



GENDER BASED VIOLENCE: AN EXAMINATION OF ITS EFFECT ON WOMEN'S SOCIAL ECONOMIC STATUS

A SURVEY OF LANGAS ESTATE, UASIN GISHU COUNTY

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Abstract: *This study focused on gender based violence and its effect on the social women's economic status with specific reference to Langas Estate, Uasin Gishu County. The objectives were; to investigate the forms of gender based violence and its effect on women's productivity. A survey design was used in the study. The target population involved women respondents from Langas Estate, Uasin Gishu County and employees at Centre for Rights Education and Awareness. Out of the entire population, the study considered 100 women and men respondents and all employees, twenty in number at Centre for Rights Education and Awareness. Questionnaires were used to collect data from the respondents. Data was analyzed descriptively, converted in frequencies and percentages and presented in tables and charts for ease of understanding. The study established that verbal abuse was the most common form of gender based violence being experienced. Women were the most affected as established by the study findings. The study therefore recommends that the government and other stakeholders spearheading campaigns against gender based violence should increase their availability especially in the slams where gender based violence is widespread to ensure all cases are reported.*

Keywords: *Gender based violence, Women's Socioeconomic Status*

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INTRODUCTION

Background Information

Gender Based Violence (GBV) is a major public health and human rights problem involving all ages and sexes. The term “gender based violence” is widely used as a synonym for violence against women, though it also occurs among men. The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVW), defines the term “violence against women” as: “Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. According to Bagley, Christopher and Colin P. (2003), current estimates of gender based violence indicate that between 8-70% of women worldwide have been physically and sexually assaulted by a male partner at least once in their lives. In rural Ethiopia, forty nine percent of ever partnered women have ever experienced physical violence by an intimate partner, while fifty nine percent had ever experienced sexual violence. All these variations may be a consequence of underreporting, stigma, shame or other social and cultural factors that deter women from discussing episodes of violence. In a hospital based in Nairobi, the prevalence of sexual violence was 61.5%, while the proportion of physical assault was 38.5%. This study also reported that majority of the perpetrators of gender based violence were married and alcohol was a significant contributor.

Statement of the Problem

In spite of all the studies on violence against women, their documentation is almost non-existent. This may largely be due to the wide spread tolerance of such acts and lack of appropriate legal framework that protects women from gender based violence in Kenya. Members of the community in this case, Langas Estate may shy away from exposing this challenge and as such leaving the subject largely unexplored. The researcher fills this void by examining the root causes of factors influencing gender based violence against women, and examination of its effect on women’s social economic status.

Objective of the Study

- To investigate forms of gender based violence and
- To investigate the effects of gender based violence on women’s productivity



LITERATURE REVIEW

Systems theory

The study used the systems theory to be able to put the study in a theoretical perspective. A computer search of recent literature yielded an emerging area in the counseling literature. The focus is on the role of interpersonal factors characterizing violent couples. This approach is grounded in systems theory. Proponents of systems theory explain violence against intimates as a product of the family system. Within this model, the family is viewed as a dynamic organization of interdependent components (e.g., individual members) that continually interact with one another. An aggressive action by a man towards his wife, from this theoretical perspective, results in a reaction by another family member (e.g., calling police, taking refuge in a women's shelter). This, in turn, affects the probability of aggressive behavior in the future. Violence is thought to be maintained through the roles, relations and feedback mechanisms that regulate and stabilize the system. If violence is rewarded by the system, it is more likely to re-occur. Over time, the dynamic may become so established that it is challenging to interrupt. This causal explanation assumes that the unit of analysis for assessment and intervention is the family, or a subsystem within the family (e.g, the adult couple), rather than one or more individuals in isolation. For example, Wileman and Wileman (1995) found that reductions in violence were associated with the man assuming responsibility for the change but even more so with the woman's decreasing her vulnerability and taking an active role in balancing the power in the relationship.

Empirical studies

According to Kimani, (2007) In Kenya, almost half of homicide cases in 2007 were related to domestic violence. Like other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, domestic violence is a problem in Kenya probably due to the structures of domination and exploitation often peddled through the concept of patriarchy. Of the 5015 cases of domestic violence between January 1999 and December 2002 recorded at the Kenya Police Service, more than a third was due to wife battering/assault. A 1998 survey on domestic violence among women in Kenya showed that one in three had been beaten, slapped or physically abused by a current or most recent partner.

According to UNICEF, (2000) The United Nations point to several institutionalized socio-cultural factors that not only evoke, but perpetuate and re-enforce violence among women,



especially in sub-Saharan Africa including Kenya. These cultural factors, some of which include wife inheritance and dowry payments, forced marriages, widowhood rites, and female genital mutilation and have been unleashed on Kenyan women including those married, targeted at controlling their sexuality and sexual behaviors. Other factors, deeply rooted in the cultural ethos of the Kenyan society, and reflected in the socialization of men and women, are the belief in the inherent superiority of men, and the acceptance of violence as a means of resolving conflicts within relationships.

According to Brent et al., (2000) The gender inequity and power imbalances that characterize most sexual relationships are inextricably linked to the limited educational and training opportunities for women, culminating in their continuous dependence on men. Women in sub-Saharan Africa including those in Kenya have limited access to cash and credit, and to employment opportunities both in the formal and informal sectors (UNICEF, 2000; Brent et al. 2000). These render women economically disadvantaged and vulnerable to physical, emotional and sexual violence. Using data from the 2008 Ghana Demographic and Health Survey, and employing feminist, cultural and life course perspectives, this study contributes to the literature on domestic and marital violence in sub-Saharan Africa with Ghana as a case study.

In the study by Brent (2000) on violence among young female hawkers, 19.7% of women had experienced physical assault, 36.3% had received sexual harassment, while only 7.2% had emotional or psychological violence. Prevalence of wife beating among civil servants in another study was 31.3%; 42.5% of the men had been perpetrators, while 23.5% of the women had been victims. In this study, alcohol consumption and growing up in an environment where parents fight publicly were significantly associated with men beating their wives, while being young, unmarried and domestic violence between parents of the respondents were significantly associated with women being beaten.

Costs of violence against women are widespread throughout society. Every recognizable effect of violence has a cost whether it is direct or indirect. Direct costs come from the use of goods and services for which a monetary exchange is made. Direct costs exist for capital, labour and material inputs. Indirect costs stem from effects of violence against women that have an imputed monetary value even though they do not involve an actual monetary exchange, such as lost income or reduced profits. Effects of violence against women also



include intangible costs such as premature death, and pain and suffering for which there is no imputed monetary value in the economy. Costs can also be borne in the short-run or the long-run.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design constitutes the blue print for the collection, measurement and analysis of data, (Kothari, 2005). A cross-sectional survey research design was used in this study. Cross-sectional survey is a method that involves the analysis of data collected from a population, or a representative subset, at one specific point in time Orodho (2003). The choice of this design is appropriate for this study since it utilizes a questionnaire as a tool of data collection. This is supported by (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003) who assert that this type of design enables one to obtain information with sufficient precision so that hypothesis can be tested properly. It is also a framework that guides the collection and analysis of data. (Kothari, 2005) observes that a descriptive research design is used when data is collected to describe persons, organizational settings or phenomenon.

Target Population

The study targeted women respondents from Langas Estate, Uasin Gishu County and employees at Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW). The total number of employees at Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW) currently stand at 20 (Human Resource Database, 2015). The employees will be considered because of their direct contact with victims of gender based violence.

Sampling Size and Techniques

To arrive at the sample size the researcher considered 100 women respondents of the entire population and all employees, twenty in number at Centre for Rights Education and Awareness (CREAW). The sample selected was considered adequate as it took into account the objectives, purpose and variables of the study. To calculate the sample size for the study, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) formula was used as presented below.

Formula

Sample size determination

(Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003)

$$\text{Sample size} = nf = \frac{n}{1+(n)N}$$



Where: n_f = the desired sample size
 n = the desired sample size when the population is more than 10,000
 N = the estimate of the population size

Therefore, 100 women will form the sample size for the study.

Sample size formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n =sample size
 N = sample population
 e =precision

Table 1: Sample Frame

Population	Target population	Sample at 10% precision
Civil servants	1000	100
Total	1000	100

Data Collection Instrument

The data for the study were generated from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data were obtained using questionnaires. Secondary sources included: internet, textbooks, government publications, journals, libraries, archives and government offices among others.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection was conducted using questionnaire as the main data collection tool. The questions were subdivided into sections to capture the response and details that were required. The researcher collected data from the selected respondents after receiving permission from the District Office, Uasin Gishu County to carry out research in the identified area of study. The researcher before collecting data from the participant informed the Director at (CREAW) in advance and sought for an appointment to enable data collection. After familiarization, data was then collected from the respondents. The service of research assistant was sought to assist in the collection of the questionnaires from the respondents, while the researcher personally distributed the questionnaire. The completed instruments were verified and collected from the respondents within a period of fifteen days from the day of distribution.



Validity of the Instruments

Validity of an instrument, according to Romney, Albrecht and Cherrington (1980) is demonstrated when an instrument is seen to be, "using the right questions framed in the least ambiguous way". Essentially validity is concerned with establishing whether an instrument is measuring what it purports to measure. This study used Content validity method which is a non-statistical method used to ensure that the contents of the questionnaire are accurate and relevant.

Reliability of the Instruments

Reliability refers to the consistency that an instrument demonstrates when applied repeatedly under similar conditions Romney, Albrecht and Cherrington (1980). To determine the reliability of the instrument used in this study, the researcher carried out a pilot study in Huruma Estate, in the same County. The response was then subjected to the Cronbatch Alpha Coefficient test for reliability in the SPSS computer package. An alpha coefficient of 0.946 was obtained and therefore deemed high enough to make the questionnaire reliable.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.946

Data analysis

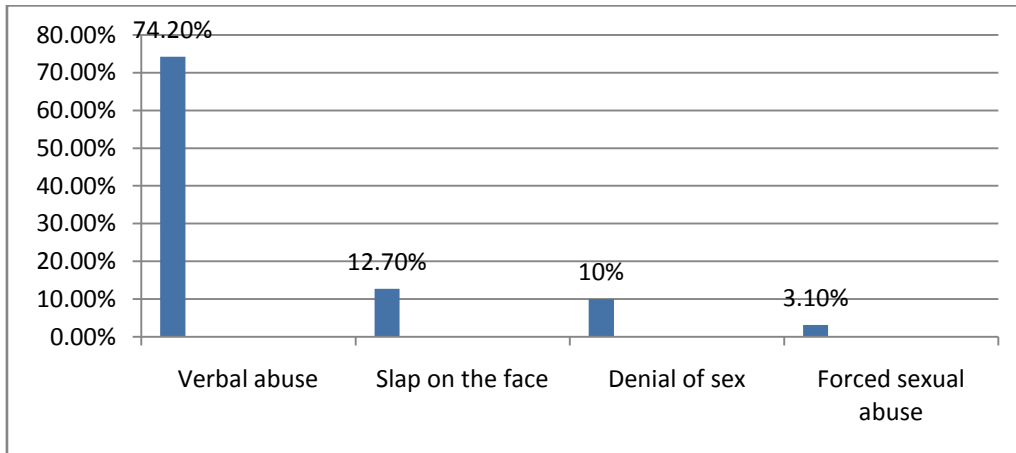
The data was analyzed statistically using descriptive statistics which involved frequencies and percentages. The analysis was undertaken to establish the degree of relationships between some pertinent factors and issues as well as to show the relative size or significance of each factor relative to the others.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Prevalence of different types of Gender Based Violence

Fig 1: Prevalence of different types of Gender Based Violence



Gender based violence was defined by different variables such as verbal abuse, slap on the face, throwing something at one, and pushing among others. Verbal abuse had the highest prevalence (74.20%), followed by slap on the face (12.7%). (10.0%) respondents mentioned denial of sex while only (3.1%) reported forced sexual intercourse. Significantly more females than males had experienced verbal abuse – 56.6% vs 50.2%. However, more males than females had experienced denial of sex – 13.1% Vs 7.0%. Also, forced sex was more common among females than males (4.1% Vs 2.00%). Figure 2 shows the frequency distribution of the different types of violence experienced by gender.

Fig 2: Frequency distribution of the different types of violence experienced by gender

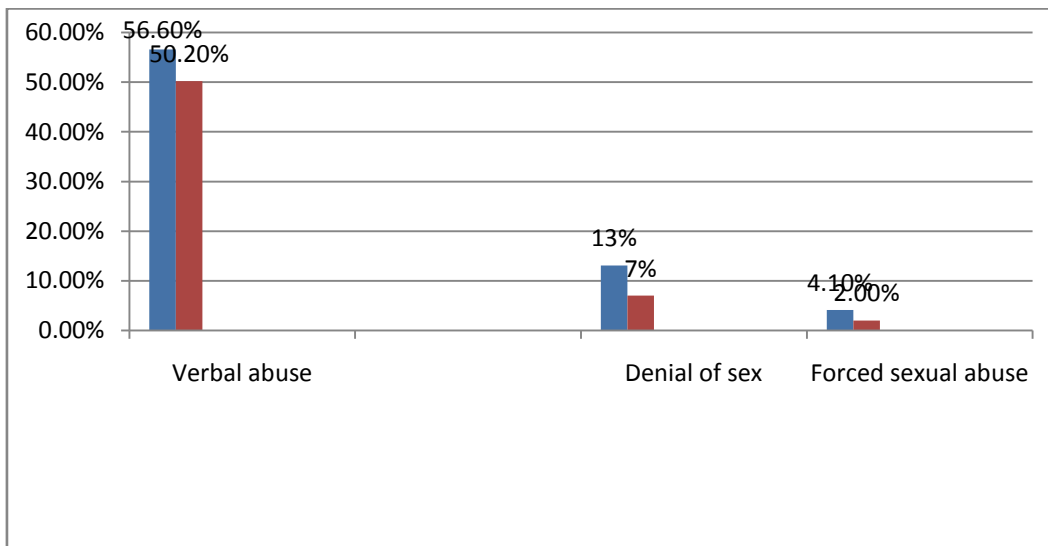




Table 3: Effects of gender based violence on work performance

Effect of gender based violence on work performance	SA	A	UD	D	SD
Gender based violence has a negative impact on job performance, including lateness, absenteeism, decreased job retention and career advancement;	80	10	5	5	0
Women who have experienced gender based violence lose more work time to absenteeism and lateness than non-victims;	90	10	0	0	0
Women who experience gender based violence do not experience job satisfaction	95	5	0	0	0
Mean	88	8	2	2	0

From the findings, an average of 88% of respondents cited that they strongly agreed with the statements that women who experience gender based violence do not experience job satisfaction, lose more work time to absenteeism and lateness and non-victims and have a decreased job retention and career advancement, 8% were in agreement with the statement, 2% were undecided while 2% disagreed and none strongly disagreed.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that, verbal abuse was the most common form of gender based violence being experienced. Women were the most affected as established by the study findings. The study also concludes that, gender based violence affects women's job performance. The study therefore recommends that the government and other stakeholders spearheading campaigns against gender based violence should increase their availability especially in the slums where gender based violence is widespread to ensure all cases are reported. In so doing, the vulnerable groups will be taken care of and their productivity will be ensured.

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