



The Impact of Domestic Gender Based Violence on the Psychological Well-Being of Men in Luwingu Township, Northern Province - Zambia

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Abstract: Men endure many types of violence which have a wide range of effects on them. For instance, among many other things, they are subjected to physical, emotional and psychological abuse. This study was set to assess the impact of gender based domestic violence on the psychological well-being of men in Luwingu Township in the Northern Province of Zambia. The study was guided by Transactional Analysis (TA) theory, a psychoanalytic theory developed by Eric Berne. It adopted a convergent parallel mixed-method design where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously. The target population was 90 while the sample size was 71 participants. Slovin formula was adopted to determine the sample size for the study. Convenience and purposeful sampling was used to select the sample population. To collect qualitative data, a semi-structured interview guide was administered through phone call interview recording while focus group discussion was facilitated by the research agent. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data. Descriptive analysis was done using SPSS version 21.0 to analyze the quantitative data. The qualitative data was transcribed using verbatim and presented in narrative format. The study established that some men in Luwingu Township were subjected to a range of domestic violence in form of physical, psychological, emotional and economical which affected their self-confidence, fostering feelings of helplessness, frustration, disappointment, depression, anxiety, loneliness, marginalization, inferiority, anger and shame. The study findings also indicated that stereotyping of culturally assigned roles of men has placed them at a disadvantage making them conceal abuses to avoid losing the 'community image of masculinity' and ridicule from the society. The study recommended that government and private stakeholders should sensitize the community on domestic abuse on male victims and encourage men to report occurrences and a further study should be conducted to give further strategic interventions.

Key words: Men, Domestic, gender based violence, Psychological Well-being

1.1 Study background

Domestic violence exists in homes, culture and society at large. Women, men, children and youths are affected by different types of domestic violence in many ways. The secretiveness of domestic abuse, however, makes it frequently an unacknowledged social issue. The invisibleness of the issue is mostly

ascribed to the idea that it is a personal family affair that shouldn't be shared with others. This study looked at how domestic violence psychologically affect men in homes specially men who are married. Generally, society does not seem to believe that some men suffer violence in their marital homes. Men who are victims of violence in their marital homes face intimidation in public since it is not culturally acceptable for men to employ violence (Chibwe, 2023). Men who suffer from such violence often do not talk about their experiences because of shame, low self-esteem, cultural beliefs and the society understanding of physical power of the man (Kathia, 2022).

The public perception is that men are much stronger than women, therefore, if a man victimizes a woman, the reaction is opposite as and this is taken as women abuse that can lead to even legal action. The public perception is historical and has led to Gender-based violence (GBV) being framed and understood exclusively as a women's issue (Chibwe, 2023). Gender-based violence and maltreatment of women and girls are nearly interchangeable in today's vocabulary. Male who are abused by women are left out and receive less attention. For instance, the first formal definition of gender-based violence was provided in two different paragraphs of the United Nations (UN) Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women in 1993, as follows: Article 1: "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life."(United Nations, 1995 as quoted by Mundando, 2015). The second article, which is an expansion of the first, claims that, "gender based violence encompasses but is not limited to acts of physical, sexual and psychological violence within the family, child sexual abuse, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation, rape and sexual abuse, sexual harassment in the workplace and educational institutions, trafficking in women and forced prostitution." In its subsequent assembly in 1995, the United Nations stated that, "violence was an intentional act, either threatened or actual against oneself, another person and which either resulted in or had a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation" (United Nations, 1995). The two articles by United Nations did not include men in the definition of gender based violence.

Despite data indicating that males are mostly responsible for gender violence, we shouldn't be blinded to the fact that women can also be perpetrators of sexual violence. (Nthiana and Odhiambo, 2021). Compared to women, who tend to confide in friends and family, most males prefer to keep their problems a secret, which affects their mental health. Men have been victims of sexual assault, but nobody ever believes them. GBV has a huge long-lasting impact. Men often feel powerless if they can't provide for their families, they feel that they have lost the respect of their communities and partners and even themselves. This often leads to domestic violence, depression, abandonment of families and other tragic consequences (Kanthia 2022). Additionally, it can result in emotional damage, a sense of low self-worth, lack of discontentment, mental despair, fear, mental tension, and bewilderment about what to do or who to turn to.

Apparently, there doesn't seem to be a tool that guarantees that all gender is treated with equal or neutral and there are no programs which are addressing domestic violence in both genders (Chelangat, 2016). Because gender neutrality is not addressed, male victims experience feelings of shame, isolation and fear, which harm them. Men feel that society does not expect them to be victims of violence but rather to be fearless, very powerful, and dominating with authority (Steinmetz and Lucca, 1999 as quoted by Chelangat 2016). Men are less likely to report when they are physically or emotionally abused because they feel intimidated or ashamed about discussing their family problems. It is considerably harder for a man who is being abused by a woman to seek help from law enforcement

office and hospital and counseling center. This makes men to lie out of shame because not even medical officers or a counselor would believe such a man. GBV against males is therefore stigmatized as a result of societal and cultural standards connected with masculinity (Kanthia 2022). However, achieving gender equality means that even men should be listened to and also have community dialogues to end discrimination because they also suffer in silence (Nthiana and Odhiambo, 2021).

From which ever perspective one looks at it, violence is bad and must be opposed at all means, regardless of who or what causes it. Although the literature and awareness campaigns by the government and non-governmental organizations are biased towards women and against men, portraying men as the perpetrators and women as victims of gender-based violence, the fundamental truth is that both men and women are victims of gender-based violence (GBV) and that both men and women cause issues in marital relationships.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

There is gender based violence against men in homes, offices and public places. It seems that some percentages of men are abused by women but it does not seem to be noticed. This is because men who are abused by women feel intimidated by society and culture. They feel ashamed to accept that they can be beaten and violated by women. Men feel embarrassed to admit their vulnerability. Society makes it even worse by seeing such men as weak and irresponsible. According to society, men should not be beaten by women. The other aspect which effect men is that even their fellow men tend to laugh and jeer at them making it impossible to share their feelings and emotions. Some men feel depressed and develop illness that they cannot explain.

It is no longer the debate of whether men are victims of domestic violence or not, but rather how and why men fall victim to women's violence, regardless of the small percentages of such men compared to those of women. Despite this relatively small number of male victims of domestic violence, there are a number of reasons why we should all be concerned with women's violence against men. Some of such reasons are that: all victims (men and women) of violence deserve compassion; support and intervention. It is for this reason that this study examined the impact of domestic gender based violence on the psychological well-Being of men in Luwingu township, Northern Province - Zambia.

1.3 Study objective

The study objective guiding this study was to determine the impact of domestic gender based violence on the psychological well-being of men in Luwingu Township, Northern Province of Zambia.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study may yield findings that may be important in forming the intervention policies and approaches at the Gender Based Violence One-Stop-Centers towards focusing on the plight of men seeking care. In particular, the findings of the study may assist Policy and Advocate Non-Governmental Organizations such as World Vision Zambia to put into focus barriers that male victims of violence face when seeking care and justice. This research might also help improve the family life in terms of peace and stability. Finally, the study may be an important source of literature for scholars interested in documenting the results or effects of domestic abuse on the individual or society and the couple relations.

1.5 Scope and limitations of the study

The scope of this study covered the impact of domestic violence and psychological well-being of men in Luwingu Township, Northern Province of Zambia. The study was delimited to domestic violence in heterosexual relationships particularly married men and women without including the dynamics of violent homosexual relationships. Participants were drawn from only those who are above 18 years old, and having been in marriage for at least one year. Those men who suffer from intimate partner violence but are unmarried were not included in this study. The study used a small sample size which might limit the generalizability of the findings to depict the picture of domestic violence across the country.

1.6 Literature review

This study section presents the theoretical review and empirical review which guided a better understanding of this area from the works of various previous researchers.

1.6.1 Theoretical framework

This study was anchored on Transactional Analysis (TA) theory a psychoanalytic theory and method of therapy, developed by Eric Berne during the 1950s. His ideas for Transactional Analysis (TA) developed from Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory that childhood experiences have a great impact on our lives as adults and this is the basis for the development of our personalities, and psychological or emotional issues that we suffer. In the same way, Berne believed that our childhood experiences, particularly how we are parented, effects the developmental formation of our three ego states (Parent, Adult and Child). This can then unconsciously cause us to replay the same attitudes and behaviors that our parents had towards us to someone else during a conversation, or to respond to communication and interactions with past childhood anxieties and emotions (Stewart, I. 1992). Transactions refer to the communication exchanges between people. During a conversation with someone, the person starting the communication will give the 'transaction stimulus' and then the person receiving this stimulus (or message of communication) will give the 'transaction response'. Transactional analysis is the method used to analyze this process of transactions in communication with others (Stewart, 1992). It requires us to be aware of how we feel, think and behave during interactions with others.

According to Berne, the state we are in during an interaction depends on a few factors, such as how we have been conditioned to act or react from childhood, any past traumas which now cause us to act in a certain way during particular interactions or situations, and how the other person we are interacting with is treating us and what ego state they are in when speaking to us (Berne, 1957 as quoted by Stewart, 1992). According to Berne, three transactions happen during one's interaction with others. The first one is a complementary transaction which takes place when the lines between the ego state of the sender and that of the receiver are parallel. When this complementary transaction happens from adult-to-adult state, it is thought to be the best type of communication, as it is respectful and reduces conflicts.

The second transaction according to Berne, is the crossed transactions which happen when ego states of two people interacting do not match, when the ego state of the sender does not reach the desired or intended ego state of the respondent, thus they respond to the sender in a conflicting way. The third transaction according to Berne, is the ulterior transactions which happen when the sender outwardly gives a message to the receiver that sounds like its coming from his adult state to the receiver's adult state. However, there is actually an underlying, subtle message given from the sender's child or parent

state, with the intention of being received by the responder's child or parent state, thus two messages are sent at the same time. This can be done consciously or unconsciously by the sender. However, according to the theory, the three different transactions in communication are not defined by verbal language and words alone, it also incorporates tone of voice, body language and facial expressions. Berne explained also that interacting with someone from the state of child or parent mode, is often a default or unconscious reaction that is used, and it takes conscious awareness to be able to bring ourselves back into adult mode and interact from that place instead. Berne asserted that dysfunctional behavior is the result of self-limiting decisions made in childhood in the interest of survival. Such decisions culminate in what Berne called the "life script," the pre-conscious life plan that governs the way life is lived out. Lastly, Berne asserted that changing the life script is the aim of transactional analysis psychotherapy. Replacing violent organizational or societal scripting with cooperative non-violent behavior is the aim of other applications of transactional analysis (Stewart, 1992).

Current studies on Transactional Analysis (TA) appear to be promising in its ability to improve relationships and decrease conflict, improve individual life satisfaction including self-esteem. For instance, Nayeri, Lotfi, and Noorani (2014), provided 15 couples with group transactional analysis sessions, the couples attended eight sessions, each of 90 minutes. The couples originally had very low scores of rated intimacy levels, when tested again after the eight Transactional Analysis sessions they showed significantly increased intimacy levels between each 15 couples, this increase remained stable when retested three months later. This suggests that Transactional Analysis is a good educational and therapy tool to use to help improve intimacy and bonding in romantic relationships. Berne's Transactional Theory will be applicable to this study in the sense that whatever men and women experience in their homes, the reaction depended on the strength of the adult state. The goal of Transaction Analysis is to help an individual gain and maintain autonomy by strengthening the adult state, awareness, spontaneity and capacity to copy; thereby improving communication skills and relationships with others, whilst decreasing conflicts.

1.6.2 Empirical review

Okpalaenwe (2014), defines culture as the shared values, traditions, norms, customs, arts, history, folklore and institutions of a group of people. Another use of term "culture" according to Okpalaenwe, is to describe the beliefs and practices of another society, particularly where these are seen as closely linked with tradition or religion. However, culture is more than that. Culture is part of the fabric of every society, including our own. Culture shapes the way things are done and our understanding of why this should be so. According to Pace (2022), culture is the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or a social group. It includes not only arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs.

Pace (2022), talks about culture as a contributing factor to domestic gender based violence. She suggested that when two people from different cultures decide to be wedded it is necessary that they both first become acquainted with the other person's culture. It might seem exciting at first, but with time, cultural differences can play as one of the common causes of domestic violence. What might seem appropriate to one's culture could be not appreciated to the other spouse. And this will create one of the significant causes of family violence. If couples do not adopt cultural differences with a conscious approach, this can lead to domestic violence causes. Pace observed that this can ultimately put the future in question: how to raise the kids; which cultural ideology to follow; and so on and so

forth. She testifies that a lot comes into the scene if couples don't share cultural compatibility and/or disrespect each other's choices (Pace, 2022).

According to the World Report on Violence and Health by World Health Organization (2021), culture plays a significant role in creating and perpetuating Gender Based Violence. Traditional attitudes towards women and men around the world contribute to the perpetuation of GBV through stereotypical roles assigned to men and women respectively. These roles which are socially determined constrain women's ability to exercise choices that would improve their lives while maximizing opportunities for men. Therefore, domestic violence prevention strategies need deeper understanding of the fundamental causes of this violence.

The report by the World Health Organization (WHO 2021), also highlighted cultural factors to influence domestic violence as indicated by high acceptability of male against female domestic violence. This was seen in the 70 percent male justification and 90 percent female justification of wife beating by men. According to World Health Organization specific causes of violence are mostly rooted in culture included women neglecting household chores; women disobeying their husbands; women's refusal of sex; arguments over money; suspicions of infidelity; women's insistence on use of condoms; use of contraception without permission and women suspected of being HIV positive. Plan Zambia (2018), a Non-Governmental Organization operating in Zambia took a study in selected Districts in Zambia entitled Gender-Based Violence: a Situation in Chadiza, Chibombo, Mansa and Kasama." The study was commissioned and published by Plan Norway. Plan Zambia set out to establish the contribution of some Zambian cultural practices to gender based violence. The study was basically qualitative using participatory data collection tools of focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The sample of the study was drawn from court officials, police and violence survivor testimonies.

According to the findings by Plan Zambia (2018), physical and sexual violence against women was common as evident in forced early marriages for girls and defilement for younger children, while psychological violence against men was as established in men being forced into sexual cleansing activities in which they were forced to have sex with women whose spouses died. Research by Mundando (2015), on gender based violence against men in the Southern part of Zambia revealed also that some aspects of customs and traditions such as matrimonial privacy are among the causes of domestic gender based violence. The research by Mundando (2015) established that women and men who underwent initiation ceremonies were taught not to share the matrimonial matter to anyone apart from the marriage counselor. However, the negative effect of this practice is that men and women could not report any case of violence either to the Police Victim Support Unit or GBV One-Stop Center. Once the perpetrators realize that they can mistreat their victims and they cannot report anywhere or leave the marriage relationship, the perpetration would intensify causing much more suffering to the victims.

Chasaya (2008), a Zambian Traditional Marriage Counselor revealed that during marriage traditional instruction couples are taught to keep bedroom matters private. Chasaya however argues that such teachings from the Bemba cultural initiation ceremonies has contributed to the perpetuation of gender based violence against men because women take beating their husbands for granted after realizing that their husbands have nowhere to report the issue as reporting to the Police or Gender Based Violence One-Stop-Center is considered uncultured, shameful and can even render divorce. The literature that has been reviewed on the influence of culture on gender based violence is important not only to

Zambia but Africa as well, because most African cultures are similar. It gives a picture of some cultural norms and mentalities which cause domestic gender based violence. Furthermore, owing to the fact that the culture is similar in most countries in Africa, likelihood is high that situations obtaining in surrounding countries may be similar to the situation obtaining almost everywhere in Africa including Zambia and therefore solutions may be uniform.

The related literature review revealed there are some studies which have been carried out on Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and domestic violence especially at the global level but not much has been done at local level particularly on the researcher's area of study. This created contextual gaps. Another gap discovered was that the previous studies focused more on inducers and types of domestic violence against men; while this present study went further to examine the psychological well-being of abused men in Luwingu District of Northern Zambia. Most of the reviewed studies were qualitative while this present study adopted a convergent parallel mixed-method design. Stigmatization of men who report cases of violence was another gap discovered in the related literature reviewed. Men face disbelief, surprise, doubt, mockery, ridicule, and indifference from society. This research is a message to law enforcement agencies, legal system and other support services to stop the stigma related to gender based violence against men.

There is clear evidence from Zambia Demographic Health Survey report-ZDHS (2018), Gender Statistical Report (2018), Zambia Police Service Victim Support Unit (2021), that gender based violence against men is there particularly in Zambia. However, there is scanty research on domestic violence against men. Therefore, there is need to carry out this research to fill in this gap in literature that has been neglected in Zambia. Despite these gaps in the reviewed literature, it has offered great insights related to the present study on domestic gender based violence and psychological wellbeing of men thereby sending a signal to the Government and Non-Governmental that something need to be done in terms interventions for men victims of gender based violence.

1.7 Research methodology

The researcher used a mixed methods research approach adopting the convergent parallel mixed-methods design. This design permitted the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitatively data simultaneously; combine the data and use the results to understand the research problem. The location of this study was in Luwingu District in the Northern part of Zambia. Luwingu is the second largest District in Northern Province of Zambia, with urban and peri-urban unplanned settlements. In terms of its geographical location, Luwingu lies in the South Western part of Northern Province of Zambia, bordering with Lupososhi District in the west, Lunte District in the east and Chilubi District in the South. The road linking Tanzania and Democratic Republic of Congo passes through Luwingu Township. Luwingu Township is surrounded by thirty villages and a resettlement scheme. The main economic activity in this area is small scale farming. There are also a few business men and women who buy and re-selling fish from Lake Bangweulu and sell some farm products. According to the 2022 census, Luwingu District comprises of 923,282 people (Male – 49%, Female – 51%). It has 269,244 Households. It has also well-established health facilities which include One District Hospital, three Mini-Hospitals, 13 Health Centers and a One-Stop-Center which deals with various sexual and gender based violence cases. The One-Stop Center facility offers counseling and social services to the survivors of domestic violence besides the legal and medical services. The facility receives an average of ten clients and survivors per day. This justified the choice of the location for the current study.

The target population included 92 gender-based violence survivors within Luwingu Township. The study included 10 women for the focus group and two key informants who are members of staff at Gender Based Violence One-stop-Center. Being the only facility in the area, the catchment area for Luwingu Gender Based Violence One-stop-Center extends even to the surrounding districts of Lupososhi, Lunte and Chilubi.

Sampling Procedure and Sample Size

The researcher used purposeful and convenience sampling techniques to generate the data needed for the research questions since the researcher needed representative groups that produced the necessary information for this study. A target population of 92 was used for this study. This sample size was calculated using Slovin’s formula (1960) as follows:

$$\text{Size } n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

Population size, N = 92

Margin of error, e = 0.05

Where
$$\frac{N}{1+N^2}$$

$$n = \frac{92}{N=1+92(0.05^2)-92}$$

$$1 + 92 (0.0025)$$

$$\frac{92}{1 + 0.023}$$

$$\frac{92}{1.23} = 74.8 = 75$$

Table 1: Sampling Matrix for the study

| Respondents | Population | Sample Size | Sampling Technique | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|-------------|--------------------|------------|
| Male | 80 | 59 | Convenient | 88% |
| Female | 10 | 10 | Purposeful | 98% |
| Staff | 2 | 2 | Purposeful | 100% |
| Total | 92 | 71 | | 86% |

Source: Field data, 2023

The main tools the researcher used for the collection of data were questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussion for women. The researcher sampled 55 married men using the questionnaire. Four of the participants voluntarily withdrew from participation. 51 participants successfully finished the process. The researcher used a semi-structured interview guide to gather qualitative data from eight married men who are survivors of domestic gender based violence. The key informants were significant in providing data on factors perpetuating domestic gender based violence in different settings from the health center. Focus group discussion guide was used to collect data from women. It was moderated and administered with the help of two Research Agents. The focus group comprised of 8 members who were purposely selected.

Data Collection and analysis Procedures

The researcher of this study obtained a permission letter from the Director of Psych-spiritual Institute. Another permit was obtained from the Coordinator of the Gender Based Violence One-Stop-Center in Luwingu District of Northern Zambia. All these research permits were obtained in advance before embarking on the data collection procedure. The researcher contacted the participants and explained the research topic, objectives and ethical considerations to them. The researcher was guided by the principles of informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and guided against any misconduct. Where information was borrowed from other authors, their works were dully acknowledged. The study adopted a convergent parallel mixed-methods design where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously and data from the findings were merged during interpretation to understand the research problem. Quantitative data was analyzed using statistical techniques while the qualitative data depended on narrative analysis emphasizing transcription of verbatim from interviews and group discussions.

1.8 Research findings

Response rate

Table 2: Questionnaire Return Rate

| Participants | Sample size | Return Rate | Percentage % |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Married Men | 61 | 51 | 83.6% |
| Total | 61 | 51 | 83.6% |

Source: Field data, 2023

The research tool's return rate analysis has indicated that the study targeted 61 respondents upon which 51 (83.6%) responded to the self-administered questionnaire. In General, the response showed that more than half of the targeted population of the study responded to the questionnaire which is considered adequate according to Baruch and Holtom (2008), who sated that a return rate of more than 55% is good to proceed to data analysis. Teresia (2021) also considered a response rate of 70% to be very good. The positive and high response rate was actualized because there was prior orientation given to the respondents by the researcher on the topic and its relevance to them.

Qualitative data response rate

Table 3: Qualitative data response rate

| Participants | Participants | Percentage |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|
| In-depth Interview with men victims | 10 | 50 |
| In-depth Interview with Staff at GBV One-Stop-Center | 2 | 10 |
| Focus group with women | 8 | 40 |
| Total | 20 | 20 |

Source: Field data, 2023

The participants for the qualitative data were eight (40%) married men, two (10%) members of staff at Luwingu GBV One-Stop-Centre while 10 (50%) women participated in the focus group discussion. Hence, participation was 100%, which was satisfactory for the study. A classification of the women by occupation indicates that three were teachers and one was a secretary, two women were marketers

while three women run small businesses either at their homes or at the trading center as hair dressers and selling assorted goods business. Three (3) women were strategically sourced from the different churches domicile in the area and these spoke from the perspective of the church because even though all respondents in this research claimed to be Christians, there were women who were deemed staunch members of particular churches who the researcher saw fit to extract information from, from the religious perspective. No woman in this research was entirely dependent on their husband; they all claimed to be responsible wives and/or mothers to extents where some husbands depended on them for livelihood.

Standard Deviation Tests on Prevalence of Domestic Gender Based Violence in Luwingu District

The study sought to know the frequency with which the survivors of domestic violence at Luwingu Gender Based Violence One-Stop-Center had been exposed to violence. This was important in diagnosing the cycle of domestic violence and whether the occurrence was a one-time event or a continuous manifestation in the households. Most of the survivors at the Luwingu Gender Based Violence One-Stop-Center reported that they had been exposed to violent behaviors and treatment at varying degrees.

Table 4: Standard Deviation Tests on Prevalence of Domestic Gender Based Violence

| Prevalence of Domestic Violence | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|----------|-------------|-----------------------|
| I have been exposed to violent behaviours and treatment | 51 | 1.7647 | .42840 |
| I have sought help at the Gender Based Violence One-Stop-Centre | 51 | 2.4314 | .60844 |
| I have sought help at Hospital | 51 | 2.6863 | .81216 |
| I have sought help at Zambia Police Victim Support life threatening | 51 | 4.9412 | .42008 |

Source: Field data, 2023

The test on whether the respondents had sought help at the Gender Based Violence One -Stop-Centre scored (N= 51; M= 2.43; SD = 0.60) where N is the number of respondents, M is the Mean and SD is the Standard Deviation. SD of 0.60 in a Likert Scale of 1-5, where 1=Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree, is therefore within the agreement scale. This can therefore be interpreted many men had sought help from the GBV center which is an indication of a high prevalence of gender violence. The test on whether the respondents had sought help at the Hospital scored (N= 51; M= 2.68; SD = 0.81) where N is the number of respondents, M is the Mean and SD is the Standard Deviation. SD of 0.81 in a Likert Scale of 1-5, where 1=Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree, is therefore within the agreement scale. This can therefore be interpreted to mean that many men had sought help from hospitals and therefore there was a high prevalence of gender violence.

The test on whether the respondents had sought help at Zambia Police Victim Support scored (N= 51; M= 4.94; SD = 0.42) where N is the number of respondents, M is the Mean and SD is the Standard Deviation. SD of 0.42 in a Likert Scale of 1-5, where 1=Strongly Disagree 2= Disagree 3= Neutral 4= Agree 5= Strongly Agree, is therefore within the agreement scale. This can therefore be interpreted to mean that many men had sought help from the police station and therefore there was a high prevalence of gender violence. The results from the qualitative findings revealed that there is relatively increased

number of victims who go seek help either from the police, hospital or One-Stop-Center. This was confirmed by the report given by key informant A, who is a member of staff at Luwingu Gender Based Violence One-Stop-Center. According to key informant A, the cultural silence surrounding issues of domestic violence is slowly being broken whereby some men now go to seek for help at the Gender Based Violence One-Stop-Center. Informant A narrated:

"We do not just treat survivors from the physical injuries at our One-Stop-Center, but we do a lot of cross-referencing in order to solve the psycho-social facets of violence, a person may be visibly subjected to physical abuse but the root causes could be in social and economic standings in the household" (A. An interview with Staff at Luwingu One-Stop-Center. Interviewed on 3rd March, 2023).

These results were also in agreement with conclusion made by Stark and Flitcraft, (1998) in their research that there has been an increase of men who want assistance in helping them cope up with the violence at home especially from women couples. However, the qualitative findings also revealed that only when violence proved to be life threatening did the respondents opt to seek for care mostly at the hospital as reported by Participant P1 below:

"My wife started shouting at me in front of my children. Then it grew to occasional slaps and banging of doors every time I asked something from her...the trend continued till the day she poured hot water on my back that landed me in the hospital" (P1, 38 years old. Interviewed on 1st March, 2023).

Similarly, another revelation from qualitative findings was that men present false reports at the hospital. No man will explicitly mention to say he was beaten by the wife. The tendency not to report the exact incidences of domestic violence by men is enshrined in the strong patriarchal leaning of the Bemba cultural society where men are supposed to identify with images of aggressive and dominant masculinity as testified by Chasaya P. (2008), a Zambian Traditional Marriage Counselor in his book entitled "Bemba Marriage Counseling. The key informant B in this study had a similar opinion that many male victims of domestic violence had chosen to go quiet on violent experiences from their female partners in order to avoid community ridicule irrespective of the potential danger it posed to the people's lives as reported he reports:

"There is a lot of violence against men happening in most of households in the compounds of Luwingu District. The problem is that men have refused to talk about it let alone report the incidences to Police or One-Stop-Center. Sometimes when they seek care, they lie in the report that they were involved in fights with male friend. It is because the societal expectations have built on men a trait that it is 'womanly' and 'feminine' to go public that you are being frustrated by a woman in the house" (B. An interview with Staff at Luwingu One-Stop-Center. Interviewed on 3rd March, 2023).

On the other hand, one of the respondents in this study blamed local administration specifically Village Headmen and the Chiefs for having undervalued the reports from men raising concerns over violent behavior from their female spouses and labeled cowards. He said:

Even if you gather courage to report to the chief in the area about frequent verbal and physical attacks from your wife, the common response is that you need to take charge as a man and avoid bringing outsiders into your domestic affairs (P3, 33 years old. Interviewed on 1st March, 2023).

Such attitude from local leaders has the potential to bring down the efforts of fighting gender based violence. According to the findings of this study, the attitude of the chiefs and village headmen has contributed to the low number of reports on gender based violence against men in the Luwingu district. In a similar pattern, the study done by Mundando (2015) revealed that violence against men is said to have been a retaliatory tactic employed by women who have been subjected to abuse by their husbands hence more often recorded at different levels as self-protection. This explains why most of the effort to fight gender based violence is biased against men. Men are always regarded as perpetrators and not

victims of domestic violence. According to the findings of this research, domestic gender-based violence against men in Luwingu District is underreported and hardly given the research attention it deserves. This is due to the nature and sphere of violence that is usually closed to the public and the prevalent cultural notion that men cannot be humiliated or violated in their own homes.

Influence of Culture on Domestic Gender Based Violence

The researcher sought to explore the influence of culture on domestic gender-based violence against men in Luwingu District of Northern Zambia. To ascertain this aspect of the study, the questionnaire designed using conflict tactics scale (*Very frequently, Occasionally, Rare, Very rare, Never*) was administered to the participants. The results were summarized as indicated in Table 5.

Table 51: Influence of culture on domestic gender-based violence

| Statements | Very frequently | Occasionally | Rarely | Very rarely | Never |
|---|-----------------|--------------|---------|-------------|--------|
| I have been told to be a “real man” | 3(6%) | 26(51%) | 19(37%) | 1(2%) | 2(4%) |
| I have shared my domestic affairs with marriage counselor | 0(0%) | 21(41%) | 21(41%) | 4(8%) | 5(10%) |
| I have been blamed for causing/provoking abuse | 0(0%) | 30(59%) | 15(29%) | 2(4%) | 4(8%) |

Source: Field data, 2023

Table 5 shows that 51% of the respondents were occasionally told to be “real men” as well as 6% that were very frequently told to be real men. This is as opposed to 37% who rarely received such comments, 2% who very rarely received such comments while 4% never received such comments. This implies that most men used to receive comments asking them to be men. Table 5 also shows that men seems not willing to share their domestic affairs with marriage counselors as indicate by 41% who rarely reported, 8% who very rarely shared and 10% who never shared their domestic affairs. However, 41% occasionally shared domestic affairs. The study further reveals that the highest number of men (59%) were occasionally blamed for causing or provoking abuses. However, 29% rarely, 4% very rarely and 8% never experienced blame for causing or provoking abuse. This shows that most men were blamed for causing or provoking abuses.

The findings revealed the prevalence of a cultural belief about the image of ‘a real man’ who is naturally heads the household and cannot be questioned neither subjected to cruelty. Those abused by their wives have been classified as ‘female-males’ who can no longer provide for the family. The key informant B reported who is a member of staff at the Gender Based Violence One-Stop-Center reinstated the following:

“There is still some silence around domestic violence against men. The cultural definition of “a man” as being strong naturally situates the men into denial of such occurrence. It is deemed as a household conflict that should not be exposed to ‘outsiders’, some of the survivors only think that domestic violence has to be physical to qualify the definition of violence. These and other personal considerations of image protection largely affects the reporting on extent of domestic violence” (B. An interview with Staff at Luwingu GBV One-Stop-Center. Interviewed on 3rd March, 2023).

According to informant B, domestic violence is overly individualized and seems to get to the public only when men are critically injured or through the children’s report about the home reality. The

observation from key informant B relates to the findings of Mundando (2015) who carried out a study in southern Zambia on gender based violence against men. The findings revealed that the extent of reporting domestic violence cases against men depends largely on what the survivors define as an abuse and within which time span they choose to report the same.

During the focus group discussion, dependence or lack of source of income came out strongly from some women. Dependence according to the female participants of the focus group discussion meant men relying on their wives for livelihood. Such men looked up to their wives to feed them together with their children. This meant that their wives had to pay rentals, buy food, clothes and everything that was needed for their families.

Two participants cited dependence of their husbands on them as a cause of violence in their homes. One of the participants said that her husband was a casual worker who claimed that he was not getting paid by his employers and waited for his wife to support the family. Another participant cited dependence as a cause of her violence. She said that her husband seemed not interested to neither work nor do business but to just stay at home. Participant W4 narrated:

“The problem we have in our home is that my husband is too dependent on me to provide. It is like I stay with a small boy from whom I cannot expect any help yet I live with a full grown man who I think we can work together to better our living, but he cannot so because I work every day to put food on the table, he must remain working at home as well, he must cook, draw water for use and for bathing, instead of waiting for me to come and do everything for him because I come home tired (W4, aged 28, Early childhood teacher at a named pre-school, mother of 2 and a bread winner of the family” Focus group discussion on 2nd March, 2023).

Confirming the statement, participant W5 lamented that:

“My husband does not do any household chores. Both of us work as teachers but in addition to my teaching job, he expects me to cook, do laundry and cleaning the house, cut the flower hedge, slash the lawns, dig the rubbish pit and do gardening. What kind of a husband would subject his wife to such exploitation? He says that he is a man so he cannot cook or wash. (W5, aged 33, mother of 4 boys, secondary school teacher” Focus group discussion on 2nd March, 2023).

From the two situations above, issues of stereotyping men as breadwinners and primary income earners stemming from religious and cultural norms come into play. At the same time, these norms assign women to domestic work even in situations when they are involved in productive activities. Under such norms, the man is the head of the house and they are not expected to completely take over the homemaking role which is assigned to women as doing so attracts ridicule from society on both the man and the woman. Ondenko and Purdin (2002) made a similar observation in their study among Northern Uganda and Kiryandango in which men championed demand for food which they did not work hard to secure. In this case, the man who was not employed and could not contribute anything financially and failed to even help out with the domestic chores was subjected to abusive treatment from his wife. Here the woman assumed the position of the “head of the home” the position which according to culture and religion is a preserve of husbands. In this research, men who completely failed to provide were highly expected to do all the home chores while their wives fended for their families.

The study was able to establish that culture has contributed to domestic violence which exists in homes. Men suffer from such violence and often do not talk about their experiences because of shame, low self-esteem, cultural beliefs and the society understanding of physical power of the man. The victimized men experience public intimidation as the public tend to be always amused on the men who

are violated by women and call them all sorts of names. In most of the societies, men who are abused in homes are usually ignored, laughed at or chastised by the community. The study also established that culture and society expects men to be courageous, very strong and dominant with power and self-dependent and they are not expected to be victims of violence. This makes men less likely to report when they are victimized physically or emotionally because they will feel intimidated or shame about being open on their family challenges as most of them follow their culture strictly and according to their traditional male are seen and are supposed to control his family.

Domestic Gender Based Violence and Psychological Wellbeing of Men in Luwingu Township

This section presents findings on the impact of Domestic Gender based violence on the psychological wellbeing of men in Luwingu Township. To ascertain this aspect of the study, we adapted the Ryff (1998) psychological wellbeing scale and the Conflict Tactics Scale (*Very frequently, Occasionally, Rare, Very rare, Never*) which was administered to the participants. The two scales were adapted to suit the Bemba tradition culture as the matter of domestic violence is a sense one. The adapted scale measured the extent to which partners engage in psychological and physical attacks on each other and the effects on the partners' wellbeing (Straus et al. 1996). The results were summarized as indicated in Table 6.

Table 6: Domestic Gender Based Violence and Psychological Wellbeing of Men

| Statements | Very frequently | Occasionally | Rarely | Very rarely | Never |
|---|------------------------|---------------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------|
| I feel hopeless | 12 (23.5%) | 39 (76.5%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) |
| I feel frustrated with life | 1 (2%) | 29 (57%) | 19 (37.3%) | 2 (4%) | 0 (0%) |
| I have told to be a real man I feel marginalized | 1 (2%) | 22 (43%) | 22(43%) | 4 (8%) | 2 (4%) |
| I feel inferior and humiliated | 0 (0%) | 1 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 50 (98%) |

Source: Field data, 2023

The study shows that all the respondents had been exposed to violent behaviors and treatment at varying degrees. 23.5% of the respondents frequently felt hopeless while 76.5% rated the occasionally felt hopeless. This implies that men occasionally become hopeless due domestic violence. The results were in line with the assertion by McCormick (2021), that approximately one-half of all couples have experienced at least one violent incident in the life of their relationship. However, the frequency of the occurrence also matters to determine whether it was only happened once or it is a continuous manifestation in the households. As the revelation from this study stands, the conclusion was that men occasionally felt hopes due to domestic violence. The study also reveals that 57% of the respondents occasionally felt frustrated with life while another two percent very frequently felt frustrated with life. 37% rarely felt frustrated and another four percent very rarely felt frustrated. Hence, most of the respondents occasionally felt frustrated with life after experiencing violence from the spouse.

The highest number of the respondents who occasionally felt marginalized was 43% and another 43% rarely felt marginalized after being told to be a 'real man.' Those who very rarely felt marginalized were 8% and those who never felt marginalized after being told to be a 'real man were 4%. Hence, most of the respondents, occasionally felt marginalized after being told to be a 'real man.' Likewise, 98% of the respondents felt inferior and humiliated being abuse by the female partner. The findings of the study confirm the assertion made by Jacobson (2022) that making a man feel inferior is an attack

on masculinity. According to Jacobson, such kind of treatment destroys the self-esteem of the other partner and can foster the feelings of helplessness and frustration on the man.

The study established that all participants experienced some form of psychological, emotional and verbal abuse, including ridicule, coercion, insults, sarcasm, slander, negative critical comments, rebuking, labeling, harassment, excessive yelling, harsh words, verbal threats, frequent unfair blame, and abuse of their masculinity; these words affected their self-confidence, fostering feelings of helplessness and frustration. These abuses were persistent, repetitive, and severe. Some participants experienced emotional neglect, where their wives were intentionally less attentive and responsive to their emotional needs. The wives did not notice or attend to their husbands' feelings, nor did they care, appreciate, sympathize, or empathize with them. In contrast, participants reported that the emotional neglect by their wives was inadvertent. While they tried to get their wives' attention, explicitly or indirectly, their wives either dismissed their concerns or blamed and rebuked them because they considered that the husbands were responsible for their neglect. The study further established that a good number of participants faced physical violence. They were beaten with ashtrays, brooms, screwdrivers, makeup tools, hairbrushes, and shoes. Some participants were even spat at, kicked, and scratched, causing physical injuries. Regardless of the severity of the injury, all participants indicated that physical abuse by a woman had severe adverse psychological effects because they regarded it as an abuse of their identity, masculinity, and dignity.

The researcher sought to investigate participants' subjective feeling in relation to their psychological wellbeing. Participant P8 lamented:

"I feel very bad when my wife insults me in front of my children. Sometimes she even beats me in the presence people. I felt inferior and humiliated...My dignity...my manhood is lost ...I'm a fool ... An idiot ... (Ndi cipuba ca mwaume in Bemba local language)" ... [P8, 43 years old father of 4 children. Interviewed on 1st March, 2023]

In addition, another participant stated that he resorted to drinking to deal with his psychological pain. Participant P1 stated:

"I feel bad. Frankly, it is a despicable feeling. At one time I even hoped to die instead of feeling it. Death is more merciful. It is the despair of my life. I tried a lot to go to restaurants and order various kinds of delicious food. I was not able to eat so I started drinking alcohol" (P1, 38 years old father of 3 children. Interviewed on 1st March, 2023)

1.9 Conclusion

From the study findings, it was concluded that, the abuse experienced by male victims affected their psychological well-being negatively such that they could not socially function well. psychological symptoms established in this study included confusion, disappointment, feelings of hurt, depression, anxiety, loneliness, isolation, marginalization and exclusion, inferiority, anger and shame. From the findings of this research, the reality of this violence has been confirmed by both wives as perpetrators and husbands as victims. The common types of violence revealed by this research include fighting, beating, insults and yelling, denial of sex, avoidance, use of charms (juju), burning and breaking household goods. From the study findings, men are subjected to a range of domestic violence in form of physical, psychological, emotional and economic violence. The study also concludes that the stereotyping of culturally assigned roles of men has placed them at a disadvantage which makes them conceal abuses against them to avoid ridicule from the society. The researcher also observed that respondents in the study seem to delay reporting any other forms of violence till they are physically

violated. The net effect of this has been the cumulative psychological pain suffered many years in the hands of the victims

1.10 Recommendations

Research: More research needs to be conducted not only on domestic violence against married men but violence against men in general.

Sensitization: Men need to be encouraged to adopt a more equal concept of work in the home so that they realize that their involvement in domestic chores will improve the quality of their marriages and reduce instances of violence.

Churches and Non-Governmental Organization: Churches and Non-Governmental Organization must take a leading role in counseling other counselors such as traditional and community counselors to help curb this type of violence.

Government should formulate gender based violence policies that do not segregate men.

Government should train police on how to deal with cases of gender based violence especially where men are victims.

Government should establish more gender based violence counseling centers

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