

FACTORS INFLUENCING INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE AMONG WOMEN IN MERU, KARATU AND MONDULI DISTRICT COUNCILS, TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

The study on the factors influencing intimate partner violence among women was conducted in Meru, Karatu and Monduli District Councils in 2019. Broadly, the objective of the study was to assess the factors influencing intimate partner violence among Maasai, Meru and Iraqw. Specifically, the study examined the causes of the persistent act among intimate partners. Data was collected from 400 respondents, whereas triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods was used in the study. A survey was used to collect quantitative data, at the same time focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were used to collect qualitative data. The study has shown that the causes of the persistent act among intimate partners was male dominance, poverty, alcoholism, dissatisfaction in family and traditional factors were among the main factors towards intimate partner violence among the Maasai, Meru and Iraqw. Apart from those Anger, past history of violence, multiple partners, low level of education and weak legal sanctions as factors influencing Intimate Partner Violence. The study recommends that a stronger commitment be shown by the government by providing necessary support in terms of financial and human resources. Government's commitment should go beyond policy declarations and start to play a proactive role in capacity building to the entire community of the most affected areas. Community leaders and families should be sensitized on the dreadful of intimate partner violence and discriminate against women.

Keywords: Intimate Partner Violence, women.

INTRODUCTION

This article intends to assess the factors influencing intimate partner violence among women in Meru, Karatu and Monduli district Councils. The article have the following sections; the background of the study, the methodology, the results and the conclusion.

Background Information of Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate partner violence is one of the most common forms of violence against women and includes physical, sexual, economic, emotional abuse and controlling behaviours by an intimate partner. Intimate partner violence (IPV) occurs in all settings and among all socioeconomic, religious and cultural groups. Though both men and women might encounter this form of violence, the overwhelming global burden of IPV is borne by women (WHO, 2012). In 48 population-based surveys from around the world, 10-69% of women reported being physically assaulted by an intimate male partner at some point in their lives. In large national studies, the range is between 10-34%. On average 35% of all women will experience IPV in their lifetime. The effects of intimate partner violence range from simply injuries to

death. The victims also suffer from emotional effects such as stress and post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

In Africa and especially sub Saharan Africa intimate partner violence is prevalent. A study by McCloskey (2016) reports that intimate partner violence is rampant in Africa. Married women and those in intimate relationships suffer IPV on an average of 36% more than the global average of 30% (Riecher-Rossler 2013). More women in Africa are subject to lifetime partner violence (45.6%) and sexual assault (11.9%) than women anywhere in the world, with the notable exception of high-income countries in the case of rape (12.6%; García-Moreno et al., 2013). A number of reasons have been mentioned to be the causes of the persistent act among intimate partners. The causes vary according to economic, social and other factors. Economically the causes are mentioned to vary from poverty, lack of employment, low agricultural produce and lack of assets. Social factors include all those cultural factors which demean and discriminate against women such early marriage, lack of inheritance, polygamy, denial of education and denial of freedom of expression.

Tanzania like other countries in sub Saharan Africa also suffers from the effects of IPV against women. It is reported that the reported life-time prevalence of IPV ranges between 15 and 60 %. A multi-country study conducted in 2005 gives the prevalence of lifetime physical and sexual violence by an intimate partner among ever-partnered women of 33 and 23 % respectively. Furthermore, in the recent (2010) national estimates using Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), 39 and 20% of women aged 15–49 were reported having experienced physical and sexual IPV respectively since age 15 (Kazaura et al., 2016).

Arusha Region is among the regions in Tanzania with high prevalence of intimate partner violence as Kapinga et al. (2017) reports that 1 in 3 women have reported to be violated in her lifetime. Arusha inhabits people with different culture and attitudes towards women. The Maasai who have pastoralist nature value women for their reproductive role while the Iraqw and Meru who have an agro pastoralist nature do value women for their productive and reproductive roles in the community. Much as the women are valued in these communities, they encounter a number of maltreatments throughout their life. The women are violated physically and sexually by their partners and even the male family members. Emotionally the women from these communities also suffer as they are frequently threatened, controlled by their partners using emotions to criticize, embarrass, shame, blame or manipulate.

A number of policies and laws have been put forward in protecting and enhancing gender equality. The policies include; Women and Gender Development Policy of 2000; National Strategy for Gender Development of 2005; National Policy on Research and Development of 2010; National Economic Empowerment Policy of 2004; Rural Development Strategy of 2001; National Cultural Policy of 1997; Policy on Women in Development in Tanzania of 1992; Community Development Policy of 1996; National Plan of Action for Prevention and Eradication of GBV against Women of 2001 -2015; and National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA II) of 2010. The laws include the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania of 1977; Law Marriage Act, Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act, 2008; Penal Code, Employment and Labor Relations Act, 2004; Land Act, 1999 (TAWLA, 2015). All these policies and laws aim at enhancing gender equality and eradicate all forms of violence against women Halim et al., 2018).

Despite the presence of these instruments protecting the women against all forms of violence and discrimination, the problem still persists. As reported different reports (TAWLA, 2014,

Kazaura et al, 2016; Kapinga et al., 2017) intimate partner violence still persist and the trend is fluctuating (Bintabara and kibusi, 2018). This necessitated the need for this study which intends to assess the factors influencing intimate partner violence among Maasai, Meru and Iraqw. The study was conducted in Arusha since the region has recorded a high prevalence of IPV as compared to other regions in Tanzania.

METHODOLOGY

Sampling Procedure

A multi stage random sampling procedure was used in the current study. Arusha region has seven district councils namely; Arusha City, Meru, Arusha Rural, Monduli, Ngorongoro, Longido, and Karatu districts. From the list of district councils purposive sampling technique was employed to select three district councils representing the main three ethnic groups of Arusha region. The district councils chosen were; Meru, Karatu and Monduli district councils. Stage 2 involved the random selection of one ward in each district council. The wards selected included; Usa River ward for the case of Meru D.C, Monduli Juu ward for the case of Monduli D.C and Ganako ward for the case of Karatu D.C. The wards were selected from the list of all wards provided by the Local Government offices in the particular District Councils.

As a final stage, a sample of adult women and girls from each of the selected wards was randomly selected for the study. The proportion of the sample size for each district council was calculated with regards to the population size of women in the particular district.

Sample size determination

The minimum sample size required determining level of domestic violence at a 5% level of significance with a 95% power and a 5% error tolerable was calculated and a minimum sample size of 400 was arrived at. The three district council had a total of 326,616 females deduced from the Tanzania census of 2012 (URT, 2012). Yamane (1967) sample size determination formula was applied and it gave a total of 399 participants which was rounded to 400.

From this report each district's female population was established and the proportion of the sample size for each district council was determined. The sample size for Meru district council was calculated at 165 respondents, Karatu was 135 respondents and Monduli was 100 respondents.

Data collection tools

The study used the questionnaire as a quantitative data collection tool while the focus group discussion was applied as qualitative data collection tools. Two forms of Violence were considered for this study that is physical and sexual violence. Different questions were asked to deduce if the respondents have encountered any of the following actions of violence; kicking, slapping, pushing, biting, stabbing, choking, being hit by an object, stabbing, burning, shoving, dragging, punched. for the case of sexual abuse the respondents were asked if they have encountered any of the following action; forced oral sex, rape, unwanted touching, forced to watch pornography.

Data analysis

The questionnaire was the quantitative tool in this research. After data collection using this tool it was entered into the Statistical Package of Social Sciences Version 20 for analysis. Analysis was done to obtain descriptive and inferential statistics. In case of descriptive statistics frequencies were analyzed for different independent variables mentioned by respondents as causes of IPV. On another hand Chi Square test was used to assess if the mentioned factors

have any association with IPV. Content analysis was used by the researchers to analyze information gathered through the focus group discussion which was the qualitative tool.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio demographic information of respondents

Age, levels of education, marital status and ethnicity of respondents were questioned and the results are as presented in table 1.

Table 1: Socio Demographic Information of the respondents (n = 400)

	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
15 - 19	20	5
20 - 24	144	36
25 - 29	128	32
30 - 34	80	20
> 34	28	7
Education level		
Informal	50	12.5
Primary	312	78
Secondary	38	9.5
Marital Status		
Single	104	26
Married	252	63
Divorced	16	4
Separated	12	3
Widow	16	4
Ethnic Group		
Iraq	135	34
Meru	165	41
Maasai	100	21

Source: Study survey, 2019

From the table above it is shown that 36% of the respondents belonged to the age group of 20 to 24 years while only 5% of the respondents were from the age group of 15 to 19 years old. Seventy eight percent of the respondents have attained primary education while 12% of the respondents have no formal education. Majority of the respondent (63%) were married and the remaining were either single (26%), divorced (4%), separated (3%) or Widowed (4%).

3.2 Factors influencing Domestic violence in Meru, Iraq and Maasai communities

	Frequency	Percentage	χ^2 Value
Poverty	302	76	0.004
Male dominance	299	75	0.000
Alcoholism	294	74	0.000
Dissatisfaction in family	270	68	0.005
Traditional/ cultural reasons	264	66	0.000
Anger	236	59	0.000
Past history of violence	215	55	0.643
Acceptance of violence	215	55	0.093
Multiple partners	204	51	0.002
Low level of education	165	41	0.001
Weak legal sanctions of the abusers	140	35	0.090

Source: Study survey, 2019

From table 2 it was revealed that male dominance (75%), poverty (76%), alcoholism (74%), dissatisfaction in family (68%) and traditional factors (66%) were among the main factors towards intimate partner violence among the Maasai, Meru and Iraqw. Apart from those the respondents also mentioned Anger, past history of violence, multiple partners, low level of education and weak legal sanctions as factors influencing IPV. Poverty, male dominance, tradition and culture, past history of violence are discussed in the following sections.

Poverty

A significant number of respondents (76%) mentioned poverty as a factor influencing domestic violence in the three district councils visited. Respondents from the Maasai, Iraq and Meru interviewed agreed that low household income was a factor for persistent domestic violence within their household. From the focus group discussion this also came to light, the participants reported poverty as one of the main factors exacerbating violence in their homes. When tested for the association poverty showed a strong association with IPV as ($\chi^2 = 9.043$, $p < 0.05$). The relationship between poverty and violence have been reported to be complex since poverty might increase the prevalence of violence or otherwise. Much as these two variables are intertwined in this study the concern was how poverty increases the prevalence of violence among partners. The stress which comes about as a result of lacking financial or basic needs results in emotional distress to one or both partners and hence eruption of violence. According to the council of Europe (2018) the lack of economic resources generally makes women, vulnerable to violence. It creates patterns of violence and poverty that become self-perpetuating, making it extremely difficult for the victims to extricate themselves (Mahenge and Stokl, 2021). When unemployment and poverty affect men, this can also cause them to assert their masculinity through violent means.

Alcoholism

Majority of the respondents (74%) reported that alcoholism was also among the reasons IPV is prevalent in their areas. They reported that their partners drunk a lot due to stresses of life or as a form of relaxing. When tested for the association using chi square alcoholism showed a strong association with IPV as ($\chi^2 = 4.39$, $p < 0.05$). This confirms that alcoholism might influence the violent behavior of partners. This was also reported during a focus group discussion conducted in Meru as a participants report;

“My husband drinks a lot of alcohol. He also smokes weed and normal cigarettes. Whenever he gets a small amount of money he goes to drink up to when the money is finished. Last week he sold a calf and got about one hundred thousand Tanzanian shillings, I never saw him for 5 days. He drunk and slept with prostitutes till the money was finished. He came home bankrupt, with nothing expecting me to cook and wash for him. I did that because that is what our cultures want us to do.”

This was also supported by other discussions conducted in Karatu and Monduli Districts. The participants unanimously agreed that, their partners were violent and inconsiderate when drunk. They do whatever they want regardless the warnings from their partners. According to WHO (2016) Alcohol consumption, especially at harmful and hazardous levels is a major contributor to the occurrence of intimate partner violence and links between the two are manifold. Alcohol have been reported to affect cognitive and physical function thus reducing self control and leaving individuals less capable of negotiating a non-violent resolution to conflicts within relationships.

Traditions and culture

Harmful traditional practices and other cultural reasons were mentioned as the main cause of intimate partner violence among the respondents. Coming from three different ethnic backgrounds they all agreed that within their cultures women are violated partly because of the existing harmful practices. Sixty six percent of the respondents mentioned traditions and culture as a cause of male dominance and violence. The respondents revealed that physical violence in form of slapping, hitting; kicking was the order of the day. Their partners did this on a frequent base. The women were not allowed to retaliate since their cultures did not allow that. The women were supposed to be calm and work on the presumed mistakes. This was also reported in focus group discussion in Monduli as one participant reports;

“As a woman, you are not supposed to complain if you are beaten by your husband. You are supposed to be calm and report to no one. Only women who are bad mannered will report the beatings done by her husband.”

Male dominance and especially patriarchy systems existing in Maasai, Meru and Iraqw cultures have placed women at a subordinate position making her vulnerable and weak to accept beatings and other forms of violence in the name of culture. Dobash and Dobash (1979) have argued that patriarchy produces gender inequality in marriage and the family setting, and patriarchal norms are often linked to wife assault, and wife beating, which can be viewed as one form of men’s exercise of control over women. In most traditional South Asian societies, when women marry, they move into extended families where they are subordinate to all men within the household as well as to other senior members in the household (Kandiyoti, 1998). Women are expected to follow traditional role expectations, such as obedience, upholding and maintaining the family’s honor, and doing housework. If they differ from such behavioral norms, partner abuse can result.

Past history of Violence

A significant number of respondents (55%) mentioned past history of violence as a factor why their partners commit violence. They reported that they partners have witnessed violence in some instances in their lifetime. They either observed their mothers being abused by their fathers or their sisters being abused by their husbands. They narrated this situation to their partners or some of them never spoke about it. Their partners heard this from relatives or neighbours. WHO (2012) supplement this finding as they report that a history of violence in the male partner’s family (particularly having seen his own mother beaten or having experienced violence as a child) and growing up in an impoverished family are important factors related to perpetrating partner violence.

CONCLUSION

In Africa and especially sub Saharan Africa intimate partner violence is prevalent. More women in Africa are subject to lifetime partner violence than women anywhere in the world. A number of reasons have been mentioned to be the causes of the persistent act among intimate partners. The causes vary according to economic, social and other factors. Economically the causes are mentioned to vary from poverty, lack of employment, low agricultural produce and lack of assets. Social factors include all those cultural factors which humiliate and discriminate against women such early marriage, lack of inheritance, polygamy, denial of education and denial of freedom of expression. Tanzania like other countries in sub Saharan Africa also suffers from the effects of IPV against women. It is reported that the reported life-time prevalence of IPV ranges between 15 and 60

%). A multi-country study conducted in 2005 gives the prevalence of lifetime physical and sexual violence by an intimate partner among ever-partnered women of 33 and 23% respectively.

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