PARTNER VIOLENCE AMONG WOMEN WHO LIVE IN ABUSIVE MARRIAGES IN KIAMBAA DIVISION, CENTRAL KENYA

BY

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N69/71057/2007

A PROJECT PAPER SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTE OF ANTHROPOLOGY, GENDER AND AFRICAN STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

MARCH, 2010
DECLARATION

I declare that this project paper is my original work and has not been submitted to any other University for examination.

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This Project paper has been submitted with my approval as University Supervisor

Dr. W. Onyango-Ouma ...........................................  a
Signature  Date
DEDICATION

Dedicated to my family and to my late Sister Beth.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

IPV . . . . . . . . . Intimate Partner Violence
WHO . . . . . . . . World Health Organization
ICPD . . . . . . . . International Conference on Population and Development
FGC/M . . . . . . . Female Genital Cutting/Mutilation
CEDAW . . . . . . Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
UN . . . . . . . . United Nations
COVAW . . . . . . Coalition on Violence Against Women
UNICEF . . . . . United Nations Children's Fund
ECLAR . . . . . . . Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
CBS . . . . . . . . . Central Bureau of Statistics
SD . . . . . . . . . Standard Deviation
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I want to thank God Almighty for walking with me through this journey, watching over me, my family and my fellow college mates and for seeing us through the program to the end.

I would like to register my sincere gratitude to my supervisor and lecturer Dr. W. Onyango-Ouma. Your concern, suggestions and academic guidance made it possible for me to conclude this research.

I would also like to thank most sincerely the staff of the Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies for their invaluable support.

I would further like to appreciate my family for being there for me at all times and for their special understanding that I could not be with them often at dinner times.

I would also wish to thank all my colleagues in the Gender and Development class of 2008 University of Nairobi who in one way or another gave me the morale to finish my research paper. Thank you for your assistance and prayers.

You are all Wonderful and Blessed People.

MAY GOD BLESS YOU ALL, ALWAYS.
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate partner violence among women who live in abusive marriages in Kiambaa Division. Specifically, it examined the perceptions of women toward partner violence, the causes and forms of partner violence experienced by ever married women and men aged 21 to 55 years. The study administered a cross-sectional survey questionnaire to 54 ever married men and women. The method of data collection included key-informant interviews and interviewer administered questionnaire.

The findings indicate that Kiambaa women tend to perceive use of aggression by intimate partner as justifiable and a normal way of life. There were notable relationships between various perceptions of domestic violence and the actual experiences with domestic violence. The findings also show that there are fewer males than females who perceive partner violence as a normal way of life. The study also found that there are females who support wife battering partly due to cultural acceptance of abuse by husbands as normative behaviour.

Economic factors were found to account for more cases of partner violence, than structural/cultural factors. Although the study aimed at investigating partner violence among women who live in abusive marriages, study findings indicate that female perpetrated abuse against the males was equally high. Women perpetrators of intimate partner violence cause more incapacitation to their victims than the male perpetrators. In addition to economic and structural/cultural causes, several other factors account for partner violence, but no single factor explains the phenomenon of partner violence. Alcoholism, jealousy of partner, not-doing housework properly, extra-marital relations, resistance to sexual advances and poor communication, all play the role of triggers to violence in marital relationships. Although not overtly reported, there were arguments about unmet sexual needs and reports of undesired marital intercourse.

Reported forms of violence within marriage were classified into three subheads: physical, economic and psycho-social. The most common and frequently used forms of physical violence reported were slaps and blows, hitting with a stick, pushing, kicking, throwing objects, and sexual coercion or assault. Physical violence during lifetime was found to be higher among respondents who experienced divorce, were currently married, those with secondary education attainment, with lower levels of autonomy in decision making related to
household, and among all religious population. Economic form of violence is usually triggered by verbal exchanges with demands for money. The most commonly reported forms of economic violence were deprivation of access to funds for basic needs, withholding money, expecting her to run a house on a minimal amount, keeping resources - both monetary and material beyond a respondent's reach, snatching away her money, not allowing her to work, forcing her to source for support from her birth home, giving her no power in deciding where and how to use the money. The most commonly described forms of psychosocial violence were withdrawal from normal interactions, unconstructive criticism, threats, insults, belittling comments, manipulation and isolation. This form of violence was reported in equal proportions by both females and males, regardless of social and educational status. No single form of violence takes place in isolation and the highest reported forms of violence were those that combined all three major forms and they took place simultaneously.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that legal aid and advice be made available to victims of partner violence and a media strategy for bringing a massive awareness and education on the issue of gender be planned. The government should develop, enlarge and strengthen social support services programmes for victims of domestic violence, irrespective of gender. The government should carry out the implementation of comprehensive strategies addressing domestic violence that are sensitive to the needs and safety of the victims and hold offenders accountable for their crimes.
CHAPTER ONE

1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

At the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women (Beijing+10), held in Addis Ababa in October 2004, the African Ministers in charge of gender and women affairs met to review the status of implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action. They reaffirmed and renewed their commitment to gender equality, equity and women's empowerment as stated in the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action, and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994. During the International Conference, the elimination of all kinds of violence against women was declared a priority objective of the international community" (Principle 4 of the ICPD Programme of Action). By this they resolved to eliminate the specter of domestic and sexual violence from the daily lives of women (UN 2006).

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines intimate partner violence (IPV) against women as 'the range of sexually, psychologically, and physically coercive acts used against adult and adolescent women by current or former male partners' (WHO/WHD 1997). Intimate partner violence is the third highest cause of death among people 15-44 years of age (Krug et al. 2002) and the most common form of violence against women. Its negative effects on women's health are serious enough to be recognized as a public health crisis with extensive effects on society (Bacchus et al. 2004). Lifetime prevalence of IPV in Sub-Saharan Africa is reported at 20-71% in marriage or current partnerships (Koenig et al. 2003). The prevalence is, however, suspected to be under-estimated due to under-reporting and a lack of standardized methodology (Krug et al. 2002). Victims of psychological violence lose their independence, self-esteem, and dignity and tend to remain in abusive situations.

Domestic violence takes various forms, including: physical (e.g., pushing and shoving, slapping, suffocating); sexual (e.g., raping or forcing the victim into unwanted sexual
practices); verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse (using degrading language, insults, criticism, or name calling, controlling, blaming the victim, humiliating); threats and intimidation (breaking and smashing objects or destroying the victim's personal property, instilling fear by threatening to seek sole custody of children); economic coercion (withholding money, prohibiting access to family income, or lying about financial assets and debts, refusing to contribute to shared or household bills); and entitlement behaviors (treating the victim like a servant, making all decisions for the victim, defining gender roles in the home and relationship).

Despite the impact of violence, a lot of women choose to stay with their abusive partners. Studies on domestic violence in Kenya have tended to concentrate more on female genital cutting/mutilation (FGC/M), early marriages and sexual violence on the girl child. Little is known about the triggers of domestic violence experienced in the privacy of the bedroom. The coping mechanisms women adopt in living in abusive marriages are also unknown. Observations indicate that women do not want to leave their abusive partners. The perceptions of intimate partner violence by victims, perpetrators and the society mostly influence their decision to remain in abusive relationships. Since community attitudes, socio-cultural norms and values largely shape perceptions and response to violence, they are critical issues to be understood if violence is to be eliminated. This study will use quantitative and qualitative methods to explore women's perceptions of partner violence, its causes, the various forms it takes and the coping mechanisms women adopt to counter partner violence in Kiambaa Division, Kiambu District.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although it is often assumed that the home is a safe haven where people should feel safe, it is actually one of society's most violent social institutions, and it is especially apprehensive for women (Browne, 1997). Domestic violence is often confined to the intimacy and privacy of the home and rarely do women admit in public to abuse. Women try to hide the problem to maintain harmony within the family (Njau et al. 1997). Victims tend to perceive partner
violence as culturally acceptable and a normal marriage experience and therefore often pass off as a private matter.

In patriarchal societies, intimate partner violence is seen as a natural way of disciplining women. Despite current socio-cultural changes, wife battering is still a widespread cultural practice in Kiambu District. Among the Agikuyu community, beating one's wife is considered acceptable and even normal. Men beat their wives in order to maintain discipline in the home. Wife beating is even viewed as an expression of love and trust. Such cultural beliefs can lead people to believe that women provoke, tolerate and even appreciate a certain amount of violence from their husbands.

However, domestic violence endangers women's autonomy and social stability and drains their emotional strength and self-esteem. Strategies for dealing with violence range from leaving the aggressor, accepting the violence or resorting to self-defense (Jewkes et al. 2002 cited in Krug et al. 2002). In addition to physical injuries that can range from bruises to death, battered women suffer from serious psychological problems. They tend to be very anxious and are prone to depression, leading to abnormally high rates of suicide (UN 2006). Most of them are disorientated and lack self confidence. They blame themselves and feel responsible for their situation, particularly in societies where it is generally considered that if a woman is beaten by her partner, she has somehow deserved it (Jewkes et al. 2000).

Violence has a substantial economic and social cost not only to the survivor, but also to the society. According to Tiemoko (2004), violence against women and girls not only threatens efforts to reduce poverty and poor health, but also threatens efforts to advance peace and security. A lot of resources are used in taking care of the violence survivors due to the time spent and the cost incurred on counseling and treatment. This makes the problem of violence require urgent remedial measures since its occurrence has not only psychological, health, social and economic implications to the survivor, their families and the community, but also to the country as a whole. Keeping this in mind, this study was undertaken in of Kiambaa
Division, where women continue to be subjected to various forms of abuse, and yet many of them remain in the abusive relationships. The question was "Why?"

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- How do women perceive partner violence in Kiambaa Division?
- What are the forms of partner violence experienced by married women in Kiambaa Division?
- What are the causes of intimate partner violence against women in Kiambaa?

1.3 Research objectives

1.3.1 General objective
To investigate partner violence among women who live in abusive marriages in Kiambaa division.

1.3.2 Specific objectives
- To determine women's perceptions of partner violence in Kiambaa Division.
- To find out the forms of partner violence experienced by married women.
- To examine factors that account for partner violence among married couples.

1.4 Justification of the Study
Although Kenya is a signatory of various conventions dealing with women's rights, (The Beijing Declaration made at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPC); and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (Article18), it is yet to domesticate them into laws or policies aimed at combating violence against women. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW) specifically call for women's safety in their private and public lives. Violence against women continues to be pervasive among the Agikuyu ethnic group and in other parts
of Kenya. Little effort has been made to educate women on their rights and the options available to them, should they be assaulted.

The changing social, cultural and religious norms require long-term action, using formal (law enforcement) and informal (community, traditional and religious leaders) means. Understanding the perceptions of women towards IPV might aid intervention programmes necessary to reduce and prevent IPV in pre-urban settings. If the victim perceives IPV to be an integral part of 'male supremacy' culturally acceptable and a normal part of the marriage experience, she is unlikely to report such incidences of violence to appropriate health and law enforcement authorities, or to leave the marriage. The study will contribute to the understanding of gender-based violence as an expression of gender inequality in relations between women and men. It will highlight the social, cultural, economic, and psychological problems associated with partner abuse on an individual, familial and community levels. Thus, appropriate measures can be designed from this study to prevent occurrences of new violent episodes and to re-integrate the perpetrators of violence into the family and the community at large.

1.5 Scope and Limitations of the Study

1.5.1 Scope of the study

This study was intended to capture the issues that motivate partner abuse as influenced by the societal norms regarding domestic violence. It offers insights into the social environment and norms surrounding domestic violence through the examination of the relationship between perceptions towards IPV and demographic variables, socioeconomic status (i.e. educational level, and occupational status), and empowerment indicators (i.e. autonomy in household decisions, access to information, and literacy). It offers insights into the socio-economic, cultural and religious attitudes restricting women's decision to report abuse or violence to relevant authorities or to leave abusive relationships especially in the context of intimate partners and also outside of the partnerships. It explores physical and psychological
abuse particularly economic, emotional and idealized love as an expression of traditional masculinity within a patriarchal society.

1.5.2 Limitations of the study

This was a cross-sectional study that used structured and unstructured tools to elicit information from respondents. The study design did not capture the entire scope of societal norms regarding domestic violence and the issues that motivate partner abuse or attitudes towards partner abuse. Focus group discussions would have been ideal to capture this. Further, since the study was based on self-reporting, the sensitivity and stigma associated with violence may have lead to under-reporting and non-response. It took longer than was necessary to get authorization to access women prisoners. Even when authority was granted and researcher accessed Langata Women’s Prisons, no prisoner from the study area was made available, and the researcher had to interview inmates availed from Eastern Province. The date collected, is therefore not used in this study.
CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter deals with related literature in the area of violence against women. The discussion begins with key concepts that account for domestic violence and how these relate to the problem of violence against women. As will be seen in essence, the pervasive gender inequality is the root cause of violence against women. It then discusses physical, psychosocial and economic forms of violence experienced by couples in intimate relationships. Briefly it discusses the attitudes of women toward partner violence viewing religious beliefs and culture being rationalized to prevent women leaving abusive relationships. Coping mechanisms employed by women who live in abusive relationships, have been highlighted at the end of this section to explain why couples remain in abusive relationships.

2.1.1 Factors that account for domestic violence

Many factors have been advanced by researchers to account for domestic violence. The historical inequality of women and gender socialization of both females and males contribute to the root causes of domestic violence. Society and its formal institutions view domestic violence as a "private matter." As awareness and recognition of the problem grew, groups of women organized an advocacy movement that focused on addressing the safety needs of victims and the systemic barriers and social attitudes that contributed to domestic violence. Many believe that the low social status of women, a patriarchal society, economic backwardness, insufficient protection by laws, low educational levels, account for domestic violence in developing countries (Rabbani, 2008). In Africa, men are generally considered superior and women are seen as property expected to be dutiful to husbands and children, especially as they lack economic security (Miller 1984). Jewkes (2002) reasons that female
empowerment is accompanied by a resistance by women to patriarchal norms, which in turn provokes men to violence in an attempt to regain control (Jewkes et al. 2002). It is further suggested that female empowerment confers greater risk of physical violence only up to a certain level, after which it confers protection (Jewkes 2002).

In support of the socialization, Gelles et al. (1980) observe, "That violence and love can coexist in a household is perhaps the most insidious aspect of family violence, because we grow up learning that it is acceptable to hit the people we love." Manifestations of discrimination foster an environment in which physical and mental abuse of women is seen as acceptable even proper (El-Burshra & Lopez 1993).

Women's economic dependence on men accounts for domestic violence. Lack of economic resources underpins women's vulnerability to violence and their difficulty in removing themselves from a violent relationship. The link between violence and lack of economic resources and dependence is circular. On the one hand, the threat and fear of violence keeps women from seeking employment, or, at best, compels them to accept low-paid, home-based exploitative labor. And on the other, with limited economic independence, women have no power to escape from an abusive relationship (Schuler et al. 1996). The reverse of this argument also holds true in some countries, that is, women's increasing economic activity and independence is viewed as a threat which leads to increased male violence (ECLAC 1996). This is particularly true when the male partner is unemployed, and feels his power undermined in the household. Studies have linked a rise in violence to the destabilization of economic patterns in society. Macro-economic policies such as structural adjustment programmes, globalization, and the growing inequalities they have created, have been linked to increasing levels of violence in several regions, including Latin America, Africa and Asia (UNICEF 1989). Other factors that act indirectly to raise women's vulnerability include: limited access to cash and credit; discriminatory laws regarding inheritance; property rights, use of communal lands, and maintenance after divorce or widowhood; limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors and limited access to education and training for women (Heise 1994). These factors encourage more risk-taking behavior, more alcohol and
drug abuse, the breakdown of social support networks, and the economic dependence of women on their partners (UNICEF 1999).

2.1.2 **Forms of partner violence**

There are several types of abuse that occur in intimate romantic relationships. It is frequently the case that two or more types of abuse are present in the same relationship. Emotional abuse often precedes, occurs with, and/or follows physical or sexual abuse in relationships (Koss *et al.* 1994; Stets 1991; Tolman 1992; Walker 1984). Sexual and non-sexual physical abuse also co-occur in many abusive relationships (Browne 1987; Mahoney & Williams 1998; Walker 1984), and, as with emotional abuse, sexual and non-sexual abuse often are combined elements of a single abusive incident (Bergen 1996; Browne 1987; Finkelhor & Yllo 1985; Russell 1990; Walker 1984).

Several definitions and names for emotional abuse are providing in literature. These include psychological maltreatment, nonphysical abuse, psychological abuse, psychological aggression and indirect abuse. Verbal abuse is a feature of emotional abuse and an article from Sweden states that it is a mechanism that 'communicates worthlessness' (Hyden 1995). Any relationship that consists of strategies to control or overpower another person must be considered maladaptive. From a feminist perspective emotional abuse is a means of establishing power and control over the victim in addition to enabling the abuser to maintain a system of psychological abuse behaviours that reinforce this power and control (Shepard & Campbell 1992).

Emotional abuse includes verbal attacks, harassment, belittling, excessive possessiveness, isolation of partner, and deprivation of physical and economic resources. (Alexander 1993) Emotional blackmail or threats to leave are also present in the literature. (Follingstad *et al.* 1990).

The effects of emotional abuse are seen as adding to the cycle of violence in which a physically abused woman finds herself (Follingstad *et al.* 1990) and has long term
debilitating effects on a woman's sense of self and integrity. There are preliminary investigations into the relationship between emotional abuse and physical abuse. It can be surmised from the literature that a relationship would exist between emotional abuse and physical abuse. Some initial questions about prevalence and frequency of emotional abuse in physically abusive relationships have been investigated. Three types of emotional abuse appear to predict physical abuse. These included threats, restriction of the woman and damage to the woman's property. (Follingstad et al. 1990)

Studies carried out in the United States indicated that 55% of divorces were due to psychological abuse; 27% of dating relationships reported psychological abuse; 89% - 97% of engaged couples in counseling reported that emotional abuse has taken place in the last twelve months. Within the general population there was a direct correlation between verbal abuse and the probability of depression (Chang 1996).

Emotional abuse, in fact, contains many of the same behaviours that present themselves in documents by an international human rights organization's description of torture: "isolation, induced debility (sleep and food deprivation), monopolization of perception, verbal degradation (denial of powers, humiliation), drugs, threats to kill and occasional indulgences (positives, verbal or material). (Tolman 1992).

As discussed by Tolman (1992), it may be somewhat artificial to separate emotional abuse from physical forms of abuse because physical forms of abuse also inflict emotional and psychological harm to victims, and both forms of abuse serve to establish dominance and control over another person. However, it also is possible for any one of these types of abuse to occur alone. In fact, emotional abuse often occurs in the absence of other types of abuse.

2.1.3 Attitudes of women towards partner violence

Religious beliefs and culture help women rationalize domestic violence and prevent women leaving abusive relationships. Cardarelli (1997) found that the clergy was not supportive of women leaving abusive marriages. Many religions as Hinduism and Christianity promote that marriage should be an unbreakable contract. Women who remain in abusive
relationships try to honor their vows 'until death do us part' or 'for better or for worse'. They do not regard some forms of abuse as justification to end the marriage (Schechter & Gary 1985). A survey conducted by Schechter and Gary (1985) on the Protestant clergy, found that 21% of the participants felt that no amount of abuse would ever justify a wife's leaving her husband; 26% agreed that a wife should submit to her husband and depend on God to endure the abuse. They also found that many women have looked first to the church for support but these institutions seldom responded by condemning the abuse. Instead the women are treated as part of the problem (Schechter and Gary 1985).

### 2.3.4 Coping mechanisms employed by abused women

World Health organization estimates that worldwide up to 27% of women suffer from partner violence (Garcia-Moreno et al. 2005). Women who are exposed to abuse that does not seem to have an end develop coping mechanisms to help them deal with the stresses of abuse. Women use different coping strategies to adjust and deal with the stress of abuse. Some of these strategies are as follows:

**Being passive:** As the oppression and fear continues and perhaps escalates, the woman adopts a passive, pain-focused coping strategy. This takes the form of avoiding the problem, or accepting that nothing can be done. However, increased levels of these strategies are associated with health factors that limit an abused woman's ability to work (Straight et al. 2003). The shame and guilt experienced by the victim results in passivity and a sense of helplessness. Depression becomes normalized due to its duration. Some women find eating as a form of comfort. Passivity has been shown to further injure an abused women's health above and beyond the abuse. She may start to feel fatigued, passive, and unable to act, unable to think concretely, and to have poor memory. (Anderson et al. 1991). When the woman begins to cling and move into traumatic bonding, the abuser escalates his use of emotional violence, as his loss is intensified and he feels the loss, there is less of her available (Straight 2003).
Amnesia: This is another coping strategy adopted by women in abusive marriages. Loring (1994) describe amnesia as a condition characterized by the inability to recall specific aspects of a traumatic event. This results from multiple forms of abuse including death threats where the belief that a physical or emotional death is about to take place and there is no escape. (Loring 1994).

Alcohol and drugs: Physical and psychological abuse have additionally been shown to increase the risk factors for negative health behaviors like smoking, drinking alcohol, and drug use among women (Caetano et al. 2000; Coker et al. 2002; Smith et al. 2002). As a supplement to or as a substitute for seeking health care, some abused women attempt to self-medicate their symptoms with drugs (Coker et al. 2002) in order to escape the violence and cope with distress associated with abuse (Raphael 2000).

Surrender, denial, and self-blaming are other forms of coping mechanisms adopted by women living in abusive marriages. Women stay in abusive relationships because they experience a form of captivity and oppression (Herman 1992). Herman 1992 argues that women in abusive relationships 'surrender to the coercive control of their perpetrator'. Browne (1997) explains that because of a pattern of violence in marriage, some women are entrapped. Physical aggression is often preceded by non-violent tactics as intrusion, isolation, jealousy, possessiveness, anger, and verbal abuse (Browne 1997). Very often after episodes of abuse, there is contrition and remorse (Browne 1997). Women's response and survival strategies occur in stages-ardor, accommodation, ambivalence, terror, and homicide. In the first stage of ardor, although a woman may view her husband's non-violent tactics as a violation of trust and intimacy, she may not assess it as justification to leave the relationship. In this honeymoon stage of the relationship, women overlook "negative characteristics and forewarnings of danger" (Ferraro 1997). Most women report no experience of physical violence during the first six months of marriage. In the second stage of 'accommodation', women do not leave after the first incident of violence. They protect their commitment through rationalization, denial, and self-blaming. By the third stage of 'ambivalence', a woman remains in the relationship for many socio-economic reasons. In the 'terror' stage, if the woman attempts to leave, the perpetrator uses violent threats. Ferraro (1997) argues that
many women may stay in abusive relationships because violence is gradual and progressively lethal.

From the foregoing, it is evident that there are many factors that account for domestic violence and women adopt several coping mechanisms to counter partner violence. It seems rare that it is for a lack of exploring other options. The lack of a viable and safe option seems to be the primary reason why women may adapt to abuse, and see it as normal. According to Chase et al (2004), there is need for more comprehensive approaches to provide adequate options for women. There is need for measures to restore safety in the home and the socio-economic well being of battered women. This would require more Government initiatives to address structural issues and stressors that impact families. From a radical feminist perspective, there is need to restore the balance of power in marriages as a strategy to reduce violence in marriage. Empowering women to become self-reliant and equipping them make informed decisions might help women terminate abusive relationships.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

There is great diversity in feminist perspectives on violence against women. This study was guided by radical feminism as conceptualized by Western feminist theory (Radford and Stanko 1996). Radical feminists highlight the connections between the patriarchal structures and practices of other cultures/societies recognizing that they are different in scope and degree, but not in their functionality. For example, Radford and Stanko (1996) assert that although the form and nature of male violence varies across cultures, "the presence of male violence ... is a feature in all societies characterized by male supremacy and female subordination - the social relations of patriarchy" (p65). I however recognize that differences exist between patriarchal societies in Kenya and those in the West.

Radical feminists such as Kabeer (1994), and Stanko (1994) emphasize the patriarchal roots of inequality between men and women or, specifically, social dominance of women and men. It views patriarchy as separating power, rights and privileges primarily by gender, and as a
result oppressing women and privileging men with the control of women. It believes that the liberation of all those oppressed by a patriarchal system, must be empowered on equal bases with men. Radical feminism considers the family, and the institution of heterosexuality as a central institution in patriarchal society, one in which private struggles around patriarchal power relations are enacted, and hence one in which violence frequently features as a form of control of the powerless by the powerful (Radford and Stanko 1996).

Although there is no single feminist perspective on male violence it is in the work of radical feminists that the most detailed analyses are to be found. At one of these feminist theories is the view that violence is both a reflection of unequal power relations in society and serves to maintain those unequal power relations (Randall & Waylem 1998). Other feminists have also analyzed how patriarchal values, social and economic gender inequality, as well as the dominant cultural concept of femininity (in which women are subordinate to men) circumscribe women's ability to leave violent relationships ((Kandiyoti 1988, cited in Sweetman 1998).

The key concept and central category in feminist social theory is patriarchy. It is closely related to the concepts of gender and power. Feminist definitions of patriarchy emphasize that this system of male domination over women is socially constructed. Thus, feminist see patriarchy using violence as a means of social control as well as enforcement and maintenance of patriarchal ideology. Radical feminism points out the control of women's sexuality and the use of force as the two essential features of patriarchy. Radical feminists focus on men's exercise, misuse, and abuse of power over women and identify violence as a means to maintain or regain that power.

Besides strengths, radical feminism has some weakness. Radical feminism tends to be militant. It opposes existing political and social organizations in general because it is innately blames patriarchy as the source of all women's ills. It calls for categorical opposition to authority and hierarchy. It supports cultural change that undermines patriarchy.
and associated hierarchical structures. One would have to experience domination and uncalled for submission to view this as strength.

2.2.1 Relevance of Radical Feminism

Radical feminism is relevant in this study as it emphasizes the patriarchal root of inequality between men and women. Specifically it views patriarchy as dividing rights, privileges and power primarily by gender leading to social dominance of women by men. Male power over women is consolidated by ideological myths about women (that they are naturally passive, that they have maternal instincts and so forth). These myths are part of a powerful socializing influence upon women that leads them to define their major role as that of "mother, housekeeper and child-rearer". This benefits men because women perform a "domestic servant" role for all men.

The radical feminism paradigm supports the notion that domestic violence is primarily a culturally supported endeavor and that female violence is always defensive and reactive. Men who assault their wives are actually living up to cultural prescriptions that are cherished in African society, aggressiveness, male dominance and female subordination. Hence they are using physical force to enforce that dominance (Dobbash et al. 1997).

In general, radical feminists see the exploitation of women as involving both the public sphere (e.g., work) and the private sphere (the home - marriage as institutionalized source of female oppression); thus a dual form of female exploitation not experienced by men.

2.3 Assumptions

The study makes the following assumptions:

- Socio-cultural factors that favour patriarchy manipulate women's perceptions of partner violence.
- Physical and psychological forms of abuse is a reflection of unequal power relations in society.
2.3.1 Definition of terms

**Intimate partner violence (IPV):** Any behavior within an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship. Such behavior includes: Acts of physical aggression - such as slapping, hitting, kicking and beating. Psychological abuse - such as intimidation, constant belittling and humiliating. Forced intercourse and other forms of sexual coercion. Various controlling behaviors - such as isolating a person from their family and friends, monitoring their movements, and restricting their access to information or assistance.

**Violence against women:** Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private

**Gender-based violence:** Gender-based violence is violence involving men and women, in which the female is usually the victim; and which is derived from unequal power relationships between men and women. Violence is directed specifically against a woman because she is a woman, or affects women disproportionately. It includes, but is not limited to physical, sexual, and psychological harm (including intimidation, suffering, coercion, and/or deprivation of liberty within the family, or within the general community). It includes that violence which is perpetrated or condoned by the state.

**Domestic violence:** The most common usage is with reference to physical, sexual and emotional violence by the spouse or intimate partner (see definition above) and is sometimes used synonymously with intimate partner violence. However, the term can also include violence within the family including violence experienced by children and the elderly.
**Physical violence/abuse:** A pattern of physical assaults and threats used to control another person. It includes punching, hitting, choking, biting, and throwing objects at a person, kicking and pushing and using a weapon such as a gun or a knife. Physical abuse usually escalates over time and may end in the woman's death.

**Sexual violence/abuse:** Mistreatment or the control of a partner sexually. This can include demands for sex using coercion or the performance of certain sexual acts, forcing her to have sex with other people, treating her in a sexually derogatory manner and/or insisting on unsafe

**Emotional and verbal violence/abuse:** Mistreatment and undermining of a partner's self-worth. It can include criticism, threats, insults, belittling comments and manipulation on the part of the batterer.

**Psychological violence/abuse:** Use of various tactics to isolate and undermine a partner's self-esteem causing her to be more dependent on and frightened of the batterer. It can include such acts as: refusing to allow the woman to work outside the home, withholding money or access to money, isolating her from her family and friends, threatening to harm people and things she loves, constantly checking up on her.

**Patriarchy:** system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women.

**Oppression:** Concept that all people do not equally hold power, and that some use their sex, class, ethnic or other privileges to exploit others for their own advantage.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0  METHODOLOGY

3.1  Introduction
This chapter describes the research site, study design, study population and the unit of analysis. The chapter also describes the sampling strategy, the sample size, as well as the methods and instruments of data collection, how the data was processed analyzed and, finally, presented.

3.2  Research Site
This study was conducted in Kiambaa division of Kiambu District, the southernmost of seven districts of Central Province, lying to the north east of and adjacent to Kenya's capital city - Nairobi (Map 3.1). Proximity to Nairobi brings numerous social and economic benefits to Kiambu's inhabitants. The district supplies the capital city daily with a professional, skilled and semi-skilled labour-force, relatively cheap housing, and agricultural products - fresh vegetables and dairy products. The majority of the women and men in the sample live between ten and 30 kilometres away from Nairobi. Residents own small plots of free-hold land on which some grow vegetables, keep a few heads of cattle and some poultry both for the market and for their consumption.


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This notwithstanding, violence pervades the lives of many women in Kiambaa division and the larger Kiambu District. Domestic violence seems to be escalating with increased instability in marriages. Though the husband customarily is the head of the household, the number of female headed families has increased in Kiambaa division. According to the CBS et al. (2004), the high rate of divorce and separation is attributed to emotional and physical violence from current or most recent husband/partner. Under the traditional social system of the Agikuyu people, productive resources belong to men. A woman can neither possess land nor property because, according to customary law, her assets belong to her husband or father and it is their sons who will inherit them. These cultural values have perpetuated women's dependence on men. Majority of Kiambaa women victims of violence are financially depended on their abusers. They continue to assume positions and perform tasks subordinate to those assumed by men. Besides the economic and social concerns, women continue to suffer all forms of violence under the cultural weight of discriminatory traditions still in force. Sadly, many of these women believe that a husband is justified in beating his wife for any reason including going out without telling them, illustrating the deep-rooted socio-cultural attitudes.

3.2 Research design

This study employed a descriptive cross-sectional design. It was carried out in two phases. The first phase involved quantitative data collection using a structured questionnaire. Phase two involved in-depth interviews using an interview guide to obtain qualitative data from key informants. All unstructured interviews were audio recorded using a digital voice recorder and later transcribed.

3.3 Study Population

Kiambaa Division in the Central Province was selected as the area of study. Located next to Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, the division is a peri-urban set-up and is therefore better developed with all-weather roads, piped water, electricity and telephone facilities as well as relatively better equipped schools and health facilities. The inhabitants of Kiambaa are
heterogeneous and comprise mostly business, professional and skilled and unskilled communities, who form part of the labour-force working in the capital city next door.

The sample population was drawn from this peri-urban setting, thus enriching the study by providing a study population with a range of social-cultural and economic backgrounds. The main occupation of majority inhabitants were found to be small self-financed businesses like hawking, sale of secondhand clothing, and transportation and a large number of subsistence and commercial farming, blending with professions such as teachers, and nurses.

3.4 Sample population and unit of analysis
The study's unit of analysis was adult women and men within the age range of 21 and 55 years, currently married, divorced, separated, deserted, or windowed. The total sample population consisted of 54 respondents comprising 29 women and 25 men drawn from Kiambaa Division. A total of 7 females and 5 male respondents refused to be interviewed from all three locations of Kiambaa Division.

3.5 Sampling procedure
Convenient sampling strategy was utilized to select the sample population. Kiambaa Division is subdivided into several administrative locations, three of which - Banana, Kanunga and Kiambu Municipality the sample was drawn. Men and women meeting the particular criteria of ever been married, aged between 21 and 55 years, were conveniently selected until a reasonable sample size was achieved.

3.6 Data Collection Methods
The study used two complementary methods - structured and unstructured interviews using the following data collection tools to collect the data.

(a) Survey Technique
A structured interviewer-administered questionnaire designed to elicit information from ever-married women and men aged 21 - 55 years, about the nature of domestic violence, forms and causes, women's perception of intimate partner violence and their
coping mechanisms, was administered to the respondents. For uniformity in recording the responses, and in consideration of any illiterate or semi-literate respondents, the interviewer read out the questions and recorded the responses given. This was aimed at guarding against unanswered questions which can be a problem in self-administered questionnaires. A total of 54 respondents were interviewed.

b) Key informant interviews
Using key informant interview guide (Appendix E), unstructured interviews were administered to professionals and government officials who have experience in working closely with perpetrators and survivors of violence. These informants included the Kiambu Chief, a police officer in charge of Gender issues, and two religious leaders. In total, 5 key informants were interviewed.

To avoid loss of important data, the deliberations of individual interviews were tape recorded and later transcribed.

3.7 Data Analysis
Quantitative and qualitative data analysis was undertaken separately. Quantitative data was analyzed using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used to describe the distribution and is presented in percentages, frequency distribution tables and charts.

Qualitative data emerging from case studies and key informant interviews was transcribed, translated and coded. This was organized around patterns and themes relating to the research questions, and then examined for confirming or discontinuing evidence of these patterns. Content analysis of the same was undertaken and used to substantiate findings from quantitative analysis. Direct quotations and selected comments from the informants were utilized to give consideration to the real words used by the informants.
Ethical Considerations

All the ethical observations in conducting social science research were adhered to. Participation in the interview was voluntary. All eligible respondents were informed at the very beginning about the purpose of the study, their right to either volunteer or not volunteer for participation, their right to refuse to answer any question and their right to end the interview at any time. The ethical principles of respect for people's privacy was upheld during the entire period of the study. The interviewer guaranteed strict secrecy of information pertained from the respondent. To protect their identity, the study population was identified numerically. The respondents were also given an opportunity to ask questions before the interview took place.
CHAPTER FOUR
WOMEN'S PERCEPTION OF PARTNER VIOLENCE

4.1 Introduction

The foregoing chapter has provided detailed information on the methodology and the study design. This chapter presents the perceptions of respondents toward partner violence, by examining their attitudes toward IPV and their decision making autonomy. It offers insight into the social environment and norms surrounding domestic violence by specifically examining the relationship between attitudes towards IPV and demographic variables (gender, age and marital status, educational level, occupational status) and empowerment indicators (i.e. autonomy in household decisions).

4.2 Determinants of attitudes toward partner violence

To determine the perceptions of women and men toward partner violence, respondents were questioned on the justification for IPV as well as other social issues. Their perceptions toward IPV were assessed by asking respondents if they would justify a husband's abuse of his wife for one or several reasons, such as: (i) beating a spouse/partner is understandable in some circumstances; (ii) it's OK, to live with an abusive partner if he provides food, money, school fees; (iii) naturally a husband should control his wife's actions/movements; (iv) a woman should not refuse her husband's sexual advances; (v) a woman deserves beating if she talked back to her husband, disobeyed the husband, refused him sex, presented a poorly cooked food, or late meal and failed to care for the children; (vi) a husband can beat his wife if she does something wrong to correct her; and (vii) the people in my life whose opinion I value would approve a husband beating his wife if provoked.

An index variable to measure the respondents overall attitudes was created. This was done by recording the seven (7) attitude statements combining Strongly Disagree with Disagree and Strongly Agree with Agree and assigning them new scores. Categories portraying
positive attitudes were scored 5, unsure 3, while negative attitudes were scored 1. The scores of the new index variable ranged between 7 and 35. The higher the scores, the more positive the attitudes portrayed. Finally, an index variable portraying the overall attitudes of the respondents was created. Those who scored 29 or higher were labeled as having positive attitudes, those scoring 25-28 - the mode rate, and 24 and below were labeled negative (Fig. 4.1). The findings allow for meaningful interpretation of results in estimating the risk factors for patriarchal attitudes toward intimate partner violence.

**Figure 4.1: overall attitudes percentage**

![Bar chart showing overall attitudes percentage by gender](chart.png)

The percentage of respondents who believed that IPV is justified is presented on table 4.1. In total 75% of the respondents justified IPV with at least one of the given reasons. Considerably higher proportions of respondents have positive attitude (55.8%) than negative (25%).

Gender differences are apparent. The males with positive attitudes (45.8%) are fewer than the females by 18.5 percentage points which is undeniably a big difference. When the category measuring negative attitudes is examined, the males with negative attitudes are more than twice (37.5%) the females (14.3%) with similar attitudes.
The age variable shows that (80%) of women aged 51+ have positive attitudes toward partner violence. The age is measured in four 10-year age-groups ranging between 21-30 and 51+ years. The smallest age group is also that of the oldest respondents (9.7%), but surprisingly, there is no male respondent within the latter age group. The 31-40 year-old age group is larger than all the others (40.7%). The females are more than the males by 6.4 percentage points, which in the view of the researcher shows that the gender disparities are relatively minimal.

Table 4.1: Overall attitudes by gender & age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Positive attitudes %</th>
<th>Moderate attitudes %</th>
<th>Negative attitudes %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>21-30</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>41-50</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>51+</td>
<td>80.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among those women who justified IPV, (55.6%) were currently married and (33.3%) were without higher education. When the positive attitude category is examined against respondents who have ever lived separately, 36.7% of males and 63.3% of women had similar attitudes. When the category measuring positive attitudes is examined against the religious affiliation of respondents, 54.8% of Protestant, and 49.2% of Catholics hand similar attitudes. Religion therefore is not a good indicator of attitudes. It is a cause of concern, however, that there are females who support wife battery. This concern arises from the fact that women have often been the victims of domestic violence. The males are the abusers and the data supports this. Is this finding a demonstration of how cultural structures have infiltrated the mindset of society in general, and in particular of women?
Women with positive attitudes toward partner violence are likely to experience spousal violence and tolerate it as a normal way of life. This is probably due to the patriarchal nature of the community and their customary beliefs. Patriarchal beliefs tend to normalize violence against women and in some situations, patriarchy allows men to determine whether their female partners work, leave the home at night, and even gives men the right to have sex with an unwilling partner (Barnett, 2000). It can be adduced that the women are so deeply rooted into cultural beliefs that they rationalize violence.

4.3 Autonomy in decision making

Another variable used to measure perception of partner violence was the autonomy in decision making. Autonomy in decision making was assessed by asking respondents if they had the final say regarding: (i) daily household purchases; (ii) spending money on oneself; (iii) large household purchases; (iv) deciding on the school for children; and (v) visits to family or friends. For these variables, response options were: 'can decide independently', 'have to consult someone', and 'have to follow instructions (issued by partner or other older family members). Responses to these questions were transformed into a single dichotomous 'independently' or 'not independently' variable.

Table 4.2: Household autonomy in decision making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Independently</th>
<th>Not Independently</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results show that women who reported they were unable to independently take decisions relating to day-to-day household needs experienced higher levels of violence by 10 percentage points (71 percent), compared to those who were able to make decisions independently (61 percent). The nature of relationship between women's role in decision making and violence within marriage was the same across all three forms of violence i.e. physical, psycho-social and economic violence. Likewise, respondents who had no autonomy in household decisions pertaining to large household purchases, purchases for daily needs, deciding school for children and visits to family or relatives, justified IPV by 12.16 percentage points, above women who had full or partial autonomy.

Men who are currently married, and with little or no education justified IPV by 12.2 percentage points higher than women with similar educational and marital status. Similarly, women who had no autonomy in household decisions pertaining to large household purchases, purchases for daily needs, visits to family or relatives, and on school for the children were found to justify IPV (by 15.8 percentage points) above women who had full or partial autonomy. Again, notably higher proportions (31%) of women with tolerant attitudes towards violence were found among the semi-illiterate women.

Asked whether beating makes one feel loved and cared for, 78% answered to the contrary. However, 11% of respondents answered in the affirmative, that it actually heightens the relationship and smoothenes relationships while another 9% stated 'sometimes'. This concurs with McGee's (2005) explanation in her article *20 Reasons Why She Stays* when she says that people stay in abusive relationships for love. The counselors assist victims of domestic violence face-to-face each year, and one of the most frequently mentioned reasons for staying in the abusive relationships is so obvious that people tend to overlook it - love. As McGee(2005) explains, "when no one believes a battered woman, when her assailant isn't arrested, when she is criticized and scrutinized, when he gets custody of the children, and when he tracks her down and tries to kill her, she believes what he says. Why? Because his predictions too often turn out to be true". This further corresponds with Kiambu Chiefs sentiments that:
"... a women stay on with her abusive husband saying she knows he loves her. The husband claims he has a right over his wife for love. (Key informant interview with Chief in Kiambu Sept 2009).

Intimate partner violence was shown to be tolerated under several circumstances: approximately 55% of the women in the present study would justify IPV for at least one of the given reasons. Comparable figures have been reported in several other studies in developing countries (Khawaja et al, 2008). However, the present figures are lower than those reported in studies in similar developing countries (Koenig et al 2003; Haj-Yahia 2003). Although Kenya is a signatory to most of the instruments aimed at eliminating gender based violence, such as the International Conference of Population and Development (Cairo, 1994), the Beijing Declaration made at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), violence against women continues to be pervasive. This may be connected with the patriarchal system that condones certain forms of violence again women.

It is evident from the foregoing that Kiambaa women tend to perceive use of aggression by intimate partner as justifiable and a normal way of life. The findings also show that there are fewer males than females who perceive partner violence as a normal way of life. There was notable relationship between various perceptions of domestic violence and the actual experiences of domestic violence. The study also found that there are females who support wife battering, partly due to cultural acceptance of abuse by husbands, as normative behaviour. Majority of women facing violence do not have autonomy in household decision making.
CHAPTER FIVE
FORMS OF PARTNER/SPOUSAL VIOLENCE EXPERIENCED
BY MARRIED WOMEN

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results obtained from the various data sources. It will show the results obtained from survey interviews with ever married men and women. It also covers data from informal discussions with key informants. For purposes of this study the broader view of violence is taken which includes: physical (e.g., pushing and shoving, slapping, suffocating); sexual (e.g., raping or forcing the victim into unwanted sexual practices); verbal, emotional, and psychological abuse (using degrading language, insults, criticism, or name calling, controlling, blaming the victim, humiliating); threats and intimidation (breaking and smashing objects or destroying the victim's personal property, instilling fear by threatening to seek sole custody of children); economic coercion (withholding money, prohibiting access to family income, or lying about financial assets and debts, refusing to contribute to shared or household bills); and entitlement behaviors (treating the victim like a servant, making all decisions for the victim, defining gender roles in the home and relationship).

The discussions begin with an overview of the forms of violence. The reported forms of violence within marriage have been classified into three sub-headings: (i) physical (ii) psycho-social (emotional and mental torture, verbal, withdrawal, threats and intimidation); and (iii) economic (economic coercion and denial of entitlement), which are discussed under each subheading.

5.2 Forms of intimate partner/spousal violence

To establish existence of and forms of violence, respondents were asked whether they had ever had an argument over any matter with their spouses and/or family members during their
entire married life and in the six months preceding the interview. Majority (77.2%) responded in the affirmative while only 22.2% said they had never had an argument in their married life. They were then asked to explain what forms the arguments took. Experiences of various studies on domestic violence show that it is a very sensitive issue and therefore there is a tendency for the participants to under report their experiences. To minimize under reporting, a probe list was used when respondents said that they had not experienced arguments during their married life. The probe list covered items like exerting control over movements/speech/body, all forms of physical abuse and widely prevalent forms of psychosocial abuse.

The prevalence of reported forms of violence in marriage life and in the six months prior to the survey is presented in Table 5.1. These different forms of violence do not necessarily occur in any given order. It also does not mean that one type of violence is less harmful than the other. A perpetrator or abuser may use one type of violence at one time and another type at another moment. The individual may even employ a combination of different types of violence simultaneously.

**Table 5.1 - Forms of harassment/violence in marriage life (n=44)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Six months prior to survey (%)</th>
<th>In Marriage life (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>psycho-social</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psycho-social + economic</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psycho-social + physical</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>psycho-social + physical + economic</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.2.1. Physical violence

Table 5.1 shows that 14 percent of respondents have ever experienced physical violence during their married life. The physical violence here includes punching, hitting, choking, biting, and throwing objects at a person, kicking and pushing and using a weapon such as a
stick, stone or a knife. Physical violence also includes sexual violence that ranges from having forceful sexual relations, physically hurting the woman while having sex and forceful use of objects. Nine point one percent of respondents reported physical violence in the last six months. As mention above, physical violence was also reported to have taken place in combination with psycho-social violence by 20.9 percent of respondents. Another 20.9% reported to have experienced physical, psycho-social and economic forms of violence simultaneously in their marriage life. Further analysis indicates that in the six months prior to the survey, there was a reduction in respondents who reported physical violence and psycho-social violence combined with physical violence by 4.9 percentage points; and 7.3 percentage points respectively, while economic violence and psycho-social violence increased in the same period by 4.4 percentage points and 13.5 percentage points respectively. The reduction of physical violence and the higher psycho-social violence in the last six months prior to the survey, could be reflective of the better awareness of human rights afforded to the Kenyan public by FIDA Kenya since 1985. FIDA has been focusing its attention on enhancing and empowering women's rights and on the provision of free legal aid to women in need.

When the data is examined by age, the age range (31-40) has reported the highest rate of physical violence (15.0%). However, the youngest age group (21-30) reported the highest rate of all forms of violence (10%). Among the senior most age group, 2.5% reported experiencing physical violence, and 5% all forms of violence. This is probably an indicator of recall lapse for the older women. So the age differentials of prevalence of violence may not really be noteworthy. The evidence for this is provided by the distribution of different types of violence across the age groups. Physical violence is the least likely to be under-reported and this shows that between the youngest and oldest age groups, the difference is marginal indicating that the extent of physical violence has not reduced over time. The higher psycho-social violence amongst the younger age group is reflective of the better perception of the younger respondents about what constitutes violence, which is perhaps due to their higher levels of educational achievement and exposure.
Despite the common talk in Kenya about the women being disadvantaged and denied opportunities for self-empowerment, the gender differentials in this study show a difference of 66.6 percentage points between the females (83.3%) and males (16.7%) with University degrees. The analysis also shows more female respondents (78.6%) than males (21.4%) with post-secondary training. However, education as a gender leveler reveals all forms of violence regardless of level of education are almost equally distributed. Table 5.2 shows that those women who reported higher levels of physical and a combination of all forms of violence i.e. physical, psychosocial and economic violence, 14 percent had a background of a university degree and 21 percent had post secondary school training. Comparing these with respondents who had lower levels of education, i.e. those who did not complete secondary school and those with primary schooling and below, there is a difference of 12 percentage points in their experiences of physical violence. Perhaps higher education levels serve as a threat to the perpetrators, causing them to act violently.

Occupational profile shows that respondents who are earning have reported more physical and economic violence, as compared to non-earning women who have reported more of the combined forms of psychosocial, economic and physical forms of violence. More physical and economic violence was reported by earning women - 9 percentage points less than non-earning women. This does not necessarily mean to say that none earning respondents' experience more violence. Further analysis of the nature of jobs undertaken by respondents shows that they are mainly engaged in temporary or low paying jobs in small businesses, thereby not ensuring much of economic independence.

Reported forms of violence within marriage were classified into three subheads: physical, economic and psycho-social. However, it is well known that a particular type of violence does not occur in isolation; an attempt has been made to examine the different combinations in which violence occurs in this population. In one particular case, the respondent associated the violence to culture:

".../ think it's cultural. He is a Masai and I'm Kikuyu. He was given a whip as a wedding present and was told women need to be disciplined. He literally used it on me severally. (Separated woman - 40s. Formal employment)."
Results presented in Table 5.2 show that out of the currently married respondents interviewed, 78.9 percent reported having experienced violence in the last six months prior to the interview date. Further analysis of violence among currently married respondents in the sample shows that 63.6 percent reported having ever experienced violence during their married life.

Table 5.2: Reporting different forms of lifetime violence by background characteristics of ever married respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background characteristics</th>
<th>Physical %</th>
<th>Psycho-social %</th>
<th>Economic %</th>
<th>All forms of violence %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td>2.4</td>
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<td>2.4</td>
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<td><strong>Occupation</strong></td>
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<td>Formal employment</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>17.5</td>
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<td>Housewife</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.2 Economic violence

Economic abuse is the most commonly reported form of violence in this study. It has been experienced by 40.9 percent respondents and includes, withholding money, depriving the partner of access to funds, not providing for basic needs, expecting her to run a house on a minimal amount, keeping resources -both monetary and material beyond a respondent's reach, snatching away her money, not allowing her to work even if she wants to, forcing her to source for support from her birth home, giving her no power in deciding where and how to use the money or asking her to account of every penny spent, without allowing her to make choices. Almost a fifth (18.2%) of respondents report experiencing this type of violence in the last six months prior to the survey.

As stated above 20.5% of respondents have experienced all forms of violence during their marital life and 23.3 percent in the last six months prior to the survey. About 32 percent of the females and 52.6 percent of the male were experiencing economic violence alone. Data shows that economic and physical violence does not occur in isolation, but is always accompanied by psycho-social violence.

Figure 5.1: Reporting different forms of violence in the last six months prior to survey by gender

- Female  BMale
The relationship between educational attainment of respondents and violence experienced within marriage was outstanding in economic forms of abuse. The females have been observed to have attained higher levels of education than their male counterparts. It is, probable therefore, that highly educated women question the traditional roles and are hence perceived as a threat, making them more vulnerable to violence.

The researcher's field experience has also shown that retrenchment and the closure of industries rendered many people jobless. This was further compounded by the post election crisis which affected the tourism industry where many young men and women made a living as tour drivers or guides, while others operated curio shops. These have since been closed down. The failure of rains have further affected the farm lands that were producing vegetables for the local markets and the government's effort to clear the Nairobi city centre off hawkers, also rendered many respondents jobless. Hence many respondents have lost their jobs and they have been forced to enter the informal self funded businesses, mainly to keep the houses running.

5.2.3 Psycho-social violence

Psychological violence, as mentioned above is always accompanied by other forms of violence. On its own, therefore, it is the least reported form of violence 15.5% (5.3 males, and 10.5 females). Interestingly, 20.5 percent reported having experienced psychosocial violence during the six months immediately preceding the survey while further 36.8% (10.5% males, and 26.3% females) reported the experience of this form of violence in combination with other forms of violence. This amounts to over a half of the respondents (52.6%) who reported the experience of psychosocial violence, which according to this study includes: - psychosocial violence covering a wide range of behaviours for example, ill-treatment and the undermining of a partner's self-worth. Other related experiences cited include: unconstructive criticism, threats, insults, belittling comments and manipulation on the part of the perpetrator. It also includes the use of various tactics to isolate and undermine a person's self-esteem depriving them of empowerment in terms of loss of independence.
Some respondents reported having developed fear towards their spouses. Other acts reported include isolating them from family and friends, threatening to harm people and things they love, and constantly checking up on them.

The other psycho-social forms of violence reported by respondents include withdrawal from normal interactions with the victim to make the victim feel uneasy. In this case for example, the perpetrator might withdrawal from normal communication, refuse to eat the victim's food and/or to serve the food to the victim, leave the house at odd times and drink alcohol. The forms of verbal violence reported include abusive language, name calling and/or threats of physical violence. It is noted here that this form of violence was reported by both men and women respondents, regardless of age, educational attainment or occupation of respondent.

5.2.4 All forms of violence

All forms of violence in this study refer to physical, psycho-social and economic where they are experience simultaneously. This form was most reported by respondents who are currently married and those who are separated as compared to those who are widowed, divorced or disserted (table 5.2). This is probably an indication that within marriage, all forms of violence are still very prevalent and it takes place in many forms simultaneously. This variation is important. The lower rates of violence by divorced, windowed and disserted is an expected trend as these respondents are more likely to be living away from the 'place of violence' or the 'perpetrator', especially if the perpetrator was the husband. It is also likely that occurrence of violence could be the cause for their separation.

It is also clear that all forms of violence - physical, psycho-social and economic were mostly reported by respondents who had completed over 16 years of marriage followed by those married for 11 - 15 years. This higher percentage of reporting for the over 16 years is not surprising, as it is during this period when many of the problems identified as reasons for violence like being 'financially irresponsible' of verbal arguments over finances; when money for school fees and development, psycho-social conflicts etc are more intense. It is
likely that respondents who have married more recently are still in their honey moon years, and are not experiencing violence or are not reporting the same. Otherwise it shows that all forms of violence peak in 11 years of marriage.

Analysis of all forms of violence by religion shows that the largest group reporting experiences of violence were Protestants (50.0 percent) - irrespective of the forms of violence experienced. Catholics (42.5 percent) followed them as the second largest group. Violence was least reported amongst Muslim respondents. Religion wise differentials observed were noteworthy in all forms of violence. Here one needs to note that the study area is predominantly Christian with a few exceptions of Muslims and those who practice African religious faiths. So if this is taken into account then religious differentials may be marginal.

This chapter has shown that physical violence during lifetime was higher among respondents who were divorced, currently married, those with secondary education attainment, with lower levels of autonomy in decision making related to household, and among all religious population. Economic form of violence was reported to be triggered by verbal exchanges with demands for money and took the forms of withholding money, deprivation of access to funds for basic needs, and keeping monetary and material resources beyond a respondent's reach. Reported psychosocial violence involved withdrawal from normal interactions, unconstructive criticisms, threats, insults, belittling comments, manipulation and isolation. All forms of violence were suffered by both females and males in different proportions, irrespective of religion, social and educational status.
CHAPTER SIX
FACTORS THAT ACCOUNT FOR PARTNER VIOLENCE AMONG MARRIED COUPLES

6.1 Introduction

The foregoing chapter has provided detailed information on the forms of domestic violence experienced by respondents. This information helped lay the foundation for gathering information on the causes of intimate partner violence. This chapter now presents the findings of causes of violence. It is structured into six parts: the onset of violence in marital life; reported causes of harassment/violence; the perpetrators; levels of incapacitation following episodes of violence and the frequency of incapacitation due to violence. Verbatim narrations have been used to maintain meaning and tone.

6.2 Onset of domestic violence

The nature of the study was that it was difficult to start with direct questions on the issue of domestic violence. Hence to find out the incidence of domestic violence, the interviews started with the general aspects of daily life. Moreover, since the questions are directly linked with the private life of the respondents, it was not proper to ask questions in the presence of another person. The respondents were initially asked whether they had ever been separated from their spouses/partners and what were the reasons behind the separation.

Information on the first incidence of violence was asked to respondents who reported to have experienced the same. Marital history indicated that a large percentage (55.6%) had ever lived separately from their spouses giving a variety of reasons for the separation (Table 6.1). Violence is practiced very early in marriage as 42.9% respondents confessed having experience violence within the first year of their marriage, while 46.4 experienced violence between 2-5 years of marital life. It is, therefore seen that over half of the respondents reported having experienced violence for the first time within the first two years of their
marriage, thereby indicating that they have been facing violence for almost their entire married life.

Only 10.7 percent of respondents reported first instance of violence after completing 5 years of marital life, which indicates that the likelihood of violence occurring very early in married life is quite high.

**Table 6.1 Reasons for separation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for separation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infidelity</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeated cruelty</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial irresponsibility</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data on causes of violence reveal that 52.3% of respondents reported first episode of violence in marital life occurred over some "infidelity'. Ten point three percent of respondents claimed 'financial irresponsibility' was the reason for their first episode of violence, while 37.9% said the separation was due to 'repeated cruelty'. When these three events are combined, it is seen that issues to do with relationship at the household level are the most reported reasons for the initiation of domestic violence in marital life.

During the course of the interview, most respondents were able to recollect when they first experienced the first episode of violence in their marriage and what had led to the same. In most cases respondents reported experiencing violence within the first year of marriage. Some experienced it as early as within the first week of marriage (Table 6.2).

**Table 6.2 time of first separation in marriage**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time of first separation in marriage</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-2 years</td>
<td>51.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 years</td>
<td>37.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10 years</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Few others stated that they became aware of their husband's drinking habits within the first few days or months of their marriage and the first episode of violence - either verbal or physical - occurred at such a time. There was no specific event or reason for the violence, it occurred on some flimsy grounds. As some respondents narrated:

"The arguments started within the first one week of my marriage. My parents wanted a Christian wife while she was a Muslim and had a child out of wedlock..." (Male aged between 21-30 years, interviewed in Kiambu in September, 2009).

In another case, a respondent reported:

"I was slapped within the first 15 days of marriage ...I think it's cultural. He was given a whip as a wedding present and was told women need to be disciplined." (Female aged 41-50 years, interviewed in Banana in Sept 2009).

In some cases, the origin of the violent episode can be traced to interactions between the woman and her in-laws. In such cases, disagreements over household issues led to violence.

"... The harassment was over water connection. I wanted to have one water meter for the whole homestead including my parents and my siblings, she didn't want to share the water meter with my mother. (Male in his 40s, interviewed in Kanunga, Sept 2009).

Reasons such as loss of job, financial constraints, the respondent maintaining relations or interacting with the neighbours and making any mistakes in the household also led to violence. In most cases, such events were reported to have caused violence in the later years of marriage. In words of one respondent:

"This happened about 2-3 years after marriage. I was sitting outside with my neighbour talking. I did not realize my husband had returned home. By the time I got inside the house, he had made tea. I asked him when he had arrived. He just got up and slapped me. " (Female, 31-40 years, interviewed in Kanunga, Sept. 2009).
6.3 Causes of harassment/violence

Respondents were asked if they had experienced any form of harassment or violence during the period of marriage or relationship. The analysis of response data indicates that 77.8% respondents reported ever having experienced some form of harassment or violence. When this is examined by gender, 33.5% of men and 44.3% women reported ever having experienced some form of harassment or violence in their marital life. They were then asked to give their opinion as to the probable cause of such harassment or violence.

Respondents cited very diverse reasons/causes for violence: economic constraints, alcohol and partner's drinking habits, joblessness, being irresponsible in their God given roles of provider, infidelity and having relationships with other persons of the opposite sex, in-laws, poor communication, withdrawal, coming home late and not spending time with family, not wanting to have any children, refusing to have sex, control over finances, lack of trust and feeling insecure, incitement from friends, personal characteristics, and stalking were some of the reasons or causes reported by respondents.

When respondents shared their experiences of violence, they were also asked what in their opinion the reasons for the occurrence of violence were. Majority of the women cited 'economic constraints' or "limited economic resources" as the major reason for violence. Conversely, majority of the men cited 'being refused sex', 'lack of trust due to incitement from friends', and a few mentioned 'lack of finances'. Women shared that it mainly happens over household expenses. There are those who are given limited funds to run the household and with increasing inflation, they find it very difficult to do so. In such a case, when they approach their husbands for more money, they often get shouted at, or beaten. As one of the women narrated:

"He'd be happy one minute, then the mention of money, it's like it spoils his mood and he becomes a beast. He starts to shout at me because I ask for money for household expenses, then it's like I stop being his wife and become a stranger - he insults me .... you dog/prostitute,..." (Window, 51+ years, interviewed in Kanungu, Sept 2009).
Other women reported being asked for money by their husbands as a major cause of violence.

"He keeps suspecting that I have money and I am hiding it from him. We have disagreements over money reasons - if there is 100/-, I give him 20/- because I know he's just going to drink .... " (Female, 21-30 years, interviewed in Kiambu, Sept 2009).

Another reported reason for violence was their husband's drinking habit as stated by one respondent:

"... my husband often comes home drunk - at times everyday - and picks up a fight... He does not need any specific reason to do so. It can start over something trivial as the fact that I cooked sukuma wiki and not meat today. He constantly calls me names, keeps abusing". (Female, 31-40 years, interviewed in Banana, Sept 2009).

Sometimes, irrespective of what may happen, he just gets up and starts hitting. At times it starts when the wife does not give him money for his drinking:

"If I do not give him money everyday - his daily 20/-, then he starts calling me things..."

Some women narrated specific instances when their husbands came home drunk and when the violence commenced...

"When he has no work, he drinks and comes. And then the verbal abuse starts.... " (Female, in her 40s, Kanunga, interviewed Sept. 2009).

Others shared how in their marital life, though they have not been physically hit, the verbal abuse continues:

"/found him with another woman and when I asked him, he told me that even 10 wives he can marry. Sometimes he comes home drunk, and he has not left money for household things and he says he was bought for beer. " (Bar Maid, 31-40 years, interviewed in Kiambu, Sept 2009).

Some women attributed the violence to their husband's drinking habit:

"...the violence occurs because of his drinking. If he is not drunk, he will not say anything, he behaves very nicely." (Bar Maid, 31-40 years, interviewed in Kiambu, Sept 2009).

Others accredited the conflict to separation when pursing further studies:
.....my husband took in another wife when I went for a refresher course and now she is my co-wife. Up to the time of his death, we were fighting over this. He was taking my money and spending it on her. He also felt insecure once and started beating me claiming that he saw me crossing the road carelessly like I wanted to get myself hit by a car. He was hitting me and asking me if I get hit by a car and die whom shall I leave him with. (Windowed woman 51+. Educated to Form 4).

Lack of regard for the type of job a woman did was also mention as a cause of violence:

...he had money - a lot of money - very successful businesses in transportation contracts. He had millions of shillings and saw me as nothing since I was just a secretary. (Married in her 40s).

Responses from men seem to attribute the occurrence of violence to their wives' constant nagging, being suspicious and lack of trust, and their inability to provide financially for household needs as shared by some of the men:

"he never sees me as a person. She always claims I am with prostitutes that it's why I don't give her money. (Married man in his -30s - small business).

Another yet stated:

".. she thinks I may be cheating on her. She thinks I have changed that I am a bit withdrawn or distance. (Married man - 30s - small business).

And yet another:

"...she had been told that I was having an affair with another woman. Whenever I come home late at night, even when with friends, she becomes suspicious of my involvement with other women. (Married man - 30s - small business).

These problems are further compounded by the fact that due to lack of employment and the retrenchment exercises that have rendered many jobless, many men in the area have no source of income. The frustration, which comes with the loss of job and livelihood and hence loss of control over resources is often taken out on the wife and children, who are
vulnerable and who lack power in the household. The women on their part toil tirelessly to put food on the table and the last thing they expect is to be beaten and be verbally abused. One woman said her husband tends to be very suspicious of her source of money. She said her husband insists that every time she is going out, she should take the children with her, so she does not 'do other bad things like meeting and talking to other men'. If she goes out alone, then the husband may stop talking to her or may constantly ridicule her. He then restricts her movements. This, she said, includes putting restrictions on her or completely stopping her from interacting with others including their neighbours.

Many women also saw manipulation by other family members especially in-laws as the reason for violence. Women shared instances where other family members like the sister in-law have prompted discontentment between them and their mothers-in-law or husband. This has led to arguments, further leading to physical violence between spouses.

Influenced by his family members, the husband may restrict his wife's movements or monitor them. He may also resort to physical violence. Women also felt that men tend to listen to their mothers and without any regard to their wife's views, react based on what they have been told. As one of the senior woman said:

"We shared one gate with my mother-in-law. Our house was behind hers so she would see any of my visitors as they came in. She would then follow them to my house pretending to be friendly, but what I hated most was the way she would come every morning into our house soon after my house girl woke up. She would take a chair and sit outside our bedroom door, and start talking to her son. When I complained about this behavior to my husband, he would ask me to bear with her. But one day, I remember he hit me. That's when I started praying for God to give me a home, away from my mother-in-law." (Female graduate, 51+ years, interviewed in Banana, Sept 2009).

Some women also ascribed to the view that they faced violence as they themselves had committed some mistake. This is clearly brought out in the words of one respondent:
"There was housewarming ceremony at our home in the village. There was a lot of work to be done. I had got tired of doing all the work, and a little bored too. My husband was having lunch, and he asked for water. I was very tired, so I told him to take it himself. At that time, he took the water jug and hit me with it. I made a mistake by not giving him water. Don't we hit our children when they commit mistakes? Then if something happens and husband hits - so what?" (Female, 31-40 years, interviewed in Kiambu, Sept 2009).

Women shared that they often had to face various kinds of harassment - constantly being abused, being called unprintable words, physical beating, constant monitoring by their husbands. As one of them said:

"my husband treats me not like a wife but as a servant". We have arguments for no specific reason as such - my husband hates me... He uses words to hurt me. And if I make any mistake, he hits me...". (Female, 41-50 years, interviewed in Kanunga, Sept 2009).

In many cases women felt that there was no specific reason for the violence at all - "...he is just like that." - it happens over any reason. A small fight escalates into a violent episode. It could be due to any of the reasons given above. It happens for trivial reasons such as over salting the *sukuma*. That is enough for the husband to hit her. Many a times, he has then taken a mug and hit her. Added to that, if he is angry for any reason and drinks, then he is more likely to do so. It also happens if the wife has spoken to anyone, or if she did not open the door quickly. He may suspect her of having extra marital affairs with other men and so verbally abuses her or hits her. Some women reported that often they have not understood why the violence occurred.

Being a housewife was seen as a factor of violence by some respondents. As one man said:

"she stays at home and when I come home, I don't get what I want. Sometimes I find the house in a mess and I don't feel like she appreciates the work I do when she just stays home. Why can't she get something to do instead of staying at home?" (Matatu driver, in his 30s, interviewed in Banana Sept 2009).
Other women were of the same view. They believed that housewives stay quiet and tolerate everything. If a woman was doing something to make her own money, she could have retorted against the violence being committed on her as she can depend on her own money. Men also felt that women make unwarranted demands on them for money and do not appreciate the efforts men make to feed the family. A deserted man had this to say:

"... she is never satisfied. She just wants to loam about and cannot even make a living. She has totally destabilized me financially." (Deserted man in his 40s - Ed to Form 2).

Another cause of violence was due to the fact that women tended to be more educated than men. The educated women do not bear up with violence, they go out of the house, they earn, stand on their own, they are independent. They do not stay quiet and tolerate everything. It was held that an educated woman retorted against the violence being committed on her. If the husband is not worth it then the woman leaves him. One educated woman shared:

"...he wants to control my finances. I refused from the beginning opening one bank account or have my money controlled by him. He has many times asked for money to invest, but he is a really bad business man. Taking too many risks and blaming me for his failure. This gives him a reason to come home late at night, finds me sleeping and hits me." (Married woman in her 40s. College degree).

6.4 Perpetrators of domestic violence

While understanding the forms of violence experienced by respondents, it was also pertinent to understand the person(s) responsible for perpetuating the violence. The analysis was done by gender and different tables were generated. Table 6.2 indicates that 64.7% cases, husband were mentioned as being the perpetrator, while 32.4% of cases, wives were mention as being the perpetrators. Only a negligible 2.9% was by other family member. When analyzed by forms of violence experienced, it was seen that the most reported perpetrator for all forms of violence - whether physical, psychosocial or economic - is the husband (58.5%).
Table 6.3: Persons responsible for the harassment of violence (N=34)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person responsible for harassment</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>64.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (sibling and/or parents)</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of perpetrator and reported forms of lifetime violence experienced by women shows that irrespective of forms of violence experienced, the husband was the main perpetrator (64.7%). When women experienced physical violence, in 64.7 percent cases the perpetrator was the husband only, while in 2.9 percent cases it was his family (siblings and/or parents). The part of husband as one of the perpetrator was very clear in 12 percent of women who experienced physical violence during marital life. When psychosocial violence was experienced, in 8 percent cases the perpetrator was the husband while it was 32 percent when she experienced economic violence.

Table 6.4: Forms of violence by gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Physical %</th>
<th>Economic %</th>
<th>Psychosocial %</th>
<th>psycho &amp; economic %</th>
<th>psycho &amp; physical %</th>
<th>Psycho, Physical &amp; Economic %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast, when the analysis is carried out by gender, men have reported higher rates of lifetime experiences of different forms of violence compared to women. Table 6.3 shows that irrespective of forms of violence experienced by men, the wife was the main perpetrator. When men experienced physical violence, in 10.5 percent of cases, the perpetrator was the wife while no cases of her siblings were reported. When psychosocial violence was experienced, in 31.6 percent of cases, the perpetrator was the wife while it was 51.6 percent when he experienced economic violence. Nonetheless, this analysis has a limitation as respondents were asked an open-ended question about their experiences of marital violence.
and thereafter asked who the perpetrator was. The specific forms of violence experienced and the perpetrator for each form was not specifically asked. However table 6.3 provides general information on perpetrators of violence against respondents in their marital life.

As shown on table 6.2, arguments/fights occur between husbands and wives. At times, there are no specific reasons for its occurrence while at other times, the reasons would be varied. The situation was complex when the wife or husband with their siblings was identified as the perpetrators of violence. Going by this analysis, it can be inferred that among this sample population, more males than females are the victims of physical and economic forms of violence, while the women are reportedly experiencing all forms of violence simultaneously.

6.5 Incapacitation

In some cases, the severity of physical violence has lead to incapacitation. In total about 35.3% of respondents reported they experienced some of incapacitation in their lifetime due to violence. Among the respondents who have experienced violence in lifetime, 22 percent said that violence had led to some form of incapacitation. 17.6 percent had sought help from a health professional, and 38.0 percent had used home remedies or self-medication. It is suspected that among the 29.4% who did not respond, they had used self-medication rather than seek medical help as one man stated:

"...Go where? For what? The nurses are going to ask who did this. I can't go. So I applied brake fluid on the wounds." (Married man in his 30s, from Kanunga).

Violence had reached a stage where 15.9 percent of respondents were not able to do their usual activities. The observation that 15.0 percent of these respondents had to be hospitalized due to incapacitation is very serious. All this shows prevalence of severe violence in this population, which often reached a stage where the victim had to seek medical help.

When a woman was the person mainly responsible for violence induced incapacitation, 5% of male victims required hospitalization compared to 17% of women when it was male induced incapacitation. 21% of women and 14% of men had to seek medical treatment,
while 7% of women and 5% of men could not go about doing daily tasks respectively, compared to 34% of women and 41% of men who used home remedies/self medication. Only one woman reported 'other relative' as a person responsible for the incapacitation. Some men narrated that some incidents of violence were severe enough to leave its mark not only on their mind but also on their bodies.

6.6 Frequency of incapacitation due to violence

The severity of physical injury inflicted on a victim of partner violence assumes the form of a social problem when it is a repeated action. When respondents were asked to state the frequency of physical injury subjected to them, some did not give a response to this question and others blocked it off, as it seemed to bring bad memories. For those who responded, 16% reported that they were facing incapacitation due to physical violence subjected to them on a daily basis, while 36% experienced incapacitation once or twice in a week, and 36% reported had faced incapacitation once or twice in a month throughout their marital life.

Among those who reported once or twice a week, 67% are either divorced or separated from their partners. Violence could probably be the cause of the separation or divorce.

From the foregoing, causes of partner violence identified range from trivial to the bizarre but economic factors account for more cases than structural/cultural factors. Study findings indicate that female perpetrated abuse against the males was high. Women perpetrators of intimate partner violence cause more incapacitation to their victims than the male perpetrators. Alcoholism, jealousy of partner, not-doing housework properly, extra-marital relations, resistance to sexual advances, poor communication, all play the role of triggers to violence in marital relationships. Although not overtly reported, there were arguments about unmet sexual needs and reports of undesired marital intercourse. The severity of violence experienced by victims sometimes required hospitalization and in some case required medical treatment and the frequency of violence that lead to incapacitation was high. No single factor explained the phenomenon of partner violence.
CHAPTER SEVEN
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes and gives recommendations based on the study findings on partner violence among women who live in abusive marriages in Kiambaa Division.

7.2 Conclusion

On the basis of the objectives and findings, this study makes the following conclusions. Kiambaa women perceive intimate partner violence justifiable and as a normal way of life. This conclusion is consistent with other studies. Greenblat (1985), Roscoe (1985) reported that depending on the context of the violent incident, individuals either disapprove or justify the violence. According to Greenblat (1985), cultural norms that prescribe rules of retributive justice exist. When there has been sufficient provocation for the violence, the rules of retribution can operate. This rule seems to apply to domestic violence across the cultures.

The form of violence most prevalent among Kiambaa inhabitants are psycho-social in combination with economic forms of violence. This conclusion is based on the findings that 90% of the sample reported that they had experienced or had employed psychological aggression and economic violence against their intimate partners at least once during their marital life. Although no use of a gun or a knife was reported, approximately fifteen percent of the respondents in this study used severe violence including kicking, pushing, or hitting with a fist. Approximately four out of ten respondents reported experience of a combination of all forms of violence from their spouses/partners at least once in their marital life. It should be noted that the use of withdrawal, silence, and economic withholding, were also quite prevalent. As other studies have found out, emotional abuse often precedes, occurs with, and/or follows physical or sexual abuse in relationships (Koss et al. 1994; Stets 1991; Tolman 1992; Walker 1984). Sexual and non-sexual physical abuse also co-occur in many abusive relationships (Browne 1987; Mahoney & Williams 1998; Walker 1984), and, as with
emotional abuse, sexual and non-sexual abuse often are combined elements of a single abusive incident (Bergen 1996; Browne 1987; Finkelhor & Yllo 1985; Russell 1990; Walker 1984).

Kiambaa inhabitants identified more frequent economic factors as the causes of intimate partner violence than structural/cultural factors. This conclusion is based on the findings that (i) males who had no meaningful sources of income, who could not contribute adequately to their households, were violated more, than those who had economic strengths, (ii) women with relatively higher levels of education with more autonomy in decision making and economically independent tended to be abused more. This is attributed to the threat to cultural male supremacy and women's subordinate position. The conclusion is consistent with radical feminists views. Kabeer (1994), and Stanko (1994) emphasize the patriarchal roots of inequality between men and women or, specifically, social dominance of women by men. It views patriarchy as separating power, rights and privileges primarily by gender, and as a result oppressing women and privileging men with the control of women. When this is challenged, conflict resorts.

In addition to economic and structural/cultural causes, several other factors account for partner violence, but no single factor explains the phenomenon of partner violence. Alcoholism, jealousy of partner, not-doing housework properly, extra-marital relations, resistance to sexual advances, poor communication, all play the role of triggers to violence in marital relationships. All these stem from unequal power relations between men and women. This is consistent with Gelles et al. (1980) observation that "violence and love can coexist in a household and is perhaps the most insidious aspect of family violence, because we grow up learning that it is acceptable to hit the people we love". Society and its formal institutions view domestic violence as a "private matter".

7.3 Recommendations

In light of the objectives and findings of the present study, the following recommendations are made.
1. Legal aid and advice should be made available to victims of domestic violence free of charge.

2. Private rooms in all police stations and in the Chiefs camps should be provided for use when victims of domestic violence report the violation.

3. A shift is emerging where males are becoming the victims of domestic violence, perpetrated by the female partners. A carefully planned mass media strategy is of critical importance to educate the masses on gender issues that could be causing the lift between men and women. Issues relating to gender roles, and how they can be revised should be packaged in interesting, viewer friendly programmes for assimilation and absorption in social psyche. It is, therefore, necessary to plan a media strategy for bringing a massive awareness and education on the issues of gender. The Government of Kenya should provide adequate resources for implementation of such a comprehensive media strategy for social change.

4. The governments, under the Ministry of Gender should conduct regular training programmes of the masses to identify and respond more effectively to the cases of domestic violence. The units of law enforcement officers' specially targeting domestic violence should be created, developed, trained and expanded. Similarly, data collection and communication systems, linking police, prosecutors and courts for the purpose of identifying domestic violence should be introduced at the earliest.

5. The government should develop, enlarge and strengthen social support services programmes for victims of domestic violence, irrespective of gender.

6. The government should carry out the implementation of comprehensive strategies addressing domestic violence that are sensitive to the needs and safety of the victims and hold offenders accountable for their crimes.
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Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

Introduction

My Name is Wanjiru Njuguna. I am a post-graduate student conducting research for the award of a Master's Degree in Gender and Development at the University of Nairobi.

Purposes of the Study. The purpose of this study is to learn more about intimate partner violence, causes of violence, coping mechanism and the attitudes of women and men toward intimate partner violence.

This study is voluntary and you have the right to withdraw at any time or skip any questions/discussion that you don't want to answer. There is no right or wrong answers. Some of the topics may be difficult to discuss, and are not expected to be of direct benefit to you, but the knowledge gained may be of benefit to others.

Confidentiality: I want to assure you that all answers/discussions will be kept strictly secret. I will not keep a record of your name or contact information.

Statement of Informed Consent: I understand that participation in this study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent to participate in this study at any time. Refusal to participate or withdraw will involve no penalty or benefits. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the research, and I have received answers concerning the areas that I do not understand. I willingly consent to participate in this research.

Signature of Subject Date

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent Date
Hallo. My name is Wanjiru N. Njuguna. I am a post-graduate student from the University of Nairobi. I am here to find out the causes of, or reasons behind domestic violence and the perception of men toward domestic violence. The questions concern yourself, your partner in a relationship, and experiences you may have had. Some questions may concern partners you have had in the past. I want to assure you that all your answers will be kept strictly secret. I will not keep a record of your name or address. You have the right to stop the interview at any time, or to skip any questions that you don't want to answer. There is no right or wrong answer. Some of the topics may be difficult to discuss, but many men would like to have the opportunity to talk. However, your participation is completely voluntary but your experiences could be very helpful to other men in Kenya.

**PART I**

**DEMOGRAPHIC DATA**

1. How old are you?
   - (a) 21-30
   - (b) 31-40
   - (c) 41-50
   - (e) 51 & above

2. Gender
   - DMale
   - DFemale

3. What is your marital status?
   - (a) Married
   - (d) Widowed
   - (b) Separated
   - (e) Deserted
   - (c) Divorced
   (a) If married, length of current marriage:

4. What is your religion?
   - Catholic
   - Protestant
   - Muslim
   - DOther (specify).

6. What is your current occupation?

7. What is your highest level of education/training attained?
   - a) Primary School - up to class
   - b) Secondary School - up to class
   - c) Post-secondary education
   - d) College degree.
e) • Other (describe)

MARITAL HISTORY

8. In your married life, did you and your spouse live separately for any period of time?
   • Yes  • No
   a. If yes, when in your marriage did the separation occur?

b. What was the reason for separation?

PART II

PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS PARTNER VIOLENCE

Using the following scale as a guide, indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Circle one response for each statement. Answer as honestly as you can.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(1) Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>(2) Disagree</th>
<th>(3) Not Sure</th>
<th>(4) Agree</th>
<th>(5) Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

9. In today's society, beating a spouse or partner is understandable under some circumstances  

10. It's O.K. to live with an abusive partner as long as she provides food, money and pays the school fee.

11. Naturally a husband should control the wife's movement and actions.

12. A woman should not refuse her husband's sexual advances.

13. A woman deserves beating if she talked back on her husband, disobeyed the husband, refused him sex, presented a poorly cooked food, or late meal and failed to care for the children.

14. A husband can beat his wife if she does something wrong as a corrective and training measure.

15. The people in my life whose opinion I value would approve a husband beating his wife whenever provoked.

DECISION MAKING & AUTONOMY

When faced with the following situations, what do you do? Choose from:
Can decide independently
Have to consult someone
Have to follow instructions (issued by partner or other older family members such as father-in-law)
Other (specify)

16. Deciding on household daily purchase
17. Spending money on yourself
18. Purchasing major assets like land, TV, etc
19. Deciding the school for your children
20. Going out with friends / other men from the community

PART III

FORMS OF VIOLENCE

21. You have been married for______years. During this time, did you ever have an argument over any matter with your wife and / or family members?
   (i) DYes   (ii) DNo (go to Q15)   (iii) DNo response (probe list)
   (a) If yes, what forms do your arguments or fights with your wife and / or family members take?

22. In the last six months did you face harassment or violence (been hit, slapped, kicked, repeatedly insulted, called bad words, always need to ask for money even for daily purchases, taking away your money, constantly needing to know where you are, threatening to hurt you or those you love, etc)!
   (i) DYes   (ii) DNo (if not go to Q23)   (iii) DNo response (See checklist)
   (a) If yes, in the last six months what form did it take? Let the respondent narrate. Researcher to go through the checklist.

CAUSES OF VIOLENCE

23. Who was the person responsible for the harassment or violation?

24. In your opinion what were the probable causes of such harassment or violence?
   (List the responses given by the respondent)
25. When in your marriage did the violence begin? \textit{(Ask about 'time')} \\

26. Has the violence ever physically impaired you or your partner such that \\
\hspace{1cm} *(a) You/she could not go about doing your daily tasks \\\n\hspace{1cm} *(b) Had to seek medical treatment \\\n\hspace{1cm} *(c) Had to be hospitalized \\\n\hspace{1cm} *(d) No response \textit{(probe list)} \\

27. If response to Q 22 is (a) or (b) or (c), how often has this happened in the last one year? \\

\textit{Thank you for your time and answers. This has been extremely helpful. As I said in the beginning, the discussion we have had is confidential. Do you have any questions for me? Thank you for your co-operation.}
Appendix A

Key-Informant Interview Guide
(Professionals and Government Officers)

Name:

Occupation:

Institution:

1. How would you define domestic violence?
2. What forms of physical partner violence have you dealt with?
3. What forms of emotional partner abuse have you dealt with?
4. What are the causes of domestic violence reported to you?
5. What makes women/men stay in abusive marriages/relationships?
6. What are the community responses when violence occurs?
7. What do you think should be done to end the partner violence?
8. What advice would you give to women/men in abusive relationships?
9. And what advice would you give to society?

Thank you for your time and answers. This has been extremely helpful. As I said in the beginning, the discussion we have had is confidential. Do you have any questions for me? Thank you for your co-operation.