to NSD three times before approval; due to the sensitivity of the topic and the possibility that their positions, and other sensitive information like their ethnicities, could be revealed during my interviews.

The notion of informed consent refers to that the person has a complete and thorough understanding of the aims and processes of the research project, what the research will be used for, and who will have access to the information gathered (Scheyvens et al., 2003a). The informed consent information given to the participants must clearly state that potential contributors do not have to participate and if they decide not to there will be no prejudice, and that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time (Scheyvens et al., 2003a). I also needed to clearly describe how my participant's identities would be protected. I provided them with an information sheet, which also indicated when anonymity cannot be guaranteed; this was also be explained to participants at the time of the interviews. Obtaining the participants' consent, also allowed for the disclosure of their identities (see Cassel and Jacobs, 1987). Participants will often feel proud of being included in a research project, such as in the case for my thesis, where all participants said they would like for the name of their NGOs to be included. At certain times during the interview process, I experienced being entrusted with private information, and thus had a responsibility for ensuring fieldnotes, tapes and transcripts will be stored in a safe place, and that the information gathered is only for the purpose of the

research (Scheyvens et al., 2003a). At the end of the project, I will destroy all information. The same applies if one of the participants at any time chooses to withdraw from the project.

The research must be based on a relationship of trust and loyalty with participants, research sponsors, supervisors and universities. In any research, perhaps especially when conducting research in the Global South, we find that there are power relations existing between researchers and their informants on two levels: 1) real differences associated with access to money, education, and other resources, and 2) perceived differences, which exists in the mind of those participants who feel they are inferior, and researchers who give an impression that they are superior (Scheyvens et al., 2003a). Interviews thus need to be conducted with care, as my status as a researcher could sometimes be made obvious by clipboard and paper, as well as my clothing; this might make respondents sometimes feel intimidated and fearful (Scheyvens et al., 2003a). However, power gradients may not be so extreme with female researchers, as women are often perceived as being naturally less threatening than men (Razavi, 1992). Both men and women can control how we dress and our general appearance and should always make sure to be clean and tidy, as well as dressing in a culturally respectful manner.

It was also important for me to consider what I can give back to those who provided me with assistance (Wolf, 1996). I may be able to give something back through the process of research, by showing value in the participants information and knowledge. Researchers should consider participating in local activities and learning local customs, which I feel helped me show that I valued the culture of those I studied (Walcott, 1995, cited in Scheyvens et al., 2003a). Studies conducted in the Global South should not be seen merely as a source of data through which a researcher can further their career but should be a two-way process of interaction. Issues such as how well informed, politically aware and sensitive the researcher is to the topic in question and the local context, may determine how suitable they are to conduct such research (Escobar, 1995). Our attitude towards people who face economic and other hardships, should not be so shrouded by pity that we fail to see things of value in those we study (Scheyvens et al., 2003b). Women are not all vulnerable or disadvantaged in relation to other members of society; however, social structures which vary from culture to culture mean many women face specific forms of oppression in their daily life and are generally less able than men to access resources to improve their quality of life (Scheyvens et al., 2003b).

"The exotic fieldwork pursued over a continuous period of at least a year has, for some time now, set the norm against which other practices are judged" (Clifford, 1997). In other words,

different types of research may be considered as “less” fieldwork. Women were consulted so little in the past, that they may experience genuine surprise and suspicion when you want to speak to women (Scheyvens et al., 2003b). Development research with women can be particularly sensitive if it reveals aspects of women’s disadvantage. Female research participants are more likely respond more freely openly to a female researcher (Scheyvens et al., 2003b). When women are interviewing women, it is an “antidote to centuries of ignoring women’s ideas all together or having men speak for women” (Reinharz 1992, quoted in Scheyvens et al, 2003b). I, as a female researcher, was not necessarily seeing or being allowed to see the same social worlds as a male researcher would have seen. But we should still not assume that women researchers will be able to build better rapport than men with female participants or be more likely to gather more meaningful data. Research should be an empowering process for participants, an opportunity for education and a stimulus for social action. Many researchers of development issues, including myself, are motivated at least in part by their moral conscience, as they want to not just better understand the world but enable people to improve their living conditions and overcome inequalities. A major concern among women in the Global South is whether women in the West can represent their interests if they have never experienced double or triple oppression based on gender, class, and ethnicity (Scheyvens et al., 2003b). If you are in a position to bring their concerns to the attention of decision-makers, then they most likely will wish you to do so. Sadly, as a relatively powerless student, I am in no such position; if I had been, I would have been honoured to be an advocate for the very important issues brought to me by my research participants.

2.10 Limitations

Identifying limitations, as well as explaining to the reader what impact these limitations have on the study results, is important to give clear direction on how to analyse my data and read my results (Greener, 2018). The limitations of social research are usually attributed to technical weakness in design, data collection and analysis (Shipman, 1988). Naturally, when conducting a research within a certain time frame and with a specific budget available, there will be some limitations that possibly affect the process of research. Firstly, I received no funding, and this affected where and how I could travel when conducting my fieldwork. My sample size could have been potentially bigger, had I possessed the means to travel to different cities in Sri Lanka rather than just stay in the capital. I had to depend on simplifying complex reality and use my small sample size to create a larger generalisation based on not all

that much data. Secondly, in addition to the small sample size, the participants also presented a one-sided view on working with survivors of sexualized violence. Whilst I did set out to study how NGOs in particular provide support services, there are however other points of views which could also have been explored, such as official service providers, or the views of the victim-survivors themselves. I was also limited in my understanding of the internal processes and dynamics of non-profit boards (Cornforth, 2012). My initial academic research of the topic focused mainly on sexual violence and international guidelines on persecution and punishment. I had very limited knowledge on NGOs and their development and structure. I could have been better prepared on their work and motivations.

Finally, my primary information being gathered in semi-structured interviews meant I had to rely only on the words of the interview participants. I did not receive any official sources or statistics backing up their point of views in cases specific to Sri Lanka (which I also could not confirm online due to the publications being in Sinhalese). This is a trap which students are often warned about; that of accepting data, especially self-report but also other quantitative data, at face value (Greener, 2018). This is part of why the study focuses on how they themselves perceive working with survivors of sexual violence, and not claiming to be objective. The language barrier was a hurdle both in terms of collecting primary information related to the specific cases discussed in the interviews and focus group, as well as when the actual interviews were conducted. The focus group was a last-minute resort due to not all participants feeling confident communicating in English, and instead wanting to use a senior member of the organisation as a translator. The fact that I was unable to speak directly to some of the participants, might mean a loss of potentially interesting or important details or information that got lost in translation. The focus group might also have had its limitations for the participants, as there might have been some cases where they would have felt more comfortable discussing the topic alone with me. Perhaps they at times felt like they needed to agree with the main consensus of the group during their discussions in Singhalese. Though, this is pure speculation, with the point being that I *do not know* what was discussed in Singhalese, which makes the dynamic hard for me to properly read. The limitations mentioned in this chapter, affected both the initial development of my research, as well as how I conducted the interviews, the analysis and the following discussion of my gathered data. Going forward, I urge the reader to keep these methodological and technical limitations in mind and view my thesis in light of them.

Chapter 3

Analysis

This chapter will focus on an introduction and analysis of key findings from one focus group and two semi-structured interviews. The analysis itself will be thematic, and the layout will explore five major themes identified during the sessions. Each theme will be explored in relation to the main thesis question, whilst focusing on the context, challenges and possible solutions related to sexualized violence in Sri Lanka. Each theme was selected by distinctive, yet related, reasons. The first one sets the context for how sexualized violence is approached in a post-conflict society. Following this, the main challenges the NGOs face will be explored and discussed. I then present an explanation of why these challenges are still so prominent in society, when reflecting on the participants' views on the patriarchy. One of the themes identified revolves around how international and national cooperation with other organisations might affect or benefit their work after this. Finally, the last theme identified is what could be a possibly solution to make it easier for NGOs to work with sexual violence in a post-conflict, patriarchal society. The participants from the discussions and interviews present both similar and varying views on how to reach out, offer help to, and support female survivors in different situations following such violations. After identifying themes and studying the different information gathered, there will be a conclusion summarizing how local voices compare to global agendas.

3.1 Sexualized violence post-conflict

Part of my interest when conducting this research, was how a recent armed conflict has affected the way NGOs work with sexualized violence; this includes the sexual violence occurring as part of the conflict itself, and also how it is now affecting support services in a post-conflict society. The recent conflict in Sri Lanka creates the context for how NGOs conduct their work to this day. When the war ended, many hoped the Sri Lankan society would build and grow. Instead, the next five years saw the country’s prospects diminished by a government that sought to consolidate its power and limit the rights of its citizens (Mohan, 2014). Northern Tamils describe a total transformation of their landscapes: people have disappeared, unidentified bodies found, large-scale internal and external displacement, and several buildings have been completely destroyed by bombs (Thiranagama, 2011). During the

interviews, participants were questioned about whether they had seen an increase in reports on sexual violence after the end of the civil war in 2009. The focus group all agree that sexual violence seem to be on the increase, but it is unsure if this is because more women step forward. Evanshi says that after the war, death and violence became so common, many might consider it “not a big deal” anymore. People have the mentality of everything being easier because at least they are living in times of peace. They settle on that all crime seem to be on the increase, especially violent crime. Evanshi says people do not care as much about death, because of how the war affected them. She jokes: “People will say, “only three hundred dead? That’s good”.” They seem to agree this increase on crime is true for all crime, not just sexual violence. They mention drug dealing, as there is a Sri Lankan Drug Maria who provide funding for some politicians and their parties. Chetna says that although the military attempted to collect weapons after the end of the war, some men still managed to keep theirs. They now use those guns to rob, threaten, rape and kill. Aarvi adds that the war caused a disruption of society; there is a sense of not knowing where you belong (a state famously described as *anomie* by Emile Durkheim). Politicians and police officers misuse their new power.

In my interview with Farani, she confirms that during the war, a lot of ethnic attacks took place; although she never personally worked with any survivors of such attacks. Rape in conflict is not about sexual desire, but an act of aggression and hatred. It is done out of misogyny and has a great political importance (Cockburn, 2011). Sexual violence in war is intended to intimidate and shame the survivors. The penis is used as a weapon. It is often performed in public, in view of community or family of the survivor, sometimes performed under coercion by a relative (Cockburn, 2011). It demoralizes the enemy, as many cultures women seen as embodying the honour of the men to whom they "belong". Farani continues to say: "I am not aware of any current violent ethnic conflicts in the country". However, she raises an interesting point, which is that "gender-based violence tends to focus on the physical harm, while ignoring mental and economic abuse". She wonders if how Tamil women experience being denied access to certain resources in the North could be part of economic gender-based violence. Different kinds of violence, which is not physical, may in many cases be even harder to identify.

Another change following the war, is that organisations are now openly working on issues such as sexualized violence and women’s rights. An important political change is that it can be more openly discussed. Farani says the space is created now, and donors seem more

interested in funding projects. The focus has had the chance to change since the war. Drishy puts it like this:

"Before, the question would be: How do we survive the war?" Now instead, people ask "How do we keep living our lives?"
- Drishy, 10.10.18

In other words, she is saying that during the war you had no time to think about sexual violence and attacks on women; your primary focus was survival. Now that the war is over, there seems to be more opportunity and space to have these kinds of discussions and a change of focus.

3.2 Main challenges

As I deciphered the different themes emerging from the interviews, I knew I wanted to focus on the context, causes and solutions related the challenges faced by the NGOs. The theme I identified right away, which was frequently brought up by all participants, was that of *main challenges* themselves as experienced by the NGO when working with such a sensitive topic. The challenges of stigmatisation and re-victimisation were brought up by all three organisations and they will both be analysed and discussed in two following sub-sections, as well as a discussion regarding the challenge of accessibility.

2.1 Stigmatisation

During all the interviews and in the focus group, there appeared to be an agreement about how women tend to be very reluctant to come forward and initiate contact with the different organisations. They all expressed a belief that this is because women will often try to hide the rape or abuse from everyone, including their own families and local communities. Reaching out for help means risking exposure. As a result of this reluctance, the amount of reported cases is understandably low. Govardhan mentions a study done by UNFBA, which revealed that 4 % of women reported sexual harassment on public transport, whilst the real number is known to be much higher. It can then be assumed even *less* women report on domestic sexual violence, or sexual attacks by someone else known to them.

Instead of waiting for survivors to initiate contact, workers for the organisations sometimes must be the ones reaching out to known survivors in the local areas. Whilst there are some

services in place, women are regrettably often afraid to use them. Brija says:

"*This [lack of women using existing support services] is a problem that is made more challenging in rural areas without internet access, where we have to actually travel to visit the local communities and try to make contact with the survivors."*
- Brija, 10.10.18.

The focus group came to an agreement that whilst almost no one is willing to come forward with their stories, an exception might be more educated women who are, as they put it, “aware of their own worth”. However, this is something Farani disagrees with in my one-on-one interview with her; she believes "an educated woman with a good career will have even more to lose by stepping forward", meaning she might choose to keep quiet to keep up the façade of a perfect life. During the focus group, Aarvi estimates that less than 5-10 % of all survivors report an incident of sexual violence and that the issue of low reporting rates is the same in rural areas and in bigger cities.

The focus group believes the biggest challenges regarding helping victimized women, is the level of refusal of survivors to ask for help, and the lack of social support in their communities. This includes the lack of psychological support, which there is still a serious lack of awareness of. Farani states there is still a stigma around seeking counselling; women will say "I am not crazy!". Farani does however bring up a story about a successful campaign related to mental health awareness. She tells me about how a young Sri Lankan actor committed suicide recently, which resulted in a national campaign about not keeping quiet about your own struggles. A lot of calls were made to the hotline following this campaign. Farani believes that people may not always be aware of what kind of help is available to them, meaning there is a need for more campaigning and advertising. She says the issue of mental health must be spoken more openly about, to make sure people know all their options. She also thinks the suicide prevention hotline must be open during all times of the day, that staff must receive proper training, and the service must be available in all languages. "If it's not available to everyone, then it is useless," she tells me.

Farani does however express optimism in a positive development that has been seen over the last few years, with more women coming forward and sharing their stories. She believes this is a kind of domino effect; when someone sees their neighbour step forward, they will feel inspired and encouraged to tell their own story too. Something Govardhan brings attention to in his interview, which can sometimes be hard to balance, is the issue of cultural differences

and respect, yet also wanting to fight stigmatization encouraged by specific religious or ethnic groups. What is important to Govardhan, is that they are disassociated from a general bias, and only focus on bringing attention to specific cases. For instance, his organization has a webpage bringing attention to the issue of female gender mutilation, which is more common in Muslim communities in Sri Lanka. He thinks there must be a discussion about this kind of violence, and breaking the shame and stigma surrounding it. The issue of stigmatization will be further explored in light of the patriarchy.

2.2. Re-victimisation

In addition to the shame related to the stigmatisation of sexual violence, survivors also commonly face re-victimisation from several different forces: by their families, their communities or professional services, such as the police and judicial system. Chetna says: "*Women will sometimes experience re-victimisation in the most literal way if they actually file a report to the police; the police officer might rape them again when they step forward*."
- Chetna, 10.10.18.

In a different sense of re-victimisation, women might go through tough questioning for a long period of time and be met with doubt and disgust when they report. Women also have a lot of fear for the reactions of their communities and what will happen next. Culture and religion may limit their willingness to report. Evanshi mentions special Muslim and Hindu laws where the survivor might be physically punished for being a survivor of rape. Rape can also taint the family honour, so the family encourage, or even threaten, the survivor to keep quiet; this is especially the case when the rape has been committed by a family member or someone the family know. The lack of support the survivors receives in cases like that, both from their family and their community, makes it even harder to step forward.

The organisations interviewed do always advice and encourage women to report the sexual violence. Aarvi says they will give advice such as not to wash their clothes, do not shower, to not keep it a secret, and to keep all witnesses. These are common advice given to women in Western countries as well, proving to me that these ideas on how to respond to rape and sexual violence are becoming global. Evanshi says, in an almost jokingly tone, that she sometimes almost force women to report and drag them with her to the police station. In a serious tone, she states they will always offer support and go with the survivors if they express a need for additional support. For women, it can be tough to come forward due to

police, medical and legal aid sometimes considering sexual violence not a big deal. They might be told to "sort it out with your husband", as Farani says. Law enforcement will try to encourage “family reconciliation” before getting involved themselves; they often dismiss the courage it takes for a survivor to report sexual violence. Women already do feel shame and fear when they report, so if they are turned away once, they might never go back again.

An additional issue in the North of Sri Lanka has been the language barrier, as not all police officers speak Tamil. The issue of re-victimisation is something also commonly explored in academic literature. As Danieli (2009) writes: “every step throughout the justice experience might exacerbate the conspiracy of silence by missing or neglecting the opportunity for healing survivors and reintegrating them into their communities and societies; or worse, by actively re-victimizing and re-traumatizing them” (Danieli, 2009). Fear of experiencing re-victimisation either by family members or law enforcement is one of the major reasons why women choose to remain silent.

2.3 Accessibility

The final challenge I considered, was that of how accessible these support services are to survivors. Due to the stigmatization and shame associated with sexualized violence and rape, as well as the fear of re-victimisation, it is generally emotionally and mentally difficult for survivors to reach out for help. Options on how to access the different organisations are either coming to the office and directly ask for help, or via phone and social media. The latter is often easier, as it is hard for many women to tell their stories and ask for help due to the previously mentioned social stigma. Women who have suffered a trauma will be directed to Women in Need, where they can receive proper counselling. The focus group agree they will generally advice women on the steps forward, provide support, someone to talk to or tell their story to, and encourage them to report what happened. Farani says her organisation goes through the administrative structure in an area.

"We need approval from ministries, when our staff works with communities in the North. Our services are always accessible in the local languages. We advertise through Facebook and other websites, and there has been talk about creating a leaflet to further get the word out about our existence."

- Farani, 11.10.18.

Farani's NGO does programs on engaging women politically regarding sexual violence. Their work in the North and their previous research have made them visible as an organisation.

Research they did have been made into recommendations and become adapted by other organisations. Thus, Farani believes a lot of their advertising comes naturally as a result of being well-known from their previous work.

Farani informs me that when they work at community level, a major part of women accessing their services is that you must build up a level of trust. This is important as it is such a sensitive issue. Farani says they commonly build trust through orientation programs. Then, they partner with local actors, someone who is visible in the community regarding gender-based violence issues. They will then link the women to state actors, and interventions will be done through local parties. When they target young people, the approach is slightly different. They first do a mapping exercise to understand the structures around these young people's lives. Though women are encouraged to report sexual violence, they are not forced. Sometimes it takes time for survivors to feel ready to report an incident; what happened to her needs to really sink in first.

Finally, Govardhan's organisation have primarily an online presence, which does make them easily accessible for anyone who has access to the internet or a computer. People can also contribute to their websites with stories and experiences from their own lives. Govardhan tells me they are usually they are contacted via email or WhatsApp. They want to reach out both Singhalese and Tamil contact, in order to offer people support in their local language. It is thus important for them they have workers who can communicate with both ethnic groups. Women can reach out and come to them, or they can come to the local area. They mainly advertise through their website, Facebook and Instagram and Twitter. Govardhan considers leaflets and posters "a waste of resources". He prefers people to be able to contact them directly straight away. Of course, their primarily online presence does provide some obstacles for individuals without internet access or access to their own computer. Whilst Govardhan does not address this problem directly, he does ensure me that they also travel around the country to provide workshops and education programmes, and take that time to make themselves available for the locals as well, giving them the opportunity to reach out to a larger scale than that available from simply the online presence.

3.3 The patriarchy: an explanatory model

One underlying cause of the main challenges discussed, is the patriarchal society the survivors live in. Kate Millett was the one who first introduced the concept of a patriarchy in the 1970 publication of *Sexual Politics*: "Our society, like all other historical civilizations, is a

patriarchy" […] "(Millett, 2000). Millett wrote that the situation between the sexes now and throughout history is a relationship of dominance and sub ordinance; a social order where men are dominant over women. As Millett claimed all historical civilizations have been patriarchies, Sri Lanka is no exception. The question it raises is how does being a patriarchal society affect or contribute to (sexualized) violence against women? Feminist scholarship has brought understanding to how instances of violence, dominance and control against and over women are often used as tools aimed at maintaining patriarchy and women's subordinate position (Skjelsbæk, 2001). Patriarchy is not easy to sustain, as it is not a "natural" order of things. Instead, it requires great effort, from both men and women (Leatherman, 2011). Sexual violence becomes a key tool in arsenal of the global political economy of both war and times of peace; it is a political strategy, used to decide who remains in control and which assets they possess.

The women in the focus group tell me that in Sri Lanka, one woman is raped every ninety minutes. They present a situation to illustrate how commonly accepted rape is, both socially and legally. It is Evanshi who tells me the story, short and to the point:
"*One member of the local parliament, when he got to his one hundred rape, he threw a big party. To celebrate it! And even worse, he was re-elected. Even after this*."
- Evanshi, 10.10.18.

I do not have any way to confirm this story or not, as any relevant news articles are in Singahelse. However, whether or not the story is true, one could argue that what is important is people's *belief* in the truth of it. The focus group all clearly shared a belief that raping one hundred women would have no say in the position of a powerful man, which is quite telling for how they consider society to view sexual violence and the lack of value of women.

The group discuss among themselves how the story told above is an example of how little respect is shown to women; how abusing women does not necessarily cause any harm or effect to your career or social life. However, these attitudes are found not only in the public sphere, but in the private one as well. Evanshi goes on to explain there is a common problem amongst poorer families where the parents cannot provide food for all children: they will encourage their young daughters to go out and find food elsewhere, which often means the girls will trade sexual favours in order to obtain it. Girls are sometimes encouraged to have sex with their fathers, stepfathers, "uncles"/family friends in order to get them to want to

invest food and other necessary resources into them. In some cases, the daughter will get pregnant by their own father or stepfather. However, the group maintains the mother will often still encourage the situation. Brothers are also sometimes encouraged to sleep with their sisters, because it is better than them looking for women outside of the family, considering the brothers sometimes are the main providers. Parents thus want them to stay for as long as possible. Evanshi says this is a problem which local organizations cannot stop, as it is so integrated in cultural attitude.

"*All we can do is provide information about protection and safe sex. and family planning, to avoid sexual diseases and further pregnancies in these rurual areas."*

- Evanshi, 10.10.18.

The focus group also tells me that when women migrate to Middle-Eastern countries like Dubai and Saudi-Arabia, the fathers with the absent wives will sometimes use their oldest daughter for sex; she will become almost like a wife to him for the time his actual wife is away. Evanshi informs us about a case where a girl got pregnant with her father, and when the mother came home, she told her not to tell anyone the child belonged to her father. They wanted to keep it a secret, in order to protect the family honour and avoid the shame. The girl moved to her grandparents and had her baby there, with no repercussion for the father. This particular story has a happy ending, as the girl did eventually get an education and a job to provide for herself and her child, with the help of the women's organization Evanshi works for.

Farani expresses her belief that the patriarchal society they live in has a big impact on how women speak, or rather do not speak, about sexual violence. Women not open about sexual violence. She says girls are raised to believe that: "what the man says is the Gospel". Farani thinks Tamil and Muslim culture in the North might be even more affected by the strict patriarchy, making it even more difficult to step forward. However, she is uncertain about the extent of the ethnic and religious effects. As she puts it:

"*There is no class or caste difference when it comes to gender-based violence. It can happen to anyone."*

Farani, 11.10.18.

Sexual violence can happen to all kinds of women, from all parts of societies. Farani also brings up an interesting issue regarding the patriarchy in local law enforcement, which often

will cause cases to be immediately dismissed. Police sometimes view intimate partner violence as an issue between a husband and a wife; something to be sorted out privately. In my interview with Govardhan, he tells me it is considered a women's responsibility if she is raped in Sri Lanka. Common questions she will be asked if what she wore, what she was drinking and where she was; questions he says seem to be asked everywhere in the world when it comes to survivors of sexual violence. He says in order to understand the high statistics of sexual violence and harassment, we must understand that misogyny and sexism stem from a deep-rooted patriarchy and the objectifying of women. As quoted at the very beginning of my thesis, Govardhan tells me this is a global issue, but he believes it is perhaps not as hidden in Sri Lanka as it might be in the West. He goes on to talk about the issue of a male sense of entitlement; instead of men considering themselves to be "owed" something from women or society, it is important that they recognize their privilege so they may use it to help those in need. Govardhan finishes by stating that "equal opportunity and possibility shouldn't depend on what's between your legs."

3. 4 Cooperation: local, national and global

The challenges and problems NGOs face working with survivors of sexualized violence in Sri Lanka, are challenges which are also faced by several other organisations globally. I was interested to hear how the NGOs interviewed cooperate on an international scale. This is particularly relevant to how they conduct their work, and how cooperation possibly affects their day to day work as well as their structure on a larger scale. The topic of cooperation with other organisations is interesting, because it may reveal if someone else's agenda could play a part in how these organisations work. Sometimes, NGOs will have to compromise their work and position in order to receive the necessary funding for their projects. There is not always a value consensus among NGO activists and between NGOs and official donors (Tvedt, 2002). Tvedt also goes on to write that the term global civil society in a sense downplays the fact that most influential organizations are financed by the state and are working in accordance with regulations issued by individual states or the international state system. The notion of a global civil society often disregards the role of the state in funding and influencing NGOs. The focus group interviewed explain that the last time MDL received any official funding was from 2013 to 2015. Their official funding was then cut due to a national financial crisis. However, some of the member organisations within their umbrella organization did help fund them these last years; some of them which still receive national funding (no names were mentioned

here). As a result of the lack of direct funding, the focus group agree they try to do very cost-efficient work. MDL works with other Sri Lankan networks, such as the Movement for Free and Fair Elections (MFFE), Peoples Action for Free and Fair Elections (PAFFREL), and the Action Forum for Migrant Workers (ACTFORM) They do also cooperate with international organisations, especially South Asian ones. Other mentioned were UN women, USaid, AustralianAID, Hivos, Global Fund for Women and Mama Cash. During the discussion, global initiatives came up. It seems to be the consensus of the members that the increased awareness and focus on women's right is a good thing, but that it can be hard to apply due to cultural differences. By cultural differences, it is referred to gender discrimination excused by cultural norms and attitudes. One major concern of the focus group is that although the legal guidelines are there, but there is a problem with social attitudes in particular communities. This cannot be changed by global initiatives.

Farani tells me her organisation cooperates with national and district level gender-based violence forums, to do campaigns raising awareness.
"At a district level, gender-based violence forums include sectors such as the police, law enforcement, the medical community, ministries and civil society. We all come together to discuss specific cases and how to handle them."
- Farani, 11.10.18.

These forums do receive donor support, which they themselves must apply for. In the past they have received funding from instances such as Oak, the EU, and the US. They also team up with particular private organisations in the private sector in order to obtain funding. An example is how they have teamed up with tea plantations in order to work towards improving women's working conditions there. Farani says the only problem they have related to international and national funding is: "sometimes it hurts when it [the funding] has to end." As an example, she explains that the EU recently funded a project on women's participation to end gender-based violence in the North of Sri Lanka. The project was based around the new empowerment of women; how to empower them to come forward, and then how to use this power in order to build a new lie for themselves. As a result of this empowerment campaign and workshops, eight women were elected for a political committee in the local structure.

Farani goes on saying she hopes they can implement the same program and workshops in other parts of the country, but they need to find funding alternatives now that the EU no longer is part of the program. She does believe international cooperation is important on two

levels: firstly, international cooperation provides instruments to make countries ratify the Human Rights Acts; there are standards set for individual counties, and a close cooperation will make sure these frameworks are actually followed, by government making budget changes and other alterations to help better the situation for women. These international frameworks help to further highlight the problems and bring focus to holding someone accountable for minimizing the issues. Secondly, Farani says her organisation still work closely with Care International, which is the organization they started out as a branch of. Care International's international campaigns provide an opportunity for Farani and her team to replicate these campaigns in Sri Lanka. She believes the knowledge they gain through global initiatives is very helpful to how they implement changes in local communities.

Both the focus group and Govardhan inform me that they work closely with the organisation Women in Need (WIN). A lot of the participants says cases gets referred to WIN, because they are able to provide regional centres and professional counselling. Counselling is something the organisations interviewed do not primarily offer, if at all. Thus, is cooperation with a team such as WIN is crucial, in order to ensure survivors are provided with the psychological support needed. Govardhan also mentions cooperating with organisations like CED Sri Lanka, the Cybercrime division, Child Protection Services, CCC helpline, and Family Planning services. Govardhan and his team work at a grassroots level, and thus prefer all cooperation to be national or local. They have however done some cooperation with Women on Web, though specifically regarding gaining information on medical abortions, which are still banned in Sri Lanka.

3.5 Education as a potential solution

Finally, the last theme identified, is the one the participants, and I, consider to be a possible solution to the causes of sexualized violence. Though the causes and effects of such violence are very complex, all participants brought attention to the importance of education as a tool to solve the issue of sexualized violence. This includes both education of adult men and women, as well as education for younger children, even campaigning for it to be part of school's curriculum. They believe the education must focus on topics such as how to treat women with respect, how to recognize toxic relationships, and increase awareness to fight toxic masculinity and other gender stereotypes. Chetna says:

"*Change cannot be done in a short time. Laws are in place, people should be punished*

according to the law, but it does not always happen."
- Chetna, 10.10.18.

What Chetna refers to is that the legal framework is already there, but it is limited to the books; it does not always work when put into action. The long court processes mean women are always reliving the case. Women who were raped when they were as young as four years old, will now be twenty years old and still wait as their case is going through the court system. The focus group also agree a new issue is that the lawyers will now make sexual advances to the victim-survivor now that she is grown, causing further victimization. There is what they describe as "a big gap" in the legal system, with the rape cases being dragged out. No verdict is given and thus, no justice. They believe this is another manifestation of not taking female survivors seriously.

There is also a problem with attitudes, which has already been discussed under previous themes. Chetna stresses that rape does not mean you are "gone" or "ruined". Organisations aiming to help women work with changing these culturally based attitudes and believe education about women's true worth is the only solution. A huge problem within such a patriarchal culture, is that powerful people protect each other; or rather, men help protect other men. Chetna brings up an example, which is that if a lawyer rapes someone, the case will be dismissed. This is because his connections within the justice system. Brija brings attention to how "slang" language is used to objectify women further and encourage sexist attitudes, including how men sometimes call women a "piece", like an object. For instance, if a woman works abroad to support her family, she will be called a "Dubai piece".

Brija goes on to say "Education is needed to teach men how to respect women and girls." Civil society organisations proposed to the government to include respect for girls into the school curriculum; the focus group tells me proudly how the proposal went through, and it is now part of preschool education in certain schools. Brija also mentions she has also noticed self-defence programmes and the use of pepper spray becoming more common; women are taking it upon themselves to avoid or be prepared for sexual attacks. It is also important to make sure individuals who work with public services keep educating themselves on how to handle sexualized violence. Farani tells me police officers sometimes attend the programs, so women can see the faces of those who are in a position to help them. This will help build women's trust in the judicial system and encourage them to report the violence they have experienced.

Another part of their aim to further educate all parts of society, is the intention to strengthen the Ministry of Women's Affairs and linking them to local communities, as well as working with women leaders. Farani says although educate and change is important, sometimes when attempting to create a specific new plan, it will be easier to look at an already existing plan and asking: what more needs to be implemented? Then, they draft a proposal with a link to this already existing plan. This makes the process more sustainable, and the result will not be that dramatically different from existing action plans. They always look at the International Human Rights convention as well, in order to point specifically to what points needs to be implemented better. Although this method will not ensure any radical change to happen immediately, it is a safe approach in order to take steps in the right direction, in a way ministers will be able to handle.

Govardhan and his team focus greatly on education; which to him is the only real solution to the issue of attitudes and ignorance. He is not a big fan of campaigns and marches, and instead believes "this only makes the people who are marching feel better without having any real consequences for the people who are suffering". Real change must go deeper, starting with education. The NGO Govardhan works for, conduct sexual harassment workshops, for example one on prevention of sexual harassment in the work place. He says that, like the overall judicial system, companies will sometimes have a good policy on paper, but not in practice. Govardhan also works with providing support for people living with HIV through supporting organisations and sex work outlets with training and financial aid and helping them write proposals for policy changes if necessary. Govardhan keeps coming back to the importance of delivering information in a language people understand, in order to give them access to all their options.

Govardhan wants to build a better education system, with the primary focus being on early emotional development, and sexual health education programs. So far, they have helped model the curriculum in more than 60 schools. What he wants from new policies in school, is that they deal with gender stereotypes, patriarchy and sexism at every level of society. This is something children must learn to recognize from an early age. However, he also hopes it is not too late to provide the same kind of educational programs for individuals in the police and law enforcement. Govardhan states that: "Toxic masculinity needs to be undone." Following such a statement, it is important to remember there are different kinds of masculinities; some are dominant or allied, whilst other are subordinate. There are also different femininities. The emphasis of this approach is that there is a role of norms, rules, beliefs and ideas which

influence expectations for social behaviour. Structural violence often limits a person's agency. Even in armed conflict, men assume different masculine identities (Leatherman, 2011). Some husbands support their wives regardless of their injuries in war, including rape, without respect to customary/gendered expectations that might lead them to do otherwise. The idea of masculinity is relational and does not exist in and of itself. Hyper-masculinity exaggerates non-catastrophic masculinities and draws on excessive forms of toughness (Leatherman, 2011).

The process of undoing toxic masculinity is one which must be started from scratch. Govardhan does not necessarily focus on women when he speaks about the consequences of toxic masculinity; it hurts everyone. His main focus is finding a way to promote human dignity and respect. In order to fight deep-rooted toxic masculinity, Govardhan says:
"*I only believe in long-term strategies, that need to be taught from a young age. And yes, schools provide a good structure for this kind of education, but parents must also be involved and cooperate, as attitudes are also shaped in the home and community*."
Govardhan, 12.10.18.

This is a change that will not happen overnight. Although they have successfully helped modify some of the school's curriculum, Govardhan says it is too early to tell if this education will provide any good results. The attitudes must be evaluated throughout a person's life, to get accurate evidence regarding the success of these programs. Govardhan stated that "a homegrown response is the best response." He elaborated that he does believe it is important to have an international standard and guide on how to treat each other as humans; however, he considers the danger in having an international stance is that it will limit the development of homegrown initiatives. Govardhan remarked that whilst international responses are helpful, they are pointless if they cannot or will not be followed locally. He considers the challenge to be greed and corruption. We must take values which has come from inside the system, like sexism, toxic masculinity and discrimination, and instead turn it around to focus on other values, such as humanity and compassion.

Chapter 4

Discussion of findings

In this chapter, I discuss the findings discovered throughout my analysis in light of existing academic work and literature. I do this in order to better understand my own findings in relation to an international context and current research challenges. The participants seemed to be in a consensus on most of the major themes identified in the analysis, though on a select view their opinions also varied. I will discuss both the similarities and differences of my findings. The participants agreed on the biggest challenges when working with survivors is the patriarchal society as well as the stigmatisation women face once they step forward, causing them to remain silent about the abuse they have suffered. Govardhan made an interesting remark, which can be seen as part of the opening quote of my thesis, about how "Misogyny and sexism […] is a global issue but is perhaps not as hidden in Sri Lanka as it is in the West". Of course, the question of patriarchy and how it affects women living in patriarchal societies (as most societies still are), has also been a big part of the discussion in Western academic literature.

4.1 The patriarchy and cultural challenges

Women are traditionally subordinated in both the productive and reproductive spheres of the global economy under the institutions of hegemonic patriarchy. Unpaid labour for women, such as child rearing and caring for elderly, is normalized. This extends into other realms, i.e. Non-responsibility for exploitation of labours who are not directly under employment of multinational corporations, like sweatshops (Leatherman, 2011). The divide between public and private is also marked by development of male-oriented human rights protections in the public sphere, which is where they work and engage in politics. In return, it lacks the legal protections in the private sphere for women (Leatherman, 2011). Women are thus left vulnerable to inequalities, both within and outside of the home. The patriarchy as a concept is not "easy" to sustain, it is not the "natural" state of things; quite the opposite, it requires great effort, which women also participate in (Leatherman, 2011). Leatherman goes on to write that sexual violence is a key tool in arsenal of the global political economy of war; it is a political strategy, deciding who remains in control and what assets are theirs. It is interesting

that Govardhan considers the challenges with patriarchy in Sri Lanka, to be not too different from the challenges most societies have.

Unlike Govardhan, in my interview with Farani she identified Tamil/Hindu and Muslim culture to be potentially more patriarchal than Singhalese culture, which she believed makes it more difficult for women in these communities to step forward. Indeed, there are differences in impact on different survivors, as social construction of gender varies across cultures, thus perceptions of victim-survivors and perpetrators of sexual violence may differ, as will the consequences. For example, women might experience forced pregnancy, whilst men do not. In many cultures, women internalize rape as though she is guilty for it happening. The help she receives after the incident, depends to prevailing cultural norms and practices (Leatherman, 2011). There might be truth to both Govardhan and Farani's point of views. Scholars do identify the Global North as patriarchal, but researchers have also pointed to a failure to address the collective sustenance of cultures of tolerance that tends to underscore sexually violent encounters (Carmody and Carrington, 2000).

Researchers call for a need to redefine policy initiatives within a framework that acknowledges the power of cultural constructions of femininity and masculinity, and in turn develop multi-level prevention strategies (Carmody and Carrington, 2000). We must focus on challenging cultural norms that normalize intimate sexual violence as "natural" or "exaggerated" expression of innate male sexuality. Rape prevention strategies ought to be concerned with the promotion of a normative basis for the inculcation of sexual ethical conduct. What is important, is the need for men to reject the language that constructs women as orifice and stigmatizes women who find pleasure through sexuality (Carmody and Carrington, 2000). We all need to promote a cultural intolerance for unethical sexual practices, and recent efforts by international community sought to address wartime sexual violence (Palermo and Peterman, 2011).

In March 2007: UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict body launched to coordinate efforts across 13 UN entities and increase efforts to end sexual violence in armed conflict, as well as call for rigorous research including enhanced data collection on wartime sexual violence. Standard reporting and data collection tend to be compromised in situations of civil unrest, but our understanding of sexual violence dynamics is particularly poor (Palermo and Peterman, 2011). Flawed estimates are often perpetuated due to desire to provide numbers to illustrate the magnitude of violence, such as: sources of bias and limitations, due to macro-level and micro-level constraints. Macro-level constraints include logistical barriers to

collecting large-scale nationally-representative surveys. The majority of available databases come from reports to law enforcements or record reviews at health facilities, which is lower than true prevalence (Palermo and Peterman, 2011). Until recently, sexualized violence was considered a "feminist" research agenda.

4.2 Sexual violence: fear, stigma, and re-victimisation

Despite sexual violence gaining more international attention, there is still the problem of stigmatisation and fear of re-victimisation. All the interview participants agreed this is an ongoing key problem. We know these are also problems faced in all countries on a global scale. Sexual violence in household surveys is often underreported due to stigma, shame, and fear of disclosure (Palermo and Peterman, 2011). We must recognize that there is a very real possibility that there has been a lack of acknowledgement of these limitations caused by underreporting, particularly in cases where the perpetrator was someone close to the victim-survivors, by human rights advocacy groups, policy institutions and journalists. Thus, it is somewhat reassuring to see the NGOs in my study recognizing stigmatization and fear as such a continuing major problem.

Farani also pointed out the lack of social support for survivors within their families and communities as a big factor as to why some remain silent about their abuse. Whilst the effects of rape do vary, the documented harm is extreme. Long-term emotional and psychological harm is common, including risk of suicide; which are among the reasons why rape is sometimes referred to as a "crime worse than death" (Faucette, 2012). The brutality of these crimes has sometimes resulted in death or permanent physical harm, including sterility. Children resulting from rape tend to be stigmatized, and their mothers ostracized from family and community. HIV infections are another serious potential consequence (Faucette, 2012). These are concerns faced both by local NGO workers such as those I interviewed, as well as concerns that receive international attention and are subjects of study.

The participants expressed different ways of reaching out to the survivors of violence. Grassrooted has a big online platform, whilst MDL and Chrysalis do more travelling to rural areas to reach out to known victim-survivors. Whilst it might feel safer and easier for some to make online contact, especially as it allows you to avoid the fear of having to face someone in person to talk about the abuse you have experienced, for others it might be physically impossible to reach out online. Some of the more poor and rural areas might not have access to internet or a computer. The issue of NGO outreach has also been discussed in literature.

Edwards and Fowler (2011) discuss the problems of poor scale of outreach, and how at times there is serious doubts regarding NGOs abilities to reach out to the very poorest of society. Unlike civil society groups that are not dependent on foreign aid, NGOs will find it difficult to embark on directions that differ from those which governments and official aid agencies expect, or will tolerate (Edwards and Fowler, 2011). NGOs have a crucial role to play in encouraging the transferability of such informal networks into organized community groups that will be key players in civil society and municipal and national politics. The interview participant working for Chrysalis, spoke of how the work she does on gender-based violence and discrimination end up influencing political reforms. One of the examples were how women factory workers' rights to maternity leave were to be secured the same way as women in government jobs, as well as factory workers earning the right to a five-minute break to sit down for every hour they work.

4.3 NGOs: failing women?

Women-focused NGOs such as those interviewed for this research, have expanded dramatically since 1975 (Desai, 2002). Desai states informal activism is often born out of deprivation, exhaustion and disadvantage; it still contributes to women's conscious sense of political agency and helps breaks chains of victimhood. For instance, MDL was established six years after the Sri Lankan civil war broke out. This is a testament to how NGOs in developing countries are often central to empowerment efforts. They provide good starting points for examining the relationship between politics, gender, empowerment and NGOs (Desai, 2002).

NGOs are also increasingly being drawn into the welfare state service provision, which means reducing state fiscal crisis and institutional constraints. They are thus filling gaps left by the state. In the case of interference from NGOs or the public, pressure to abandon i.e. sexual violence in conflict appears only after the sexual violence has been discovered (Laguardia, 2017). Similarly, in order for institutional oversight to successfully prevent said sexual violence, there must be: 1) government actors who are sufficiently committed to anti-sexual violence norms that they will interfere with plans to commit such violence; and, 2) iron-clad mechanisms by which plans to commit sexual violence will be discovered (Laguardia, 2017). Though, while acceptance of human rights treaties and increasing passage of human rights legislation generated hope among NGO advocates, these formal legal outcomes have largely

proven to be "empty promises," as states have continued to engage in abuses and repression (Laguardia, 2017).

The organisations all mentioned hosting education programmes and workshops, some involving members of law enforcement and local politics. Grassrooted also advertise how they supplement existing Health and Physical Education and Science curricula (*Grassrooted*, no date). However, many NGO projects for women have failed, often due to lack of technical knowledge or poor planning (Desai, 2002). NGOs tend to stay in relatively "safe" service delivery areas. Desai notes women's participation in NGO projects are often restricted compared to men's, due to a failing to arouse male support and men dismissing women's abilities and resent having to share their skills and expertise with them.

I discovered this is true for Sri Lanka too, as the MDL focus group expressed how men are often resistant to listening to them when they arrive in local communities. Farani made a comment that "what the men say is the Gospel", which despite being a hyperbole, still strongly indicates that male voices have an easier time being heard compared to female ones. Farani also expressed deep sadness for some of the projects which had to end at the time the funding ran out. Policy-makers often see poverty alleviation as a male problem, whilst women are rarely treated as knowing what they need. Agencies often seek to think and act on their behalf (Desai, 2002). Discriminatory attitudes of male NGO project staff sometimes limit women's active and visible participation. The effectiveness of the NGO sector is at risk if it does not support the young women and their emerging gender issues in the changing world of cities such as Bombay (Desai, 2002). NGOs need to overcome internal obstacles that inhibit their ability to support the informal and formal politics required to address the challenges of progressive social transformation. NGOs cannot afford to ignore women's informal policies; if they do, they will lose their constituency and their grassroots effectiveness. Whilst NGOs have achieved many micro-level successes, but the systems and structures that determine power and resource allocations (locally, nationally and globally) remain intact.

The issue of a lack of both a familial and official support system for survivors of sexual violence was discussed in all my interviews. The topic of sexual violence is still very much a taboo one, making the women feel isolated and alone with their experiences. The NGOs interviewed all work towards making sure the survivors know they are not alone and that they have nothing to be ashamed of. Still, support services and legal aid are rarely provided to women. Even the international justice system in its present form lacks a consideration of privilege, and in turn miss several opportunities to further inquire into how societal resources

are channelled in ways that privilege and protect some while toleration the disadvantage and vulnerability of others (St. Germain and Dewey, 2013). The common failure to be respectful of needs and concerns of individuals from marginalized communities, leads to these individuals' diverse experiences being obscured. Victim-survivors face a double set of marginalizing forces; the first at the time of assault, then via a national and international criminal justice system. Sonia Lawrence (2004) stated:
"*Some women have been left behind, and some women are being harmed by initiatives that have benefitted others*"
(quoted in St. Germain and Dewey, 2013:39).

The limitations of current prosecution-oriented responses include how little attention given to gendered geographies, histories and cultures. The rape law reform movement has been criticized for lack of feminist sensitivities, designed to address sexual violence according to gender-neutral standards and do not reflect reality (St. Germain and Dewey, 2013). Dynamics of sexual violence in conflict zones is different from assaults in peacetime. The larger scale of rape in conflict zone, means there is also a larger number of perpetrators and survivors. It is difficult to measure the scale of rape and assaults during the Sri Lankan civil war, as the government still denies many of the attack ever took place, but we do know they did happen. The women of the MDL focus group discussed how sexual violence appears to be on an increase after the end of the war, but that this might be simply because now that the war is over, society can again focus on crimes such as rape and gender-based violence. These issues got, in a way, "lost" in the violent conflict, with the consensus of the focus group being they were not considered important enough to pay any attention to when the war was still on-going. Now, during a time of peace, these issues can finally be given a greater attention.

4.5 Awareness campaigns and their (lack of?) impact

Govardhan was the only participant to express that he felt campaigning and marches were "pointless". He believed such actions are only really helpful in making the protesters feel better about themselves, without bringing about any real change. However, the others all recognise the importance of awareness campaigns, especially as a way for victim-survivors to discover what help is available to them. Awareness about sexual violence and its effects, and clinical care for survivors of rape, needs to be part of the training curricula of health-care providers, including nurses and midwives (Garcia-Moreno, 2014). This includes both on a

local and global scale, although seeking out health services in the local community may serve the most sufficient and, in some cases, may be the only option, for the majority of women. There is a need to develop low-intensity, evidence-based mental health interventions for survivors which do not rely on specialists. As stigma, shame and lack of information can all be factors preventing women from seeking help, it is important to engage in community-based interventions built on local initiatives, and make sure anonymity is protected (Garcia-Moreno, 2014). There is also an urge for a complication of the straightforward binary frequently drawn between international and local perspectives. In the context of international involvement in post-conflict societies, there seems that too often is only select voices endorsed or engaged with; usually the voices that reflect what the international community expects or wants to hear (Grewal, 2012).

Failure to produce genuine local engagement leads to a limited understanding of the various complex, and locally contested, factors at play within both conflict and post-conflict contexts. In international contexts, the lives of women are too often only considered part of a crisis only when they are harmed in a way that is seen to demean the whole of their social group or the honour of a community. Other forms of systematic violence against women do not constitute a crisis for international lawyers but is merely seen as part of status quo (Grewal, 2012). Historically, there are limited resources made available for raped girls and women; usually, affront was to her father, husband or family, not to the raped girl herself (Leatherman, 2011). She could sometimes be married to her rapist, rejected by family, tainted, and devalued.

The consequences of war-time rape on and to girls, is difficult to document; establishing reliable numbers of incidence both historically and in contemporary conflict is highly challenging (Leatherman, 2011). Despite the disagreement between Govardhan and the other participants regarding campaigning, they did agree on one thing: education is the only real solution to the issue of sexualized violence. Of course, education can also occur through campaigns, as we have seen with campaigns aimed at changing attitudes and bringing attention to a criminal issue. One recent example is the #MeToo campaign, bringing great awareness to sexual harassment at the work place. The education mentioned by my interview participants also did include education aimed at changing existing attitudes in older people, specifically men, though the primary target seems to be to educate children as young as primary school on how to treat each other with respect.

There needs to be a general awareness of sexual violence and its consequences implemented into society, through education and information about the situation. In some countries, this

can often be seen through the commitment to the notion of “never again” (Danieli, 2009). The dedication to “never again” is however more relevant to incidents such as the Rwandan genocide and the mass rape of women as a way to instrument the destruction of an entire people. The ultimate goal of any initiative that addresses conflict-related, and peace-time, sexual violence should involve transformation of wider cultural frameworks in ways that actively engage men as partners (St. Germain and Dewey, 2013).

The education programmes mentioned by the participants in my study, focus on changing particularly the attitudes of young boys as well as adult males. The attitudes of men in how to treat and respect women as individuals with equal worth, is what needs to change. However, one of the pressing issues in rape prevention education is whether negative attitudes, knowledge or behaviour are amenable to change, and if so, is it lasting? Most researchers found an attitude change to rape following education programs; however, they noted a variation in how this was achieved (Carmody and Carrington, 2000). Something more alarming is whether or not the very attitudes and behaviours at odds with ethical sexual behaviour can be exacerbated by the “quick-fix” workshop approach to rape preventing education stereotypes unintentionally reinforced among the cohort? (Carmody and Carrington, 2000). Public education strategies are a potential tool in challenging victim-blaming attitudes and providing more knowledge to the community. Many public education programmes are endorsed by government and seen as major initiatives in preventing sexual violence. National, state, and local campaigns are also possible tools sponsored by government to raise general public awareness of domestic violence, sexual violence and child abuse (Carmody and Carrington, 2000). The impact of education in changing personal behaviour is in need of further research, as the preventive impact is still unknown. Still, education programs in school are consistently identified as a key strategy for reducing violence in society (Carmody and Carrington, 2000).

During the focus groups, Chetna made an interesting comment that
“Change can’t be done in a short time, even if the laws are in place. We need to change attitudes, not just laws."
- Chetna, 10.10.18.

She expanded on this by saying that it is too easy for people to simply ignore the law, especially when individuals working within the law enforcements continue to re-victimise sexual-violence survivors. When you go to the police station to report a rape, only to be raped

again by the officers, or told what happened to you was deserved, how can you keep faith in the law and in a fair criminal justice system? Chetna ended her statement by saying that if the law is just writing on paper but not reflected in the attitudes of the people, then it is worthless. Law cannot address everything; purposes such as humiliation, ostracism, or reputation-based harm can only be effectively eradicated through cultural change and education (Faucette, 2012). If men believe rape is acceptable, this immediate social understanding will contribute more to their actions than some vague understanding of international law. Though it is important to note that one of law's primary intents *is also* to change attitudes and shape the morals and behaviours of the people (Ashworth and Zedner, 2014). Law is not developed only to punish, but just as much to cause deterrence and harm prevention; from keeping the harm from happening in the first place. Demands for public protection, the influence of a precautionary approach, and legal powers and measures with which to prevent harms are all prominent features of contemporary criminal justice (Ashworth and Zedner, 2014).

Gendered violence is intimately linked to the production of meaning within a larger social discourse; as part of a socio-political economy which is premised on inequality and "on the desire to control women's sexuality" (Saris and Lofts, 2009). A "collective understanding of, and responsibility for, this type of violence as a socially constructed phenomenon is key to changing the status quo". Many survivors, especially women emphasized the importance of rehabilitation, and access to healthcare, psychological care or other social services (Saris and Lofts, 2009). In other words, the criminal justice service is thus not the only section in need of change; there needs to be developments in healthcare and other social services too, to offer the support necessary for the rehabilitation of survivors.

4.6 Global development of female empowerment

Finally, the last finding I will discuss is that some of the participants considered international cooperation more important than others. The women of MDL as well as Farani, had faith in the potential of international campaigns sometimes being successfully replicated into Sri Lanka. However, Govardhan's team only cooperates on a national level, because he believes in building unique responses for Sri Lanka, which can't be replicated from anywhere else. This belief is expressed in the final section of the analysis, and in the initial quote for the thesis: "A homegrown response is the best response". He states that if the response to sexual violence is tailored to fit the local cultural context of a specific place, it will have a better chance of succeeding. The other participants expressed that having international standards and

guidelines to follow makes it easier to implement similar programmes in Sri Lanka as well, even if they do need to be changed slightly or presented to communities differently. Especially the participant working for Chrysalis, which was previously part of Care International, said that their continuing co-operation with Care has helped inspire and develop campaigns and workshops in a quick and effective way.

Some existing literature also touches on the issue of implementing international standards to local communities. As transnational justice has been an increasingly important feature of international community discourse in the post-Cold War period, International Courts are frequently being identified as playing an important role. However, whilst rape in conflict is a global problem, research suggests the extent and intentions varies according to local circumstances and might need local solutions (Alcorn, 2014). Though international guidelines might prove beneficial as a starting point when developing local programmes, they might need to be tailored and change in order to be successful. International programmes on sexual violence are also still flawed in their approaches and results on sexual-violence cases, meaning following these standards might not even prove very advantageous at all. However, the fact that international standards such as those developed by the UN exist at all, is potentially enough to change both state practices and the minds of the people (Laguardia, 2017). While formal sanctions may themselves be rather ineffective at deterring potential criminals, the shame associated with those sanctions may have a strong deterrent effect (Laguardia, 2017).

Overall, International Courts established are considered to have potential for developing recognition and protection of women's rights in conflict and post-conflict, as well as peacetime (Grewal, 2012). One of the overall effects of including violations against women in the international human rights rubric is that women gain power; they may use this to expand their role outside of the Tribunals and address root causes of such violations. In other words, women bring the new power gained with them to develop local tools to deal with community issues, independent of the International Courts and community. Campaigns and workshops which inspires women to engage in local politics and parliaments were mentioned by both MDL and Chrysalis, though this could be considered part of a local development in Sri Lanka rather than merely inspiration from feministic global developments.

Chapter 5

Conclusion and suggestions for further research

The Sri Lankan civil war lasted from 1983 to 2009. Naturally, the effects of the war were dire, and can still be felt a decade after its end. Records of sexual attacks, especially against minority ethnic groups, are scarce, as the government continues to deny many of the attacks that took place. Despite these denials, The United Nations did find evidence which "strongly indicated" that war crimes were committed in Sri Lanka during the civil war and established a special "hybrid" international court to investigate individuals responsible for the worst crimes, which was argued against by the President and the incumbent who claimed such matters could be more successfully settled domestically (Burke and Perera, 2015; ucanews, 2019). After the end of the war, the participants of my study express a belief that sexual violence against women is on the increase. Due to underreporting, both during the war and after, some of the participants of my study expressed that it was hard to establish whether sexual violence is in fact more common today, or if more women are simply speaking out as the topic is being more openly discussed and acknowledged.

Literature does however point to cultural changes brought about by feminist 'discursive activism' around rape in the 1970s and 1980s (Young, 1997). From around the late 1970s, rape began to feature more frequently in popular culture, such as day-time television and magazines, marketed towards women (Cuklanz, 2000). These new representations "accepted and reproduced important feminist claims that rape was common, harmful and a social problem that affected ordinary women and deserved to be taken seriously" (Cuklanz, 2000). As the decade continued, these representations found their way into increasingly influential media forums, such as prime time television and major newspapers (Serisier, 2018). Following these developments of cultural and legal changes related to sexual violence, today speaking of sexual violence, and breaking the silence and taboos surrounding it, can be an incredibly empowering experience for many women, and used as a way of reclaiming subjectivity and agency after the initial experience of violence (Serisier, 2018). As the taboos

of speaking out about sexual violence diminishes, it seems only natural more women share their stories, both publicly and privately.

International law is also beginning to recognize men and women do not experience political violence in the same way (Saris and Lofts, 2009). Women are subjected to sexual violence more systematically, as well as other violations more specific to their gender, including reproductive violence and other forms of domestic enslavement (Saris and Lofts, 2009). Conflict-related sexual violence has become a major research area across disciplinary fields and a hot spot on the international policy agenda (Houge, 2015).

Feminist victimology has provided different explanations for why these abuses of women occur. Violence against women in conflicts has become a powerful image and tool for advocacy groups, politicians and policymakers. Rape can constitute crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide. The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 requests there should be a zero tolerance of rape and sexual violence in armed conflict. SCR 1888 adds to SCRs 1325 and 1820 in so much that it mandates peace keeping missions to protect women and children from sexual violence against armed conflict (Wachala, 2012). Tools that can be used to combat sexual violence against women in armed conflict includes: humanitarian law, the Genocide Convention, crimes against humanity, customary international law (in particular the rules of jus cogens and the Rome Statute). We are experiencing crumbling boundaries of criminology; physical, visual and conceptual (Pakes, 2004).

Although inroads have been made, it is still important for the international community not to be complacent about the progress made in dealing with sexual violence in armed conflict (Wachala, 2012). Women are still being sexually abused in conflict, such as the Sri Lankan civil war. Feminist scholars particularly criticize the tribunals for an inadequate number of sexual violence charges and convictions, as well as unduly short sentences. Other criticisms include delays in arrests and prosecutions, especially at the ICTR, such as The Prosecutor v. Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo, also referred to as the Bemba case (*Bemba Case*, 2019). This case took ten years from the arrest of Bemba in 2008, charging him with two counts of crimes against humanity and three counts of war crimes, until his acquittal in 2018. These delays are usually due to limited resources which makes it difficult for a tribunal to be effective in punishing violations and deterring future violations (Faucette, 2012).

5.1 Need for justice, but for *whom*?

There may at times be tensions between needs of justice and the needs of survivors. In some cases, prosecutors may ignore the stigmatization women experience if they report sexual violence, policies needed to ensure fair treatment of witnesses, balancing the need for justice and the survivors need (Faucette, 2012). Judges need proper training in the special issues that might come up around rape survivors as witnesses. Danieli (2009) emphasizes the need for multi-dimensional, multi-disciplinary, integrative framework for understanding massive trauma and its aftermath. There is something which she refers to as the "conspiracy of silence" between survivors and society. Attainment of justice has proved critical to healing for individual victim-survivors their families, societies and also entire nations. Justice involves a fair judicial process and implementation of judgment of courts, and also the complete reparation to survivors by governments and by society as a whole (Danieli, 2009). This process must include investigation of crime, identification and bringing to trial those responsible, the trial itself, punishment of those convicted, and finally appropriate restitution.

Impunity, by definition, is the opposite of justice, which might occur if survivors are encouraged to simply embrace the concept of "forgive and forget" (Danieli, 2009). Sexual crimes can be particularly difficult to document, as women tend to conceal their injuries to avoid retribution, ostracism, expulsion from refugee camps or further emotional harm. The conspiracy of silence makes it difficult to find survivors (Faucette, 2012). Aas (2010) also points to a "criminological apartheid", where criminology as a field has helped produce silence about atrocities happening both in the West, and also outside the boundaries of Western criminology. A vital task moving forward, is to disturb the hegemony of Western thought within criminology and establish some kind of "interactive globalisation" (Aas, 2010).

Brownmiller (1975:15) wrote: "rape has played a critical function. It's nothing more or less than a conscious process of intimidation by which *all* men keep *all* women in a state of fear" (quoted in Carmody and Carrington, 2000). Such a totalizing conception of masculinity leads to a number of serious methodological and conceptual difficulties, which constructs all men as criminals or potential criminals. On the flipside: equally totalizing concept of femininity, which robs women of any agency or ability to exert power, express desire, take control, resist, prevent or avoid their victimization (Carmody and Carrington, 2000). Broad women's human rights initiatives have successfully ensured that sexual violence would not be limited to formal recognition only when occurring in most extreme circumstances (such as genocide and war) (Copelon, 2011). Initiatives have made efforts to expand the positive human rights of women,

including rights to equality, to reproductive and sexual health, and participate in all spheres. Criminological researchers should include both victims, perpetrators and policy implementors in a grounded analysis seeking to establish how they make sense of and represent sexual war violence and human trafficking (Houge, 2015). Since much criminological research approaches crime and victimization in a broader sociological context, criminological perspectives may be able to offer an understanding of the complexities involved which is both broader and more nuanced, as well as pointing to potential policy implications that might remedy some of the harm caused to individuals and society (Houge, 2015).

5.2 Global impacts of NGOs local work

Generally, it seems like actions of NGOs are making an impact on a global level, as well as becoming a motor of national change (Morrison, 2006). NGOs and social movements have in important ways preceded the sanctioned legal forms of action and criminological knowledge. A focus on the local remains central to most advocates of empowerment; some members of the Development Studies community have become increasingly concerned with the role of national and global politics (Parpart et al., 2002). They question whether globalization is really a political tool for empowerment. In some cases, it does provide benefits for women, the poor and the world. However, free trade and global shifts in productivity also lead to the casualization and feminization of certain labour sectors, which results in additional burdens on women around the globe (Parpart et al., 2002). Again, this also do generate opportunities for women, though the extent of the opportunities available depend on their race and class. In civilian samples, rape is a trauma associated with the highest risks of developing PTSD and related psychiatric conditions. Non-sexual war trauma also has a severe and long-lasting impact on mental health outcomes (Kuwart et al., 2013).

We all need to promote a cultural intolerance for unethical sexual practices. Recent efforts by international community sought to address wartime sexual violence (Palermo and Peterman, 2011). We must focus on challenging cultural norms that normalize intimate sexual violence as “natural” or “exaggerated” expression of innate male sexuality. Rape prevention strategies ought to be concerned with the promotion of a normative basis for the inculcation of sexual ethical conduct. What is important, is the need for men to reject the language that constructs women as orifices and stigmatizes women who find pleasure through sexuality (Carmody and Carrington, 2000). Until recently, sexualized violence was considered a “feminist” research

agenda. Due to this, many studies were small in scale, not generalizable. Support structures are needed to assist women in the process of speaking out and claiming reparations. Supporting the empowerment of women and girls through their active participation in decision-making is crucial to successful reparation programmes. We should feel obliged to empower women and girls to determine for themselves the means of reparation best suited for their situation (Saris and Lofts, 2009). It is necessary that we seek nothing less than the eradication of rape as a weapon of war, through global campaign to end impunity for perpetrators, to deter and prevent sexual violence, to support and recognize survivors, and change global attitudes that fuel these crimes (Kirby, 2015).

5.3 Feminism in globalisation

Feminist theory and feminist movements have both matured substantially, as there is now a greater visibility of transnational women's struggles and movements. Economically and politically, we can see a declining power of self-governance among certain poorer nations, which is matched by the rising significance of transnational institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and governing bodies such as the EU (Mohanty, 2003). Also, a rise of religious fundamentalisms (which tend to be deeply masculinist and often racist rhetoric) poses a huge challenge for feminist struggles around the world. The increasing militarization, and masculinization, of the globe pose profound contradictions in the lives of communities of women and men in most parts of the world (Mohanty, 2003). These political shifts to the right, accompanied by global capitalist hegemony, privatization and increased religious, ethnic and racial hatreds, continue to pose very concrete challenges for feminists.

The focus now should be on an anti-capitalist transnational feminist practice, as well as the possibilities of cross-national feminist solidarity and organizing against capitalism (Mohanty, 2003) Globalization has always been part of capitalism but at this time Mohanty believes the theory, critique and activism around anti-globalization has to be the key focus for feminists. However, this does not mean the patriarchal and racist relations and structures that accompany capitalism are any less problematic now (Mohanty, 2003). The feminist-as-explorer model argues that the "foreign" woman is the object and subject of knowledge, and the larger intellectual project is entirely about countries other than the United States; here, the local and global is defined as non-Euro-American (Mohanty, 2003). The distance from "home" is fundamental to the definition of international in this framework; it does involve an

"us and them" attitude, yet can provide a deeper, more contextual understanding of feminist issues in discretely defined geographical and cultural spaces (Mohanty, 2003). The feminist solidarity or comparative feminist studies model is based on the premise that the local and the global are not defined in terms of physical geography but exist simultaneously and constitute each other (Mohanty, 2003).

5.4 The global: a new site for collective action

The relationships between the local and the global are foregrounded; these links are conceptual, material, temporal, and contextual. It emphasizes on relations of mutuality, co-responsibility, and common interests. The global is becoming a site of collective action for disempowered actors, and not only international elites (Aas, 2010). The focus is not just on the intersections of race, class, gender, nation and sexuality in different communities of women, but also on mutuality and co-implication (Mohanty, 2003). It focuses on the individual as well as the collective experiences of oppression and exploitation. The lives and interests of marginalized communities of women make the workings of power visible; colonized peoples must know themselves and the colonizer. There are casual links between marginalized social locations and experiences, and the ability of human agents to explain and analyse features of capitalist society (Mohanty, 2003). Girls and women around the world bear the brunt of globalization, as poor women and girls are hardest hit by the degradation of environmental conditions, wars, famines, privatization of services and deregulation of governments (Mohanty, 2003).

In conclusion, as I set out to explore how local NGOs work with survivors of sexual violence in a post-conflict society, I found that the local NGOs I interviewed work in quite different ways. As a result of these differences, the answer to my first sub-question, which asked to what extent local NGOs are able to incorporate international guidelines, is that it varies depending on the organisation and the circumstances. While they all travel around the country and provide workshops and education programmes, Chrysalis focuses mostly on empowering women and secure their right as workers, as well as campaigning for political reforms and helping to develop them. Grassrooted focuses less on campaigning, and more on education programmes; not just related to women and sexual violence, but also on sexual health,

different sexualities, and gender-identity. MDL, as a mix of different women-focused organisations, naturally had a mix of different areas they focus on. The women from MDL mentioned actively reaching out to known survivors of sexual violence, in order to provide further support. Though none of the organisations I interviewed offers counselling services, they will refer the survivors to someone who does. They will also encourage and help the women file a police report, and on their way forward within the criminal justice service.

The NGOs agreed that having international guidelines as a standard on how to approach sexual violence may be useful, though not necessarily provide a ready-to-use fit to be implemented in Sri Lanka. In general, if they were to follow international guidelines, they do need to be changed to fit the cultural and local context of their society. Despite the law incriminating rape, it is the attitudes of the people, as well as law enforcement, which needs to be worked on. Part of the intentions of formal laws and sanctions, including those developed on a global scale, are just that; to shape the attitudes and morals of the people. Rather than taking action from the outside, some have argued that instilling human rights norms in government actors could lessen the likelihood of human rights violations, such as torture. One might hope that violent crimes such as sexual violence will cease to exist if those who are in a position to commit these crimes are socialized to view such behaviour as "unimaginable" (Laguardia, 2017).

My second sub-question was what the greatest challenges of the NGOs were when working with survivors of sexual violence. The consensus was that the biggest challenges were primarily the issues of stigmatisation, re-victimisation, and the overall patriarchal structure of Sri Lankan culture and society. The attitudes and beliefs underpinning these issues, can only be changed through education, focusing on changing the attitudes of the people, especially men and younger boys. Recent development sees a change in primary school curriculum in some Sri Lankan schools, where boys will be taught how to respect girls from an early age. The curriculum is still too new to know if it will have any long-lasting results. Though change must be rooted in local laws and attitudes, international laws and guidelines do seem to have had a positive effect on the Sri Lankan society. Speaking out loud about crimes such as sexual violence, though still stigmatised, is becoming more accepted, both on a global and national scale.

Finally, I would recommend further research to perhaps focus on how not just how NGOs work, but also how national Governments implement internationally recommended programmes on how to response to, and end, sexualized violence. Importantly, within the

field of criminology, there needs to be the specific development of a criminology more capable of considering, both theoretically and empirically, crime and justice in the “global South”, as suggested by Donnermeyer *(*Donnermeyer, 2017). Issues focusing on women and their rights, particularly in the Global South, have traditionally received very little attention and funding. Whilst the attention to these issues, through development of theories such as feminist victimology, and the funding provided have developed and grown the last decades, it would still be interesting to further study recent developments in Government responses in the global South related to these problems.

In cases where governments have little to no response to these issues, how do NGOs work around the challenges of no support and funding? This was briefly touched upon in my research but could benefit from a bigger-scale study with more participants, and perhaps include several different countries in the Global South for a better comparison, rather than just a small generalisation. Some Western studies, such as one in Australia conducted by Carmody and Carrington (2000) have researched attitudes to sexual violence and programmes working on challenging them, and something similar could also be beneficial in regards to mapping how attitudes and views on developments regarding gender-issues and sexual violence are progressing in the Global South. Like Chetna said, change must be about a change in attitudes, as well as the law. The intention of the social deterrence of the law includes improving people, and the preventive powers of the modern criminal law are grounded upon the assumption that it is possible to inhibit would-be harm-doers before they cause the prohibited harm (Ashworth and Zedner, 2014). We may consider what it means when a powerful international organisation such as the UN are sending a strong message that "sexual violence is unacceptable"; it is a big step in making people *believe* and *internalize* that it is indeed unacceptable. Whilst it seems impossible that every individual offender will ever be fully deterred from committing a crime, that does not mean getting the issue of sexual violence on the global agenda has not proved helpful and influential many places around the world.

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Appendix

1.1 Consent Form

This is a form asking for your consent to be part of a research project concerning sexualized violence against women in Sri Lanka. The aim of the project is to gain knowledge on how women in Sri Lanka are helped locally after experiencing sexual violence. The information gathered as part of this research will be analyzed in light of existing literature on the topic. The main focus of the research is how local initiatives may or may not be better suited than international ones when working with survivors of sexual violence. The project will end before June 2019.

By signing this consent form, you confirm you understand that Ida Velde, a student at the University of Oslo, is collecting information for the purpose of a master's degree thesis on the subject of *Sexualized violence against women in conflict,* with the focus on local support organizations for women in Sri Lanka. You hereby agree to be interviewed for this purpose when Ms. Velde visits Colombo in October 2018. You understand that you have been asked to participate in this research due to your position at _____ (organization). The only information that will be gathered about you personally, is your work with _____ and your ethnic background.
Your participation will consist of an interview with Ms. Velde, where you will be asked questions related to the topic previously described. The interview questions will mainly focus on how women reach out to you/your organization and the help they may receive. Whilst the questions may ask about typical and general examples, they will never be regarding any specific situation or persons. The interview is estimated to take 30 minutes, though this may vary. Your answers will be registered by taking notes, and later saved electronically on a private laptop.

You are not required to speak to Ms. Velde if you do not wish to, or to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. Your interview with Ms. Velde will be conducted privately, between yourself and Ms. Velde. Only Ms. Velde will have access to all the information you provide in the interview. She may however discuss it with her tutor at the University of Oslo. Your information will be saved on a password protected laptop and a private USB. It will be

accessed only on said private laptop, and mainly processed on a secure University of Oslo server once Ms. Velde returns to Norway. Your name and the name of your organization will be anonymized during the entire time of the project. Your information will only be stored until the end of the project; it will then be deleted. You have the right to withdraw from the project at any time until its publication. You may also email Ms. Velde any questions you may have concerning the project at any point. Finally, Ms. Velde will completely anonymize your identity. Your name and age will not be disclosed in any publication of the project.

Ms. Velde is collecting and analyzing your data due to your consent. NSD (Norwegian centre for research data AS) has on behalf of the University of Oslo considered the handling of personal data in this project to be in accordance with privacy guidelines.

Should you have any questions, or wish to exert your rights, you may contact:

- University of Oslo – The researcher: Ida Velde (ida.velde@student.jus.uio.no)
  - Project tutor: Kjersti Lohne (kjersti.lohne@jus.uio.no)
- Privacy commissioner at University of Oslo – Maren Magnus Voll (personvernombud@uio.no)
- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS (Norwegian centre for research data AS) Email: personverntjenester@nsd.no) or phone: 55 58 21 17.

Your rights:

- You have the right to know what personal information is registered about you
- You have the right to have information regarding yourself corrected
- You have the right to have information regarding yourself deleted
- You have the right to at any point send a complaint to the Privacy commissioner at the University or to Datatilsynet regarding the treatment of your personal information.

I have received and understood the information regarding the project *Sexualized Violence against Women in Sri Lanka* and been given the opportunity to ask questions. I consent to:

- *To participate in an interview*
- *That the information I provide will be published as part of this project*

I consent to my information being studied until the end of the project, approximately June 2019.

Date and signature

1.2 Interview Questions

1. What kind of services do you provide for women who are survivors of sexual violence?

2.

a) How accessible are these services to women?

b) How do you advertise your organization?

c) How do women typically contact you?

3. Do you cooperate with any other similar organization? Local, national, or international?

4.

a) From whom do you receive financial support/funding?

b) How does it affect the work you do?

5. What is the process for how women are received once they contact you?

6.

a) How open are women regarding discussing sexual violence and abuse in Sri Lanka?

b) Are women encouraged to report sexual violence to the authorities?

7. Considering the civil war; do many women report a sexual attack by another ethnic group than their own? Do you notice any difference in how minority groups such as Tamil women are treated, compared to the majority group of Sinhalese women?

8. After the end of the civil war in 2009, did you notice any change in incidents of women reaching out to you? (If your organization was already established at this time.)

9. What do you believe is the biggest challenge when working with abused women? What can be done to make their situation better?

10. Do you believe global initiatives are helpful in terms of minimizing sexual violence against women?

1.3 Plan for researcher's health and safety

Ida Velde-Macleod

Fieldwork in Sri Lanka

8th October – 15th October.
Travel insurance: AIG travel insurance.
Passport number: 29625253

Before leaving:

- I booked an appointment with my GP, in order to get the up to date necessary vaccinations recommended.

- I planned my travelling routes via google maps, so that I already had all the addresses and means of getting there ready before visiting the different organisations.

- I saved the numbers of emergency services in Sri Lanka and the Norwegian embassy on my phone, as well as writing it down to keep in the hotel room.

- I will not bring valuable jewellery, including my wedding ring.

- I researched if I would need to dress according to a specific code or custom; however, that seemed to only be the case if visiting temples and religious sites.

During stay:

- I decided to only use official taxi services when travelling (official airport service when getting to the hotel, and recommended taxi company from the hotel reception). Buses don't have a great reputation for safe driving in Sri Lanka, so I decided against that means of public transportation.

- As recommended by gov.uk, I will only drink bottled water (including when brushing teeth).

- I will eat food in places with positive reviews by other tourists on TripAdvisor. In order to avoid stomach upsets, I will look out for under-cooked fish, salads which have been washed in unclean water, already peeled fruit if I do not know who has peeled it, and sometimes ice cream from street vendors.

- I will withdraw Euros at Oslo International Airport, in order to exchange currency at the Colombo International airport. as card payments are not recommended, and some ATMs are unsafe to use. Sri Lankan Rupi are a closed currency, meaning I cannot obtain them before entering the country.

- I will not carry all cash with me at once; most will be left in a safe at the hotel.

- In my spare time, I will only travel to tourist attraction where a lot of people frequent, such as museums, public parks and temples. I will keep a curfew and stay at the hotel after dark.

I have been in contact with the Norwegian embassy in Colombo. They know which dates I am visiting, and I have both their telephone number and email address saved.
The National Emergency telephone number is 119 and 110 if I need emergency ambulance assistance.

Embassy contact information:

49 Bullers Ln, Colombo 00500, Sri Lanka
Phone number: +94 115 608 700

Contact information while in Sri Lanka:
Ozo Colombo Sri Lanka
No. 36-38, Clifford Place, Colombo 4
Colombo, 00400 LK
Phone number: +94112555570

My contact information:
Phone Number: 94119670
Email: ida.velde@hotmail.com

ICE
William Velde-Macleod (Husband)
Contact number: +47 92077145

The plan has been created in accordance to recommendations from both the Norwegian government (https://www.regjeringen.no/no/tema/utenrikssaker/reiseinformasjon/velg-land/reiseinfo_srilanka/id2424492/) and the English government (https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/sri-lanka).