

Factors Leading to Domestic Violence in Low-Income Residential Areas in Kenya: A Case Study of Low-income Residential Areas in Kisumu City

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Abstract

Violence against women and girls continues to be a global epidemic that kills, tortures, and maims – physically, psychologically, sexually, and economically. It is one of the most pervasive of human rights violations, denying women and girl's equality, security, dignity, self-worth, and their right to enjoy fundamental freedoms. This paper focuses specifically on domestic violence – the most prevalent yet relatively hidden and ignored form of violence against women and girls. This paper is thus based on a study carried out to establish the factors contributing to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas in Kenya. More specifically, the study sought to: analyze the demographic characteristics of women and their husbands included in the survey, establish and describe characteristics of domestic violence and its ravages and identify factors leading to domestic violence in the low-income residential areas. A descriptive research design was adopted. Data was collected using a questionnaire, which was administered to women and girls found in households in selected Kisumu low-income residential areas. Simple random sampling technique was applied in picking the respondents in each Household. The sample size was 90. Each of the six selected low-income residential areas in Kisumu provided 15 women and girls for the research. The salient findings of the study are that majority of women are experiencing domestic violence, they are abused mostly by people known to them and more so their husbands, they are mostly verbally abused, most of the women abused are of low educational background, are housewives and entirely depend on their husbands for their survival. The study also observed economic hardships and incidences of extramarital affairs contributes largely to the case of domestic violence in low-income residential areas in Kenya. It is, therefore, the recommendation of this paper that efforts should be made by the government to ensure that women in Kenya are economically empowered so that they do not rely in men who take advantage and continually abuse them. Furthermore, it is suggested that stiffer punishments should be mated to perpetrators of domestic violence.

Keywords: domestic violence, gender-based violence, violence in slums

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Domestic violence is a complex issue to research as the extent and forms of its occurrence remain largely hidden and there is a great degree of social acceptance of the issue. Data should be interpreted carefully as women often under-report violence out of a feeling of shame or because they do not view certain acts as violent (IIPS and ORCMacro, 2000; INCLEN, 2000; Jejeebhoy, 1998b). According to NFHS 2, 21 percent of ever-married women in India have been physically mistreated by their husbands, in-laws or other persons since age 15; 19 percent have been beaten by their husbands; and 11 percent had been beaten in the 12 months prior to the study (IIPS and ORC Macro, 2000). While National Crimes Records Bureau figures reveal an increase in reporting of gender-based violence from 31 percent in 1995 to 45 percent in 1999 (NCRB, 1995-99), evidence is also emerging from population-based surveys suggesting that between 21 to 48 percent of women from different socio-cultural settings in India have experienced physical violence (INCLEN, 2000; Jejeebhoy, 1998b; Verma and Collumbien, 2003;

Visaria, 1999b). These estimates are corroborated by studies investigating reporting patterns of men, with 21 - 40 percent of men in different studies reporting perpetrating physical violence (Duvvury, et al. 2002; Martin et al., 1999; Verma and Collumbien, 2003). Estimates from facility-based surveys, such as hospitals, courts, NGOs and police records, reflect similar prevalence rates (Daga, et al. 1998; Jaswal, 2000). A closer scrutiny of the prevalence rates reveals some state-wise variation. Tamil Nadu shows the highest prevalence, with 40 percent of the women reporting experiencing physical violence since age 15. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Orissa, Bihar and Jammu and Kashmir have prevalence rates higher than 20 percent. Himachal Pradesh shows the lowest prevalence rate at 5.8 percent, followed by Kerala (10.1 percent) and Gujarat (10.2 percent) (IIPS and ORC Macro, 2000). An examination of the National Crimes Records Bureau statistics reveals that reporting of crimes against women at home, or cruelty by husband and his relatives, are higher in states like Kerala (80 cases per million

population) and Gujarat (82 cases per million population) (NCRB, 1995-99). While it is difficult to draw definite conclusions from data about the state-wise variation, it can be clearly said that domestic violence is a country-wide phenomena. The Kenyan case might not be different. Women in Kenya are specifically vulnerable; violence against women is widespread and persists in all layers of society. The Attorney-General of Kenya acknowledged in 1999 that "Violence against women pervades all social and ethnic groups. It is a societal crisis that requires concerted action to stem its scourge... Culture does influence the relationship between the various groups in society and ... some cultural practices, beliefs and traditions have had the tendency to relegate women to second class status in society thereby not only violating their rights as human beings [but also] leading to discrimination against women. Some... customs and cultural practices have found their way not only into law but ... [are used] as justification for violence against women.) (Amos, W. 1999). As a result, this study sought to establish factors leading to domestic violence in low-income residential areas in Kenya with the hope of it being an eye-opener to the reality of the situation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Violence against women and girls continues to be a global epidemic that kills, tortures, and maims-physically, psychologically, sexually and economically. It is one of the most pervasive of human rights violations, denying women and girl's equality, security, dignity, self-worth, and their right to enjoy fundamental freedoms. Violence against women is present in every country, cutting across boundaries of culture, class, education, income, ethnicity and age. Even though most societies proscribe violence against women, the reality is that violations against women's human rights are often sanctioned under the garb of cultural practices and norms, or through misinterpretation of religious tenets. Moreover, when the violation takes place within the home, as is very often the case, the abuse is effectively condoned by the tacit silence and the passivity displayed by the state and the law-enforcing machinery. The global dimensions of this violence are alarming, as highlighted by studies on its incidence and prevalence. No society can claim to be free of such violence; the only variation is in the patterns and trends that exist in countries and regions. Specific groups of women are more vulnerable, including minority groups, indigenous and migrant women, refugee women and those in situations of armed conflict, women in institutions and detention, women with disabilities, female children, and elderly women. Violence against women is a global public health concern. Among college students in the United States of America, 20% and 25% of women reported experiencing completed or attempted rape (Fischer, B, C Cullen,

and Turner, M, 2000). On a wider scale, lifetime partner violence against women is 21% (Parish, W et al 2004). In Africa, sexual and domestic violence against women is increasingly prevalent. In many parts of the continent however, a lot of the violence perpetrated is kept secret (Jewkes, R. and Abrahams, N, 2002); literature of gender violence epidemiology is therefore scarce. Police statistics depict more than 2,500 cases of reported rape in Kenya annually (Reuters, 2005). The health consequences of violence, especially sexual abuse, can be significant. Victims suffer physical injuries, psychological disturbances, emotional and social maladjustments. Domestic violence against women is a serious and widespread problem in Kenya. This is mainly due to traditional culture permitting a man to discipline his wife. The majority of the cases remain unreported or at least unpunished. On a positive note, during the period from 1997 to 1999, the United Nations Development Fund for Women launched inter-agency regional campaigns to eliminate violence against women in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa and Asia and the Pacific. In response to heavy media attention to the issue of violence against women, created as part of the UNIFEM-led regional campaign, the Kenyan Parliament in 2000 adopted the country's first legislation on domestic violence (UN, 2001). From a survey conducted by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics in 2003, it was established that 49% of Kenyan women reported experiencing violence in their lifetime; one in four had experienced violence in the previous 12 months (KDHS, 2003). The same survey reported that 83% of women and girls reported one or more episodes of physical abuse in childhood; 46% reported one or more episodes of sexual abuse in childhood, over 60% of these women and children did not report the event to anyone. Only 12% who had been physically or sexually abused reported to someone in authority such as a village elder or the police. Based on such a report, the researchers felt it necessary to establish factors contributing to domestic violence, more so in low-income residential areas. This study focused specifically on domestic violence-the most prevalent yet relatively hidden and ignored form of violence against women and girls. While reliable statistics are hard to come by, studies estimate that, from country to country, between 20 and 50 percent of women have experienced physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner or family member. For the purpose of this study, the term "domestic violence" includes violence against women and girls by an intimate partner, including a cohabiting partner, and by other family members, whether this violence occurs within or beyond the confines of the home. While recognizing that other forms of violence are equally worthy of attention, this study does not cover the violence inflicted on women by strangers outside the home – in public places such as streets,

workplaces or in custody, or in situations of civil conflict or war. It did not look at the issue of violence against domestic workers, as this is perpetrated by individuals who are not related. As a result, this study sought to establish factors' leading to domestic violence in Kenya and also see what role the government is playing in settling the matter.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of the study was to establish factors leading to domestic violence. More specifically, the study sought to:

- 1) Analyze the demographic characteristics of women and their husbands included in the survey.
- 2) Establish and describe characteristics of domestic violence and its ravages.
- 3) Identify factors leading to domestic violence.
- 4) Come up with recommendations on how domestic violence can be curbed.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study was guided by the following questions:

- 1) What are the demographic characteristics of women under study?
- 2) Have the households experienced domestic violence?
- 3) What were circumstances that lead to domestic violence?
- 4) What lead to domestic violence?

JUSTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study was justified on the following basis: The woman issues of today forms a major structural issue for the 21st century. As a result, there is an urgent need to understand how women are being discriminated by men and to recognize that women have the same right towards the fulfillment of their basic needs as men. Second, most of the women issues are not mainstreamed into the development processes. So far, women issues in Kenya are marginal in development debates. Thus this study sought to bring into light the aspect of domestic violence in Kenya. Finally this research was also of the view that not much has been done to understand incidences of domestic violence in Kenya. This has inspired and given justification for the study. Conducting this kind of research at a localized level has further been necessitated by the need to highlight the phenomenon of domestic violence among women residing in low-income residential areas. It was further aimed at offering some practical suggestions on how to solve the plight of women being battered in Kenya by their spouses or intimate partners.

SCOPE AND LIMITATION

The study was based on low-income residential areas found in Kisumu city. There was no sufficient time and funds for the research to be conducted in the whole district. The area, therefore, is ideal in

answering the main research questions that the study sought to address.

Assumptions of Study

The study was based on the assumption that women in low-income residential areas tend to be affected more by domestic violence than others who reside in better income residential areas.

The Study Area

The study was carried out in Kisumu City. The city is located at an altitude of 2,085 meters above sea level (0° 30'N 35° 15'E). It is the administrative headquarters of Nyanza Province. The town centre and its environs have a total of 6 low-income residential areas. All low-income residential areas in Kisumu and its environs were selected. The areas included: Obunga, Nyalenda, Manyatta, Nyawita, Nyamasare and Pandpieri. Kisumu City was chosen because it is a cosmopolitan urban town in which many women are exposed to many life challenges including domestic violence.

Research Design

The study adopted tri-angulation research design, which is the application and combination of several research methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon. In this study, the two methodologies used included survey and interviews.

Types of Data and Data Collection Methods

The data used for this study was collected from two main sources; secondary and the primary sources of data. **Secondary data:** This data comprised of literature reviewed in books, journals, the internet, magazines and past research reports. **Primary data:** This data was collected using self-administered questionnaires. The study adopted a survey research design. For the purpose of this study, survey research was used to establish factors contributing or perpetuating domestic violence in low-income residential areas. A questionnaire was designed to elicit responses from the respondents for purposes of statistical analysis. They were developed and mainly administered to the women. Structured and Likert type of questions were mainly used to collect information. Key informant interviews were also conducted to supplement what had been elicited from the questionnaire. The interview schedules were used to supplement information got from questionnaires. The interview schedules were mainly administered to six chiefs in the areas in order to find out the extent of domestic violence in their areas. Unlike the questionnaire, which had closed ended questions and a few open-ended questions, the interview schedule mainly had open-ended questions.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The study targeted the women who reside in low-income residential areas in Kisumu. To choose the sample, the researchers used purposive sampling to specifically select low-income residential areas. From each low-income residential area, 15

respondents were chosen. They were widely spread in all corners of the residential areas. A total of 90 respondents were chosen.

Data analysis techniques

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics was in the form of frequencies, percentages, tables, bar graphs and piecharts. The Special Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to aid in analysis of this data.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Demographic Characteristics Of Women And Their Husbands Included In The Survey

The first objective of the study was to analyze the demographic characteristics of women and their husbands included in the survey. The objective was measured by looking at: demographic characteristics of the sample such as age, marital status, income level, educational levels, family structure and childhood exposure to violence. Demographic characteristics of the sample such as age, marital status, income level, educational levels, family structure and childhood exposure to violence are shown in Table 1 below. The average age of all participants was 28.5. Among them, 46% of women were in the 30-34 age group, 42 % of them completed only primary school, 77% were housewives, 91% were married, 57% had 3 – 4 children and 54% of them had annual income of less than 5000.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Women from Low-income Residential areas in Kisumu included in the survey

Age group (years)	No(%) of Women
15 – 19	3(3)
20 – 24	15(17)
25 – 29	26(29)
30 – 34	41(46)
>35	5(6)
Educational level	
Illiterate	24(27)
Primary school	38(42)
High school	29(32)
University	3(3)
Marital status	
Single	3(3)
Married	82(91)
Widowed	5(6)
Type of family	
Nuclear	62(69)
Large	23(26)
Separated	4(4)
No answer	1(1)
Occupation	
Housewife	69(77)
Civil servant	7(8)
Worker	14(16)
Number of children	
None	7(8)
1-2	24(27)
3-4	51(57)
> 5	8(9)
Annual income	
< 5000	49(54)
5000 – 9999	34(38)
>10000	7(8)

Characteristics of husbands are shown in Table 2. Among them, majority (42%) completed only primary school and also majority (46%)were tradesman.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Husbands as Reported by interviewed women in Kisumu Low-income Residential Areas

Characteristics	No(% of Women)
Educational level	
Illiterate	26(29)
Primary school	38(42)
High school	26(29)
Occupation	
Tradesman	41(46)
Worker	21(23)
Civil servant	5(6)
Unemployed	17(19)
Others	6(7)

Outcome Measures

Out of 90 women, 47(52%) were exposed to at least one type of violence (Chart 1). About 35(74%) were housewives, 91% (n = 43) were married, 68.0% (n = 32) had nuclear family and 30(63.8%) had an annual income of less than KShs 5000. This is as shown in Table 3: Demographic Characteristics of women exposed to violence from low-income residential areas in Kisumu

Variable	No(% of women)
Age	
15 – 19	1(2)
20 – 24	7(15)
25 – 29	14(30)
30 – 34	21(45)
> 35	4(9)
Educational level	
Illiterate	19(40)
Primary school	20(43)
High school	8(17)
Marital status	
Single	2(4)
Married	43(91)
Widowed	2(4)
Type of family	
Nuclear	32(68)
Large	12(26)
Broken	3(6)
Occupation	
Housewife	35(74)
Civil Servant	4(9)
Worker	8(17)
Annual Family Income	
<5000	30(63.8)
5000-9999	14(29.8)
>10000	3(6.4)

Characteristics of Domestic Violence and Its Ravages

The second objective of the study was to establish and describe characteristics of domestic violence and its ravages. The objective was measured by looking at: whether women experience violence, type of violence, frequency of violence, perpetrators of violence, time of assault, circumstances surrounding the assault, weapons used by perpetrators of domestic violence and parts of body injured. All these are discussed in the following section.

Women Experience Violence

The core objective of the research was to find out factors leading to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas. However, it was found imminent to ask first whether women in the study have experienced domestic violence. The study found out that majority (52%) of women had experienced domestic violence. This is as illustrated in Figure 1.

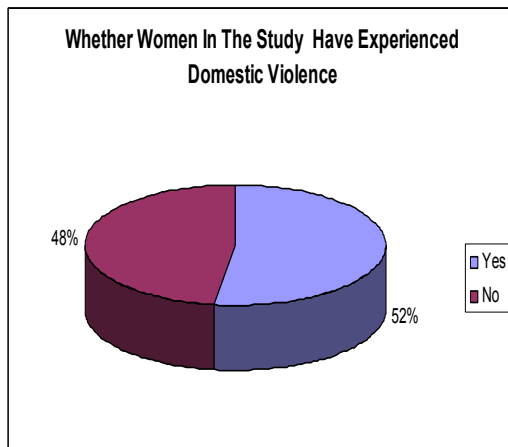


Figure 1: Whether women experienced Domestic Violence

From Figure 1, it is clear that majority of women have experienced domestic violence. Those who experienced domestic violence were mainly women who had attained primary level of education or were illiterate and were housewives. For the few (48%) who did not experience domestic violence, they comprised of women who had secondary school level of education, were widowed and were working in the civil service.

Type of Violence

Having found that majority of women in low-income residential areas in Kisumu had experienced domestic violence, the researchers thought it wise to enquire about the type of violence the women in the study had experienced. It was observed that majority (53%) had experienced verbal violence. This is illustrated in Figure 2.

From Figure 2 below, it is clear that the type of violence experienced by the women in low-income residential areas is verbal violence. They reported that verbal violence was mainly manifested by their husbands frequently threatening by warning them or keeping women away from their neighbours, family members and friends and threatened to kill them or maim them. Physical violence among the women in the study was manifested through the women experiencing physical attack by being beaten by their husbands or close family relatives and in some cases being attacked by weapons. Few talked of being sexually assaulted. This was manifested in instances the women claimed their perpetrators had sexual intercourse with them without their consent or experienced sexual threats.

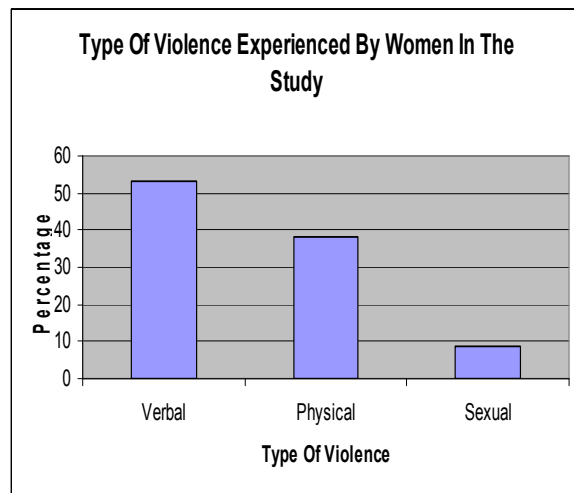


Figure 2: Type of Violence

Frequency of Violence

In order to ascertain the extent of domestic violence experienced by women in the study, it was considered important to find out the frequency at which they experienced violence. The study observed that majority (42%) experienced domestic violence few times in a month. This is as summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Frequency of Violence Experienced By Women in the Study

Frequency of violence	Frequency	Percentage
Everyday	4	9
Few times in a week	9	19
Few times in a month	21	45
Few times in a year	13	28
Total	47	100

From Table 4, it is clear that very few women experienced violence on a daily basis. It is also clear that majority of the women experience violence few

times in a month. Through further probing of the women on the issue, it was found that they experienced the violence mostly during times of economic depression in the family especially during the middle of the month where they said their husbands do not have much income and always complained of being broke as a result of having less employment opportunities.

Perpetrators of Violence

Out of the 47 women who experienced domestic violence, all reported that they were assaulted by people known to them including husbands, fathers, male child and other family members. This is as summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Presentation of Perpetrators of Violence experienced by Women in Low-income Residential Areas

Perpetrators	Frequency	Percentage
Husband	35	74
Father	4	9
Male Child(Son Or Brother)	3	6
Other Members Of Family	5	11
Total	47	100

From Table 5, it is clear that majority of perpetrators of domestic violence are husbands to the women. This can be linked to men in the African set-up exercising dominance role in families and taking their role as head of households. As a result, the husbands tend to wield power in their houses.

Time of Assault

Out of the 47 women who experienced domestic violence, 20 (43%) reported that they were assaulted between 8pm and 12 midnight. Table 6 also shows that an equal number, 10 (21%), were assaulted between 5pm and 8pm; and 12 midnight to 7am. Fewer cases, 7 (15%), occurred after midnight till morning. This is indicated in Table 6.

Table 6: Presentation of Time of Assault

Time of Assault	Frequency	Percentage
7am- 5pm	7	15
5pm- 8pm	10	21
8pm- 12 Midnight	20	43
12Midnight- 7am	10	21
Total	47	100

Table 6 clearly highlights that most of the women in the study were assaulted between 8pm and 12 midnight. This can largely be explained by being the time most men in low-income residential areas are returning from their drinking sprees and disagree with their wives or daughters at any slight excuse.

Circumstances Surrounding the Assault

Out of the 47 women who experienced domestic violence, majority, 32 (68%), reported that other factors contributed to the assault. This included

family disagreements due to financial constrains and extramarital affairs of the spouses leading to fights. Table 7 shows that 15 (32%) were assaulted due the fact that perpetrators were under influence of alcohol and substance abuse. This is summarized in Table 7.

Table 7: Presentation of Circumstances Surrounding the Assault

Circumstances Surrounding the assault	Frequency	Percentage
Substance Abuse/Alcohol	15	32
Others(Lack of financial income, lack of employment opportunities, Unreliable household income sources and Extra Marital affairs)	32	68
Total	47	100

What can be inferred from Table 7 is that most of the violence is because of financial constrains. This is highly supported by the fact that most of the women experiencing domestic violence live in households with an average annual income of less than Ksh. 5000 and their spouses are mainly tradesmen hence unable to cater for their family’s basic needs on a regular basis. Furthermore, majority of such women are housewives meaning that that they do not have their own source of income and have to rely on their spouses and with the harsh economic situation in the country, it makes it hard for their spouses to help them. This ultimately leads their spouses to pick a quarrel with the women when they request money from them. As a way of surviving, some of the women who are married engage in extra marital relationships in order for them to get basic needs which their spouses are unable to provide. Once they are discovered to be having extra marital affairs, their spouses engage them in a fight. In some cases, the fights broke when spouses who are drunkards, were discovered to be having extra marital affairs in their drinking dens.

Weapons used by Perpetrators of Domestic Violence

Among the weapons used on the 47 women who experienced domestic violence, weapons classified as others contribute to 9 (50%) as a category. This include: kicks, fists, strangulation, slaps and human bites as inflicted to survivors of domestic violence by the perpetrators. Sharp objects like knives, ‘Pangas’ bottles and hammers made up 39%, while 11% of the survivors did not report on any weapons used on them by their perpetrators. This is as indicated in Table 8.

Table 8: Presentation of Survivors of Domestic Violence by Weapons used

Weapons used	Frequency	Percentage
Sharp Objects	7	39
Others	9	50
Not Indicated	2	11
Total	18	100

From Table 8, it can be inferred that there is no much use of sharp objects by the perpetrators of domestic violence on women. This can be explained by the fact the type of violence that women in the study experienced were mainly verbal and hence there were few cases of physical attack.

Parts of the Body Injured

Out of the 47 cases of women who experienced domestic violence, 8 (44%) of the injuries occurred on the upper part of the body with a predominance involvement of the head. 4 (22%) were injured on the face while some of the victims had multiple injuries ranging from two to five parts of the body. Other common injuries were loss of teeth, facial cuts, bruises and swelling of the eyes, lips and several parts of the body. This is as summarized in Table 9.

Table 9: Presentation of Survivors of Domestic Violence by part of the body injured

Part of the body injured	Frequency	Percentage
Face	4	22
Head	8	44
Chest	1	6
Abdomen	1	6
Back	1	6
Limbs	3	17
Total	18	100

From Table 9, it is clear that majority of injury from domestic violence were found in the head region. This is explained by men preferring most of the times to slap their spouses or daughters when they feel they are not doing as per their agreement.

Cultural Factors and Women Experience of Domestic Violence

To identify factors that lead women to experience domestic violence, because of the importance of the factors listed, Likert Scale was used for answering (1 = Not at All Important, 2 = Not Important, 3 = Somewhat Not Important, 4 = Important, 5 = Very Important). Thus, this question was analyzed by using the mean to identify the rank of each reason.

Cultural factors were measured by looking at the following variables: gender-specific socialization, cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles, expectations of roles within relationships, belief in the inherent superiority of males, values that give men proprietary rights over women and girls, notion of the family as the private sphere and under male

control, customs of marriage (bride price/dowry) and acceptability of violence as a means to resolve conflict. This question was analyzed by using the mean to identify the rank of each reason. The findings are as shown it Table 10 below:

Table 10: Cultural Factors and Women Experience of Domestic Violence

Cultural Factors and women Experience of Domestic Violence	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Gender Specific socialization	4.39	0.844	1
Cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles	4.32	0.791	2
Expectations of roles within relationships	4.29	0.693	3
Belief in the inherent superiority of males	4.16	0.779	4
Values that give men proprietary rights over women and girls	4.13	0.922	5
Notion of the family as the private sphere and under male control	4.13	0.991	5
Customs of marriage(Bride price/dowry)	4.10	1.193	7
Acceptability of violence as means to resolve conflict	4.10	1.012	7

From Table 10, of the forty seven women who experienced domestic violence, “gender-specific socialization” was ranked first (4.39), “cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles” was ranked second (4.32), “expectations of roles within relationships “ was ranked third(4.29), “belief in the inherent superiority of males ” was ranked fourth (4.16), “values that give men proprietary rights over women and girls” and “notion of the family as the private sphere and under male control “were both ranked fifth (4.13). “customs of marriage (bride price/dowry)” and “acceptability of violence as means to resolve conflict “were both ranked seventh (4.10).Thus, among cultural factors that lead to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas, gender-specific socialization factor is the major factor that influences domestic violence

among women in low-income residential areas. However, it is worthwhile to note that all the cultural factors do contribute to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas. This is attested by all the cultural factors all having at least a mean of 4.00.

Economic Factors and Women Experience of Domestic Violence

Economic factors were measured by looking at the following variables: women’s economic dependence on men, limited access to cash and credit, discriminatory laws regarding inheritance, property rights, use of communal lands, and maintenance after divorce or widowhood, limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors and limited access to education and training for women. This question was analyzed by using the mean to identify the rank of each reason. The findings are as shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Economic Factors and Women Experience of Domestic Violence

Economic Factors and women Experience of Domestic Violence	Mean	Std.Deviation	Rank
Women’s Economic Dependence on Men	4.87	0.341	1
Limited access to Cash and Credit	4.77	0.425	2
Discriminatory laws regarding inheritance and property rights	4.77	0.425	2
Use of communal lands and maintenance after divorce or widowhood	4.65	0.486	4
Limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors	4.48	0.570	5
Limited access to education and training for women	4.45	0.675	6

From Table 11 , of the forty seven women who experienced domestic violence, “women’s economic dependence on men” was ranked first (4.87), “limited access to cash and credit” and

“discriminatory laws regarding inheritance and property rights “were both ranked second (4.77), “use of communal lands and maintenance after divorce or widowhood ” was ranked fourth (4.65), “limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors ” was ranked fifth (4.48) and “limited access to education and training for women” was ranked sixth (4.45).Thus, among economic factors that lead to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas, women’s economic dependence on men factor is the major factor that influences domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas. However, it is worthwhile to note that all the economic factors do contribute to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas. This is attested by all the cultural factors all having at least a mean of 4.00.

Legal Factors and Women Experience of Domestic Violence

Legal factors were measured by looking at the following variables: lesser legal status of women either by written law and/or by practice, laws regarding divorce, child custody, maintenance and inheritance, legal definitions of rape and domestic abuse, low levels of legal literacy among women and insensitive treatment of women and girls by police and judiciary. This question was analyzed by using the mean to identify the rank of each reason.

Table 12: Legal Factors and Women Experience of Domestic Violence

Legal Factors and women Experience of Domestic Violence	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Lesser legal status of women either by written law and/or by practice	3.87	0.922	1
Laws regarding divorce, child custody, maintenance and inheritance	3.87	1.176	1
Legal definitions of rape and domestic abuse	3.71	1.101	3
Low levels of legal literacy among women	3.65	0.915	4
Insensitive treatment of women and girls by police and judiciary	3.55	0.961	5

From Table 12, of the forty seven women who experienced domestic violence, “lesser legal status of women either by written law and/or by practice” and “laws regarding divorce, child custody, maintenance and inheritance” were both ranked first (3.87), “legal definitions of rape and domestic abuse” was ranked third (3.71), “low levels of legal literacy among women” was ranked fourth (3.65) and “insensitive treatment of women and girls by police and judiciary” was ranked fifth (3.55). Thus, among legal factors that lead to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas, lesser legal status of women either by written law and/or by practice factor is the major factor that influences domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas. However, it is worthwhile to note that all the legal factors do contribute to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas. However, their means are slightly lower as opposed to other factors.

Political Factors and Women Experience of Domestic Violence

Political factors was measured by looking at the following variables: under-representation of women in power, politics, the media and in the legal and medical professions, domestic violence not taken seriously, notions of family being private and beyond control of the state, risk of challenge to status quo/religious laws, limited organization of women as a political force and limited participation of women in organized political system. This question was analyzed by using the mean to identify the rank of each reason. The findings are as shown in Table 13:

Table 13: Political Factors and Women Experience of Domestic Violence

Political Factors and women Experience of Domestic Violence	Mean	Std.Deviation	Rank
Under-representation of women in power, politics, the media and in the legal and medical professions	3.55	1.387	1
Domestic violence not taken seriously	3.52	1.363	2
Notions of family being private and beyond control of the state	3.52	1.313	2

Risk of challenge to status quo/religious laws	3.42	1.177	4
Limited organization of women as a political force	3.35	1.112	5
Limited participation of women in organized political system.	3.10	1.274	6

From Table 13, of the forty seven women who experienced domestic violence, “under-representation of women in power, politics, the media and in the legal and medical professions” was ranked first (3.55), “domestic violence not taken seriously” and “notions of family being private and beyond control of the state” were both ranked second (3.52), “risk of challenge to status quo/religious laws” was ranked fourth (3.42), “limited organization of women as a political force” was ranked fifth (3.35) and “limited participation of women in organized political system” was ranked sixth (3.10).

Thus, among political factors that leads to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas, under-representation of women in power, politics, the media and in the legal and medical professions factor is the major factor that influences domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas. However, it is worthwhile to note that all the political factors do contribute to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas. However, their means are the lowest compared to means of other factors.

Ranking of Factors Contributing to Domestic Violence among Women in Low-Income Residential Areas

To find out how women ranked the factors contributing to domestic violence, they were asked to rank economic, cultural, legal and political factors in their order of contributing to domestic violence in low-income residential areas. Because of importance of the question, Likert Scale was used (1 being the most contributor and 4 being the least contributor). The close the answer to the question was nearer to 1, the most the factor contributed to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas. Thus, this question was analyzed by using the mean to identify the rank of each reason. The findings are as shown in Table 14:

Table 14: Ranking Of Factors Contributing To Domestic Violence among women in low-income Residential Areas

Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
Economic	1.6774	0.94471	1
Cultural	1.9677	0.83602	2
Legal	2.6129	1.05443	3
Political	3.4839	1.02862	4

From Table 14, of the forty seven women who experienced domestic violence, “economic factors” was ranked first (1.68), “cultural factors” was ranked second (1.97), “legal factors” was ranked third (2.61) and “political factors” was ranked fourth (3.48). Majority of the women confirmed that economic factors are the ones contributing to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas in Kisumu.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The first objective of the study was to analyze the demographic characteristics of women and their husbands included in the survey. It was observed that majority of the women picked as part of the sample majority were in the age bracket of 30 – 34 years, had primary level of education, were married, belonged in a nuclear family structure, were housewives, had 3 - 4 children and their annual income was less than Ksh. 5000. For the part of the characteristics of their husbands, majorities had attained primary level of education and were tradesman by occupation. In the case of the actual women who experienced domestic violence, majority had primary level of education, were housewives and their average annual income was less than Ksh. 5000. This means that most of the women in the study were living under precarious conditions.

The second aim of the study was to establish and describe characteristics of domestic violence and its ravages. It was observed that majority of women had experienced domestic violence, they mainly experienced verbal violence, they mainly experienced violence few times in a month, their husbands were the main perpetrators of violence, the women in the study were mainly assaulted between 8pm and 12 midnight, financial constrains and extra marital affairs of spouse mainly triggered violence against the women, the main weapons used when executing domestic violence to the women were: kicks, fists, strangulation, slaps and human bites. Lastly, majority of the women were injured in their heads. What these findings confirm is that domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas is rampant and there is need to arrest the situation before it deteriorates to a bigger menace in the society.

The third objective of the study was to identify factors leading to domestic violence. It was found that the major factor among cultural factor contributing to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas is gender specific socialization and the least contributing factor is acceptability of violence as means to resolve conflict. For the case of economic factors, contributing to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas the major factor is women’s economic dependence on men and the least factor is limited access to education and training for women. On the aspect of legal factors, contributing to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas the major factor is lesser legal status of women either by written law and/or by practice and the least factor is insensitive treatment of women and girls by police and judiciary. Lastly, for the case of political factors contributing to domestic violence on women in low-income residential areas, the major factor is under-representation of women in power, politics, the media and in the legal and medical professions and the least factor is limited participation of women in organized political system. Majority of the women confirmed that economic factors are the ones contributing to domestic violence among women in low-income residential areas in Kisumu. What these findings confirm is that in one way or another, these factors play a critical role in perpetrating the menace in the society.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings, the study recommends the following;

- There is need to empower women economically and encourage them to join voluntary organizations which can act as buffers at times of stress hence they wont be able to depend on their spouses economically.
- Stiffer measures should be taken to perpetrators of domestic violence so as to deter others from the vice
- Politicians should not treat the family institution as private and not being able to be controlled by the state. The state should take charge in such matters of domestic violence
- Non governmental organizations need to train and sensitize residents of low-income residential areas on dangers of domestic violence.
- Members of society should do away with discriminatory laws regarding inheritance and property rights; which partly make women to rely on men hence likely to experience domestic violence.

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