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Violence Against Women in Lake Victoria Zone: A Case of Tarime District, Tanzania

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Abstract

Violence against women is a global challenge affecting the survivors of violence, their families, and the country at large. While the prevention of violence against women is inevitable for the wellbeing of a nation, yet its preventive measures are vested in the hands of entities with limited capacity to handle it. This study was conducted in Tarime, a district located in the Lake Victoria Zone, to investigate violence against women. Specifically, the study examined the women's experience of violence, the determinants of violence against women, and analysed the current preventive mechanism. A random sample of 97 households was used. All women aged 15 years and above were interviewed from these households, making a total of 149 interviewees. Data analysis was done using descriptive statistics and binary regression techniques. Findings revealed that nearly all women had experienced at least some form of violence in their lifetime, and a substantial proportion of women experienced violence in the past 12 months before the period of this survey. The less targeted, less extreme, and violent acts which lacked substantial public discourse were mostly reported to have been experienced by most women. Violence was more severe among women aged between 20-34; an increase in age by one year, as well as being a child to the household head, decreased the likelihood of respondents reporting to have experienced violent acts. Protection committees were not created as proposed by NPA-VAWC.² Based on the findings, this study recommends increasing programmes of awareness creation for community transformation, establishing protection entities as per NPA-VAWC guidelines, designing and using strategies and action plans to guide implementation, enhancing the capacity of local leaders to handle violence cases, and establishing a harmonised system for capturing currently unreported incidences of violence cases.

Key Word: Violence against Women; determinant of violence; Tarime; Sexual Violence; Lake Victoria Zone.

1. Introduction

The global, through its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5 targets, among other issues, focus on eliminating any form of violence against women by 2030 (DCAF et al., 2019). However, it is more likely that most women will miss out on this immense global target. Violence against women continues to

threaten the global community while affecting not only the survivors of violence and their families but also imposing a significant negative impact on the community and country's GDP as well (African Union, 2023; Borwankar & Sommerfelt, 2008; Kinyondo et al., 2021; World Bank, 2019). It refers to any injustice act done, whether in public or

² National Plan of Action to end violence against Women

private, to a female individual that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to a female human being, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of their rights and liberty (WHO, 2024; World Bank, 2019).

The acts of violence against women may pose a profound impact on the physical and mental health of the affected group and their families and may cause significant social and economic costs to the country as well (African Union, 2023; Kinyondo et al., 2021; Simmons et al., 2020). The literature has shown that, if care is not taken, violence against women may cost the country up to 3.7% of the country's GDP (African Union, 2023; World Bank, 2023). In Tanzania, containing violence in general is estimated to cost the country over USD 6.5 billion, which is almost 7% of the country's³ GDP (IEP, 2015; URT, 2016). URT (2016) observed that these costs are higher than those involved in their prevention. In this case, addressing violence against women is inevitable for the sustainable growth of the country's economy and the well-being of any nation.

The global statistics have estimated that the problem is of enormous magnitude, affecting women from all socioeconomic backgrounds regardless of their income, age, and education level (WHO, 2024). It is estimated that about 30% of women worldwide have experienced either physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence; 7% of women have been sexually assaulted by someone other than a partner; intimate partners are committing 38% of murders of women, and 200 million women have experienced female genital mutilation (WHO, 2024).

In Tanzania, violence against women is of great magnitude (CAG, 2023; Mosha et al., 2019; Obwana, 2019; Simmons et al., 2020). The country has been witnessing high rates of violence against women. For example, from January to June 2018 only, there were about 1,218 women reported rape incidences in Tanzania (Simmons et al., 2020). A report by CAG (2023) observed that in the 2019/20 to 2021/22 financial years only, there were 189,522 reported cases in Tanzania. Considering the fact that many of the violence cases go unreported (Borwankar & Sommerfelt, 2008; Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005; UNICEF & SADC, 2023), such statistics imply that there might be more women violence cases in Tanzania than what is currently being recognised.

Lake zone areas have for a long time been a leading victim of violence against women (Saramba, 2021; The Citizen, 2021). However, many of the violence cases go unrecognised and unreported. The usual preventive measures against violence against women, as in other regions in Tanzania, remain in the hands of the few entities which still have limited hands to handle and act against the violence because of limited access to reliable information they are experiencing. Furthermore, the affected subjects seldom seek or access to local authorities for reporting the act of violence due to fear of whom they might encounter, considering that the majority of the leaders are men with whom they may have an association with the family and social norms that express beating and pleasuring a man as being a woman's social responsibility (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005; UNICEF & SADC, 2023).

There is, therefore, a dearth of evidence-based information to describe the magnitude and measures to address the problems under the causative domain and reveal the most vulnerable

³ Institute for Economics and Peace

categories, apart from the available statistics on the occurrence of incidences of violence against this group of the population, a situation that makes it difficult to initiate any appropriate response mechanism to fight the situation. Local governments seldom collect information on violence against women except by relying on a few reported cases to local authorities and children and gender desks. Several studies have revealed that the victims of violence rarely report cases of violence to the local authorities (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005; UNICEF & SADC, 2023). According to Garcia-Moreno et al. (2005), approximately 1 out of every three women who had experienced domestic violence told no one about their experience, and 60% of all women experiencing violence had never sought help from any formal authority. Similarly, UNICEF & SADC (2023) observed that one-third of the people who experienced the violence never sought help, 11 per cent told someone but never sought help, and only 54 per cent sought help related to the experienced violence. This empirical evidence implies, among other things, that violent cases are, in most cases, underreported.

It is, therefore, difficult to implement any response mechanism while lacking the correct evidence-based information on what is the magnitude of violation, where and who are the subjects of violation, what are the most vulnerable categories

among these groups and why, under which domains in the household most violence occurs and what are the appropriate measures to address the situation. This study, therefore, intends to bridge this gap by investigating violence against women in the Lake Victoria Zone. Specifically, the study intended to examine the women's experience of violence in the study area, examine the determinants of violence against women, and analyse the current violence preventive mechanism in the study area.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Study Area

The study was conducted in Tarime District, one of the districts in the Lake Victoria zone. Two wards, namely Mwema and Susuni wards, were involved in this study. This region has great economic potential, mostly emanating from the presence of Lake Victoria. The zone has, for a couple of years, been a victim of violence against women (Saramba, 2021; The Citizen, 2021). Violence cases are alleged to have increased recently following climatic variations that affected households' livelihood potentials. Households in this area mostly depend on fishing, subsistence agriculture, and petty livestock activities. The majority of these livelihood activities are conducted by men, creating a gender division of labour, which results in power imbalances and only a few women having ownership of resources.

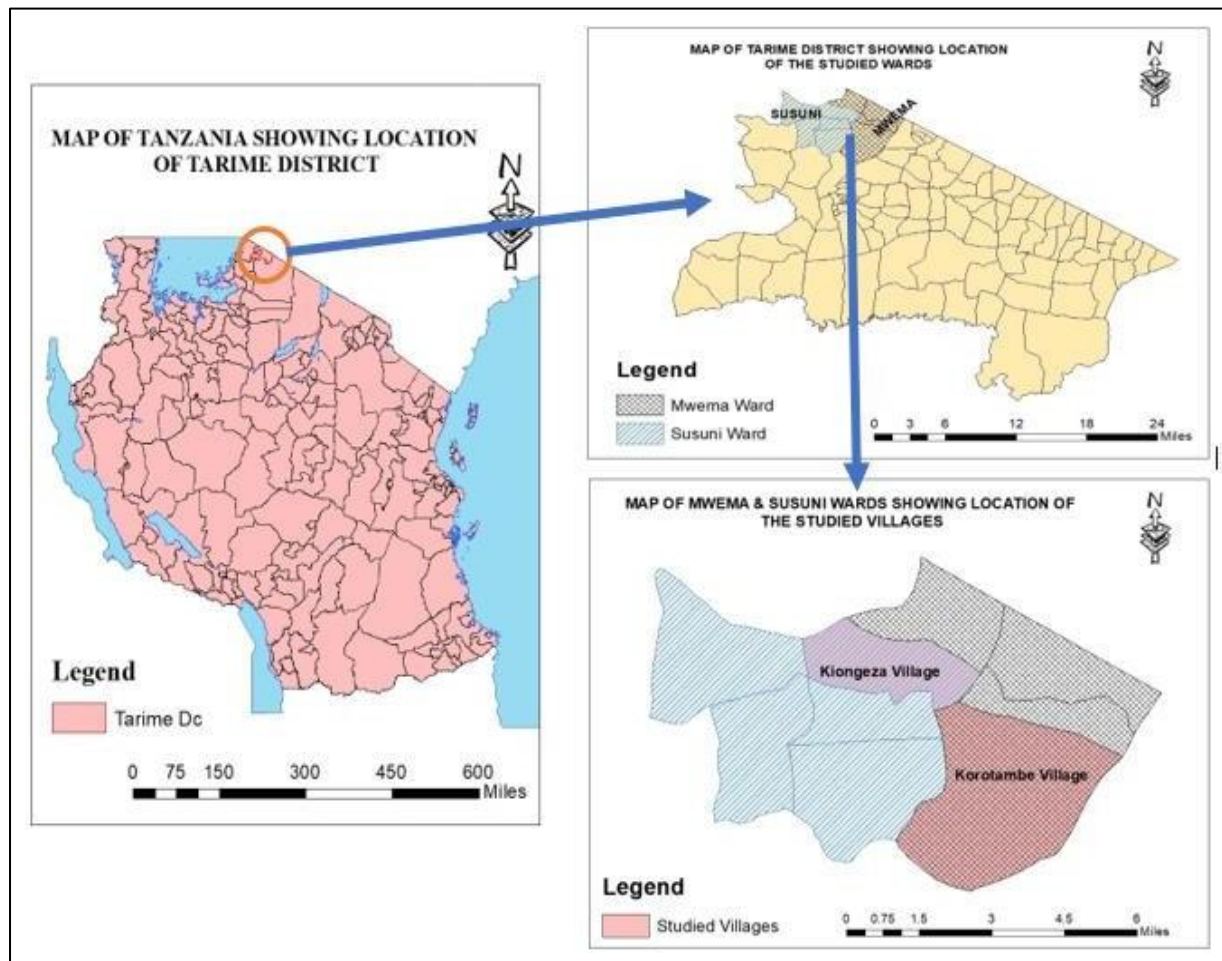


Figure 1: Location of the study area

2.2. Sampling Unit, Unit of Analysis and Sampling Procedures

The household was the sampling unit for this study, while the individual female aged 15 years and above was the unit of analysis. That is, the selected households were surveyed, and from each household, any woman aged 15 and above was interviewed to obtain the answer for the objectives of this study.

The sampling procedure was that two wards from the district were randomly selected, and from these wards, two villages, namely Korotambe from Mwema ward and Kiongera from Susuni ward, were selected using the same random selection technique. Then, using a sampling frame collected from village leaders, a proportion of random sampling was applied to select 97 households required for this study. All female individuals aged 15 years and

above were interviewed in these selected households. Purposive sampling was used to select key informants and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) participants. A total of 4 key informants were interviewed, and two focus groups were conducted in the study area.

2.3. Method of data collection and analysis

The data collection methods were a Household Survey (HS) using questionnaires, a Key Informant Interview (KII), and a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) using checklists. This study collected both qualitative and quantitative data. Data analysis was done using SPSS and involved both descriptive and inferential statistics. Data was presented using tables, texts, charts, and direct transcription of selected information from respondents.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Sample Characteristics

The sample characteristics of respondents indicate that about 149 respondents from 97 households were surveyed. This implies that the surveyed households had an average of about two females aged 15 years and above. This small number might be attributed to two-fold reasons. First, it might be due to the fact that some of the female individuals in the household were younger than 15 years, which was not required in this study. Secondly, it is possible that some of the female individuals in the household were married and subsequently moved out of the household. This is due to the fact that this study was conducted in a rural setting where many female girls get married while they are very young, a scenario that might have contributed to the observed results (Buyobe, 2022).

The age distribution (Table 1) indicates that the majority of respondents (34.9 %) had an age ranging from the early 20s to early 30s, followed by women aged between 35 to 49 and young teenagers

below 20 years, who accounted for 24.8 and 20.8 per cent, respectively. The remaining respondents (19.4%) were over 50 years inclusive. Respondents' positions in the household varied accordingly, with the majority (60.4 %) of respondents being married women. There was also a substantial proportion of children in the household (14.8), in-laws (11.4%) and house girls (6.0%). Other categories of respondents occupied less than 5 per cent inclusive (See Table 1).

The analysis of education level revealed that many respondents (58.4%) had a primary education, followed by the proportion of respondents (28.9%) with ordinary secondary education. None of the respondents had either advanced-level secondary education or any higher learning education qualification. This scenario can be attributed to the fact that the study was conducted in rural areas and involved females, of whom many rural households do not give much priority to women's education (Buyobe, 2022; Michau et al., 2022).

Table 1: Sample Characteristics of Respondent

| Response Category | Frequency | Percent |
|---|-----------|---------|
| Age of Respondent | | |
| < 20 | 31 | 20.8 |
| 20 - 34 | 52 | 34.9 |
| 35 - 49 | 37 | 24.8 |
| 50 - 64 | 23 | 15.4 |
| 65+ | 6 | 4.0 |
| Respondent's Position in the Household | | |
| Wife | 90 | 60.4 |
| House girl | 9 | 6.0 |
| In-law | 17 | 11.4 |
| Child | 22 | 14.8 |
| Grand Parent | 3 | 2.0 |
| Other relatives | 8 | 5.4 |
| Education Level of Respondent | | |
| No formal education | 17 | 11.4 |
| Primary education | 87 | 58.4 |
| Ordinary level Secondary education | 43 | 28.9 |
| College (non-higher learning) | 2 | 1.3 |

3.2. Prevalence of Violence Against Women

3.2.1. Women's Experience of Violence

The study investigated the extent to which women experience violence in the study area. Results (Table 2) indicated that nearly every woman (97.3) had

experienced at least one form of violence in their lifetime. This result is higher than the one reported by CAG (2023), and this might be attributed to the range of components included in the definition of violence used in the CAG (2023) study.

Table 2: Women's Experience of Violence

| | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| In their lifetime | | |
| Yes | 145 | 97.3 |
| No | 4 | 2.7 |
| In 12 months before the survey | | |
| Yes | 95 | 63.8 |
| No | 54 | 34.2 |

The result further indicated that in the past 12 months before the survey, more than two-thirds of women (63.8%) had experienced violence of any kind. This result creates an impression among others that violence has been an archetypical life experience for female individuals in the surveyed society. A higher prevalence of violence against women in Tanzania has been reported in other studies (Buyobe, 2022; CAG, 2023; Saramba, 2021; The Citizen, 2021). CAG (2023) attributes such high magnitude to the inadequate measures designed to eliminate violence against women, inadequate staff, and insufficient skills and knowledge possessed by members of the protection committee.

3.2.2. Categories of Violence Experienced by Women

Table 3 indicates categories of violence experienced by women examined across various sample characteristics. The results indicate that the violence category experienced by women exhibited almost a similar scenario for both "women's lifetime" as well as in "the past 12 months before the survey." However, physical and psychological violence was slightly experienced by the majority of women relative to sexual

violence, a very similar conclusion to the one reached by Muluneh et al. (2020) after performing a systematic review and meta-analysis of Sub-Saharan African countries (Table 3). When examined across the age of a woman, a woman's position in the household, and the education level of a woman, the results revealed that violent acts were mainly experienced by women aged between 21 and 34. Teenagers (below 20 years) are also reported to have experienced a substantial proportion of violence. The result further revealed that violence experienced by women tended to decline with age. This scenario may be explained as follows. At this young age which is demographically characterised by singulate age at first marriage (Brass, 2016; Siegel & Swanson, 2004), couples are inexperienced and not matured enough to keep up with the weakness of his/her partner and handling of various marital issues. This behaviour culminates in acts of violence (Moshia et al., 2019). As ages increase, couples become mature and gain much experience in handling various issues arising in marriage, hence reducing cases of violence.

Table 3: Categories of Violence Experienced

| Sample Characteristics | Women's lifetime | | | In the past 12 months | | |
|--|------------------|----------|---------------|-----------------------|----------|---------------|
| | Sexual | Physical | Psychological | Sexual | Physical | Psychological |
| Age of a woman | | | | | | |
| <20 | 25(19.7) | 28(19.6) | 29(20.1) | 18(21.2) | 20(21.3) | 20(21.1) |
| 21-34 | 46(36.2) | 50(35) | 50(34.7) | 39(45.9) | 42(44.7) | 42(44.2) |
| 35-49 | 33(26) | 37(25.9) | 36(25) | 23(27.1) | 25(26.6) | 25(26.3) |
| 50-64 | 18(14.2) | 22(15.4) | 23(16) | 4(4.7) | 6(6.4) | 7(7.4) |
| 65+ | 5(2.9) | 6(4.2) | 6(4.2) | 1(1.2) | 1(1.1) | 1(1.1) |
| A woman's position in the household | | | | | | |
| Wife | 75(59) | 86(60.1) | 86(59.7) | 47(55.3) | 52(55.3) | 53(55.8) |
| House girl | 10(7.9) | 11(7.7) | 11(7.6) | 9(10.6) | 10(10.6) | 10(10.5) |
| In-law | 16(12.6) | 16(11.2) | 16(11.1) | 13(15.3) | 13(13.8) | 13(13.7) |
| Child | 17(13.4) | 20(14) | 21(14.6) | 12(14.1) | 14(14.9) | 14(14.7) |
| Other relatives | 9(7.1) | 10(7) | 10(6.9) | 4(4.7) | 5(5.3) | 5(5.3) |
| Education level of a Woman | | | | | | |
| No formal education | 13(10.2) | 17(11.9) | 17(11.8) | 5(5.9) | 7(7.4) | 7(7.4) |
| Primary education | 76(59.8) | 85(59.4) | 85(59) | 51(60) | 56(59.6) | 57(60) |
| Secondary education | 36(28.3) | 39(27.3) | 40(27.8) | 27(31.8) | 29(30.9) | 29(30.5) |
| College and higher | 2(1.6) | 2(1.4) | 2(1.4) | 2(2.4) | 2(2.1) | 2(2.1) |

***Figures in Brackets are Row percent**

The results (Table 3) further revealed that wives in the household reported having experienced violence of any form more than any other respondent category in the household (See Table 3 above). Other studies (CAG, 2023; Mosha et al., 2019) have also observed a similar scenario. According to LHRC (2023), the culture of economic dependence, in which a woman with deprived economic power consistently depends on her partner, perpetuates the observed trend. The analysis of the education level of a woman against categories of violence revealed that violence was higher among people with primary education. Women with secondary and those with no formal education had substantially experienced violence of all forms. This result implies, among other things, that violence affects women of almost any educational background.

3.2.3. Specific Acts of Violence Inflicted to Women

Table 4 displays the violent acts for each specific category following a question asked respondents to state a specific act of violence ever experienced either in their lifetime or in the past 12 months before the period of this survey. Findings revealed that buttock touching, sex organ touching, undressing, and breast touching occupied a more significant proportion of responses than the rest of the sexual violence acts (See Table 4). Regarding the physical category of violence, beating and/or slapping occupied the most significant proportion relative to other responses (See Table 4). Female genital mutilation experienced by women in the last 12 months occupied the lowest proportion of response (8.7%). This was unexpected, considering that the study was conducted in Tarime, where the practice

is more prominent (Saramba, 2021). Such a lower proportion might have been attributed to the current government effort to end such practice in the study area (CAG, 2023; World Bank, 2022a, 2022b). Further investigation on

emotional/psychological violence (Table 4) revealed that insult and intimidation were relatively experienced by a larger proportion of respondents than any other violence type.

Table 4: Specific Acts of violence inflicted on women*

| Violence acts | In their lifetime | | 12 Months before Survey | |
|---|-------------------|------|-------------------------|------|
| | Responses | | Responses | |
| | N | % | N | % |
| Sexual Violence | | | | |
| Forced intercourse | 19 | 9.8 | 13 | 10.3 |
| Sex organ touching | 35 | 18.0 | 25 | 19.8 |
| Undressed | 36 | 18.6 | 20 | 15.9 |
| Forced Kissing | 13 | 6.7 | 5 | 4.0 |
| Forced hugging | 12 | 6.2 | 9 | 7.1 |
| Breast touching | 21 | 10.8 | 16 | 12.7 |
| Buttock touching | 41 | 21.1 | 27 | 21.4 |
| Receiving Sex for a fake promise | 17 | 8.8 | 11 | 8.7 |
| Physical Violence | | | | |
| Beating/slapping | 138 | 36.6 | 91 | 38.4 |
| Physical brutalities | 48 | 12.7 | 31 | 13.1 |
| Use of physical force | 42 | 11.1 | 26 | 11.0 |
| Threat to use a weapon | 32 | 8.5 | 32 | 13.5 |
| Thrown out of the house | 42 | 11.1 | 37 | 15.6 |
| Female Genital Mutilation | 75 | 19.9 | 20 | 8.4 |
| Emotional/psychological violence | | | | |
| Intimidation | 105 | 20.2 | 65 | 19.6 |
| Blackmailing | 5 | 1.0 | 3 | 0.9 |
| Denied social liberty | 71 | 13.7 | 48 | 14.5 |
| Imposed attitudes | 15 | 2.9 | 10 | 3.0 |
| Opinion criticized | 46 | 8.8 | 29 | 8.7 |
| Denied the right to talk | 78 | 15.0 | 49 | 14.8 |
| Denied access to money | 51 | 9.8 | 33 | 9.9 |
| Forced Separation | 20 | 3.8 | 13 | 3.9 |
| Insult/abuses | 127 | 24.4 | 81 | 24.4 |
| Death Threats | 2 | 0.4 | 1 | 0.3 |

*Multiple responses

An overall observation by this study from findings presented in Table 4 above is that those women's violence acts that are mostly considered by the public as less extreme, hence lack emphasis in public discourse, were reported to have been

experienced by a large proportion of women relative to generally discussed violence acts. Much public dialogue as many of the interventions focuses on acts including raping, femicides, female

genital mutilation, etc. (LHRC⁴, 2023), while acts such as “buttock touching, undressing, insults, denied liberty, breast touching, etc. are given less emphasis and normally less targeted.

3.2.4 Perpetrator of Violence

This study investigated the perpetrators of violence among women in the study area. Responses from respondents (Table 5) indicated that intimate partners occupied a large proportion of both physical (32.4%) and emotional violence (27.6%) and had a substantial proportion of all responses in sexual violence (27.4%). Other studies (CAG, 2023; Muluneh et al., 2020) have also found intimate partners to be a leading cause of violence among married women. A study by LHRC (2023) not only found an intimate partner as the leading cause of violence but also the main cause of women killing. Another study by Muluneh et al. (2020) observed that intimate partner violence in Sub-Saharan Africa was 35.5%. According to Michau et

al. (2022), this scenario is attributed to the fact that women are culturally considered the property of men with no power over their lives. Similarly, LHRC (2023) argued that the culture of giving dowry makes men associate with purchases of a woman as a commodity, hence perpetuating violence, an argument which supports the findings by Alesina et al. (2016). The study by LHRC (2023) also earmarked that the culture of economic dependence, in which a woman with deprived economic power consistently depends on her partner, contributes significantly to intimate partner violence.

This study also found that work partners occupied a substantial proportion of responses in almost all categories of violence, occupying 52.1% of all responses in sexual violence and 12.4% and 15.5% of all responses in the physical and emotional categories, respectively (See Table 5).

Table 5. Perpetrator of Violence against women

| Perpetrators of violence | Sexual | | Physical | | Emotional | |
|--------------------------|--------|---------|----------|---------|-----------|---------|
| | N | Percent | N | Percent | N | Percent |
| Intimate partner | 32 | 27.4 | 115 | 32.4 | 112 | 27.6 |
| Family member | 4 | 3.4 | 66 | 18.6 | 75 | 18.5 |
| Local leader | 1 | 0.9 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.2 |
| Comm member | 17 | 14.5 | 38 | 10.7 | 78 | 19.2 |
| Work partner | 61 | 52.1 | 44 | 12.4 | 63 | 15.5 |
| Church member | 1 | 0.9 | 1 | 0.3 | 1 | 0.2 |
| Church leader | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.2 |
| Father | 0 | 0 | 45 | 12.7 | 23 | 5.7 |
| Brother-in-law | 1 | 0.9 | 2 | 0.6 | 2 | 0.5 |
| Father in law | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 3.7 |
| Mother in law | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 35 | 8.6 |
| Stranger | 0 | 0 | 44 | 12.4 | 0 | 0 |

3.3. Determinants of Violence among Women

The binary logistic regression analysis was conducted to investigate the impact

of 5 predictor variables (age of a woman, education level in terms of number of years spent in school, marital status, marriage type, and respondents' position in the household) on the likelihood that a

⁴ Legal and Human Rights Center

woman will report experiencing any violence in the 12 months before the survey. A preliminary analysis of linearity assumption violation was tested, and it was found to be sound. As tested by the omnibus test, the whole model and its predictors were found significant (chi-squared, open paren 8, N equals, 124 close parens 28.698, $p < 0.01$). The goodness of fit of the model was tested using Hosmer and Lemeshow and indicated that the model was a good predictor of a dependent variable chi-squared variable (chi-squared $\chi^2(8) = 8.783$, $p = 0.3617$). The Cox & Snell R^2 was 0.207 and the Nagelkerke R^2

was 0.28 both indicating that the amount of variation in the dependent variable explained by the model. 20.7 % and 28.1%, respectively which are all good. The model correctly classified 75.0% of variabilities in a dependent variable. The analysis yielded a statistically significant Odds Ratio (OR) of 0.928, $p < 0.05$ for the age of respondents, and OR of 0.03, $p < 0.05$ for a child to the household head. The Wald chi-square for the age of a woman and respondents' position being a child was 8.438 and 6.115, which are significantly high, while the standard error of the estimate (S.E) is 0.026 and 1.422 respectively, which are sufficiently small (see Table 6).

Table 6: Determinants of Violence against Women

| Predictors | β | SE | Wald | df | sig | Exp β | CI for Exp β | |
|----------------------|---------|---------|-------|----|------|-------------|--------------------|--------|
| | | | | | | | Lower | Upper |
| Age | -.075 | .026 | 8.438 | 1 | .004 | .928 | .882 | .976 |
| Education level | -.085 | .082 | 1.075 | 1 | .300 | .919 | .782 | 1.079 |
| Marital status | -.571 | .612 | .870 | 1 | .351 | .565 | .170 | 1.875 |
| Marriage type | .087 | .474 | .033 | 1 | .855 | 1.091 | .430 | 2.763 |
| Respondents position | | | 7.938 | 5 | .160 | | | |
| Wife (1), | -1.204 | .982 | 1.502 | 1 | .220 | .300 | .044 | 2.057 |
| House girl (1), | .174 | 1.487 | .014 | 1 | .907 | 1.190 | .065 | 21.927 |
| In-law (1) | -1.589 | 1.209 | 1.728 | 1 | .189 | .204 | .019 | 2.181 |
| Child (1) | -3.517 | 1.422 | 6.115 | 1 | .013 | .030 | .002 | .482 |
| Other relative (1) | -20.72 | 2241.48 | .000 | 1 | .999 | .000 | .000 | . |
| Constant | 5.310 | 1.659 | 10.25 | 1 | .001 | 202.36 | | |

The fact that the age of a woman and the position of a respondent in the household being a child displayed a statistically significant OR implies that the age of a woman and the position of a woman being a child determined the respondents' reporting of experiencing violence in the past 12 months before this survey. The negative signs just behind the coefficient (or $\text{Exp } \beta < 0$) mean a negative relationship. That is, an

increase in the age of a woman by one year reduced the likelihood of a respondent experiencing violence in the past 12 months. Similarly, the respondent's position in the household being a child reduced the likelihood that a respondent would report experiencing violence in the past 12 months before the period of this survey. The Wald chi-square value was the most significant value for these two variables, indicating the largest contribution to the likelihood

of respondents reporting experiencing violence in the past 12 months before this survey. Similarly, a lower value of the standard error of estimate (SE) for these two variables (0.026 and 1.422), respectively, indicates that the observed estimates are very close to the true value.

In layman's language, this can be interpreted as violent acts in the household decreasing with the increase in age and that a child experienced lower violent acts relative to other respondents with different positions in the household. Other variables include education level, marital status, marriage type, and respondents' position being either a wife or household. In-law or other relative could not predict the likelihood of a woman's reporting experiencing violence in the past 12 months before this survey. Although a study by Mosha et al. (2019) in Iringa, Tanzania, observed that marital status and marriage type were among other variables that determined respondents experiencing violence in the household, this study could not establish such a relationship. The difference might be attributed to the differences in focus of violence. While a study by Mosha et al. (2019) focused on Intimate Partners Violence (IPV), this study focuses on violence in general.

3.4. Current Violence Preventive Mechanism

Tanzania's mechanism for ending violence against women is detailed in national plans for ending violence against women and children (NPA-VAWC) (URT, 2016). This plan serves as a blueprint for ending violence, putting together the previous plans and strategies. Among others, the plan emphasises better coordination and collaboration at all levels; focuses on addressing norms and values related to violence; strategizes on enhancing parenting and family support relationships related to violence; strengthens response and support

services through the establishment of strong institutions and entities for fighting violence; and emphasises implementation and enforcement of laws. This study examined various aspects to see if the implementation is done as per NPA-VAWC.

3.4.1. Entities for Handling Violence Against Women

This study examined the existing entities institutionalised for handling women's violence. Findings from key informant interviews revealed the existence of several entities that are entrusted with the responsibility of handling violence against women in the study area. These include the local leaders and the police force (possibly meaning the children and gender police desk). The procedure is that the plaintiff must report the case of violence to the local government leaders or the police force. Further investigation revealed that there was a so-called reconciliatory committee composed of 8 members (3 females and five men) operating at the ward level in the study area. The role of local leaders and the reconciliatory committee, as stated in this interview, was both reconciliatory as well as forwarding unresolved cases to the police force. On the other hand, the role of the police force is to initiate an investigation of allegations and then prosecute the offender.

While the National Plan of Action to End Violence against women and Children (NPA-VAWC) demands that the protection committees be established at the ward and village level that should convene quarterly to discuss violence matters (World Bank, 2022a), these entities were not mentioned in the study area as among the entities available to deal with women's violence concerns. This may lead one to conclude that either these committees are non-existent or members do not know the roles they are supposed to play. CAG (2023) found that

Women and Children Protection Committees have not been established in most villages and wards as demanded by NPA-VAWC. Even in a few areas where they have been established, their capacity (in terms of knowledge, skills, tools, and motivation) was inadequately developed (CAG, 2023).

Moreover, the report by CAG (2023) narrates the presence of Community Case Workers (CCW) and Community Social Workers (CSW) at the village/Mtaa and ward levels and the roles they are supposed to play. The flow of information is that Community Case Workers (CCW) collect information and submit it to the lead Community Case Workers (LCCW) at the village level, who are all volunteers from the village/Mtaa. Then, the LCCW at the village level collects all reports and submits them to the Community Social Workers (CSW) at the village level, who shall then submit the report to the Community Social Workers at the ward level (CAG, 2023). An investigation done by this study in the study area revealed that these workers are non-existent in the study area. Information on violence cases is usually received through whistleblower or complaints from the community or victims themselves.

The key informant interview with local leaders revealed that they are actively promoting gender awareness and providing information on accessing assistance. This was earmarked by the statement from one of the key informants as translated into equivalent English language as follows:

"We have done a lot to identify various cases of violence and create awareness among women about how and where to get assistance. However, the biggest challenge is that we receive little cooperation among

community members. Some women are not willing to share information on violence in fear of the repercussions that could happen to the actor."

This study was interested in knowing whether the efforts made by local authorities follow a specific guideline or action plan that explicitly states what should be done in a particular financial year. Responses from key informant interviews revealed that local leaders seem to be unaware of the existence of any guideline or action plan for implementing activities related to ending violence against women. In most cases, local leaders perform these activities in response to the higher authority's directives and instructions or to specific acts of violence reported in the society.

Implementation without adhering to a specific guideline or action plan may lead to inadequate coordination of the implementation as well as inadequate monitoring of the progress in the implementation of the measures for ending violence against women. Moreover, a CAG (2023) report observed that local leaders possess inadequate knowledge, skills, tools, and motivation to deal with violence cases.

3.4.2 Women's use of Institutionalized entities against Violence Acts

3.4.2.1 Women's Reaction on Cases of Violence

The study investigated how women reacted in the face of violence. The majority of responses (56.6%) indicated that women who encountered violence normally busted into tears, and more than a quarter of responses were that they reported the cases to their parents or guardians. Only a small proportion (0.4 %) of responses sought legal assistance.

Table 7: Women's Reactions to violence acts

| Repose mechanism | Responses | | Percent of cases |
|---|-----------|---------|------------------|
| | N | Percent | |
| Burst into tears | 142 | 56.6 | 95.9 |
| I struggled and defended myself | 7 | 2.8 | 4.7 |
| I fled and escaped | 26 | 10.4 | 17.6 |
| I screamed for help | 12 | 4.8 | 8.1 |
| I sought a legal assistant | 1 | 0.4 | 0.7 |
| I reported the case to my relatives/parents | 63 | 25.1 | 42.6 |

The fact that only 0.4% of all responses were that women who encountered violence

sought legal assistance exhibits the lower use of legal procedures and hence corroborates findings by Garcia-Moreno et al. (2005) who observed that 60% of all women experiencing violence had never sought help from any formal authority. This scenario questions the effectiveness of the awareness campaign claimed to be created.

4.4.2.2. Reasons for lower use of the institutionalised entities

Responses from a focus group discussion were asked to state the extent to which women use institutionalized entities in reporting violence cases. Respondents had a common agreement that these entities are not used. This perhaps corroborates findings in Table 7 in this study, where it was observed that only 0.4% sought legal assistance. This study further investigated the reason for the low usage of these entities. The overall responses from respondents were that fear of the distortion of their image among society and repercussions determined their decisions. Supporting this finding, one participant, while being

supported by others, earmarked the following:

"..... How many of these cases shall you report? Because they are too many. You can spend the whole day, seven days in a week at a police station. And after you have managed to do all these, how will it be your image among your people? You will live like a desolate person."

Other studies have also reported low use of institutionalised entities (CAG, 2023; Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005; LHRC, 2023). According to Garcia-Moreno et al. (2005) approximately 1(one) out of every 3 women who had experienced domestic violence told no one about their experience and 60% of all women experiencing violence had never sought help from any formal authority. A report by CAG (2023) attributed this behaviour by a long-lived culture of silence among women associated with stigma, fear and alienation that discouraged reporting of the violence acts. LHRC (2023) earmarked that the culture of financial dependence among women created a culture of fear of the repercussion of what could happen to her partner and the whole household hence keeping silent.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1. Conclusion

This study examined the prevalence of violence against women in the study area, investigated the determinants of violence in the study area, and analysed the current preventive mechanism in combat violence in the study area. Findings by this study indicated that nearly all women aged 15 and above had experienced at least one form of violence in their life time and a substantial proportion of women had experienced violence in the past 12 months before the period of this survey. The findings also revealed that the less targeted violence acts and those that lacked substantial public dialogue were the most reported to have been experienced by women. The

study further revealed that intimate partners were the leading cause of physical and emotional violence and the second leading cause of sexual violence after work partners. Moreover, the study found that work partners were a leading cause of sexual violence and occupied a substantial proportion of both physical and emotional violence. Furthermore, the findings revealed that violence was higher among women aged between 20-34 years. Wives in the household experienced a higher proportion of violence than any other respondent category. It was also observed that an increase in age by one year decreased the likelihood of respondents reporting to have experienced violence in the past 12 months before the period of this survey. Similarly, being a child in the household decreased the likelihood that the respondents will report to have experienced violence in the past 12 months before the period of this survey, and that protection entities at the lower level, as proposed by NPA-VAWC, are non-existent and measures to handle violence are vested in the hands of a few entities with limited capacity to handle violence. Their limitation lies in insufficient skills to handle violence cases and limited access to information on some cases of violence.

4.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings and discussion, this study recommends that: programmes promoting awareness of violence should persist at the community level to ensure that all women of all ages and other demographic characteristics are transformed and be aware of their rights so that they can be in a position to fight against violence; strategies and action plans for ending violence against women should be established and used to guide implementation. These plans and strategies should be known to the local leaders in order to ensure efficient coordination in implementation; the

protection entities at the local level should be created, and their capacity (in terms of skills and knowledge to handle violence cases) should be enhanced. The government should devise a mechanism that will ensure a harmonised system to capture currently unreported incidences of violence cases. This study proposes the establishment of a Demographic Surveillance System (DSS). This is a regular system of recording important demographic events and can be used to capture unreported cases of violence against women.

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