

# Triggers of Intimate Partner Violence (TIPV). The Community's Perception in Peri-Urban and the Insight from Epmafara District Harare-Zimbabwe.

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**Abstract:** This study sought to examine the triggers of intimate partner violence. There is little work done towards addressing the triggers of intimate partner violence. Thus, a significant gap as the triggers are diversified. It is well known that women's rights have always been sidelined since the early 1500's. Thus women are in most cases, victims of intimate partner violence. This study assumed that the main causes of intimate partner violence were social, economic and psychological. A phenomenological approach was adopted with 20 participants to identify a phenomena and focus on the subjective experiences and understanding about the structure of those lived experiences. The researchers used an in-depth interviews and focus groups to understand the triggers of IPV and the experiences of IPV victims. The study found that too much poverty and its related stressors worsen the risk of intimate partner violence. Women were often at the receiving end of this violence stating that alcohol and substance abuse proved to be the major key drivers' partner violence together with the loss of one's livelihood activity. Women in different peri-urban communities often got married for financial reasons more than actual love and thus there were high rates of infidelity which also resulted in intimate partner violence. This study further found that victims of intimate partner violence did not want to leave these relationships as they often heavily depended on the perpetrator. Intimate partner violence was also found to be socially acceptable as a social norm in the community, which influence its high rates. This study suggests intervention methods such as psycho-social support, IPV related campaigns and education to educate both males and females about the devastating effects of intimate partner violence. This can be aided to by comprehensive use of media and influential gate keepers in the community to help community members to shun maladaptive behaviours.

**Keywords:** Partner violence, Gender-based violence, Infidelity and community perception.

## I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

There are a number of intimate partner violence (IPV) triggers, which include psychological, social and economic. The history of IPV dates back to the 1500s when wife-beating for correctional purposes was permitted in the USA, however, the founding of SPCA in 1866, came with the

prevention of cruelty to children and women. Following the establishment of SPCA, the first Family Court was created in 1911 in Buffalo, New York; and the decision was that it is better to solve family problems in a setting of discussion and reconciliation with social service intervention. Civil rights, anti-war and black liberation movements challenge the USA between the 1950s and 1960s, and laid a foundation for the feminist movement. Thus women's voices began to be heard and recognized at large. In 1962 domestic violence cases started to be transferred from criminal court to civil court in New York, where only civil procedures apply, however, the husband never faced as harsh penalties as he would suffer if he was found guilty in criminal court for assaulting a stranger.

Further developments were done in 1966, as beating became grounds for divorce in New York, as it was now regarded as cruel and inhumane treatment, but the plaintiff had to establish that a sufficient number of beatings have taken place. The state of Maine opens one of the first shelters in the United States in 1967, and this served to help victims of IPV. The women's liberation movement started in the 1970s and it claimed that what goes on in the privacy of people's homes is deeply political. Only in 1990 was stalking identified as a crime, and this helped protect women and all IPV victims. For the first time judges were required to consider any history of spousal abuse before determining child custody or visitation rights. This also helped safeguard children from being in the hands of abusers, thus, likely turning them into abusers themselves.

In 1992, The Surgeon General ranked abuse by husbands to be the leading cause of injuries to women ages 15-44, this clearly shows that more research had and has to be done shedding light on triggers of IPV. The American Medical Association (1992) releases guidelines that doctors screen women for signs of domestic violence. In California, a bill was passed protecting children from the effects of domestic violence. This bill gave the courts authority to remove the battering parent or guardian from the household and prohibit visitation if it would jeopardize the safety of the child. It also allowed the non-

offending parent to create a safety plan to protect the child from the offending parent before the child can be removed from the non-offending parent's home in 1996. This IPV timeline shows that women were mostly sidelined and thus forming reforms in which IPV victims can find help seemed hard, as all efforts were shortly lived. The timeline (The Pennsylvania Child Welfare Resource Center), does not shed light on the triggers of IPV, rather shows how women were treated and the reforms attempted to put an end to IPV.

Globally, the lifetime prevalence of IPV among couples ranging from 15% to 71%, and studies indicate that nearly one in every three women has experienced physical aggression, sexual coercion, or emotional abuse in an intimate relationship (Olayanju et al. 2013). Economic, social and psychological factors are assumed to be major key elements influencing the high rate of intimate partner violence. Jewkes (2002) postulates that poverty, socioeconomic and associated stress are key contributors of intimate partner violence among social minorities in the United States of America. Patra, Prakash, Patra and Khanna (2018) did a study in India and they stated that strict and authentic customs in the past have endorsed the reprimanding and beating of spouses, especially under the thought of privilege and responsibility. This, thus, legitimizes power over ladies' sexuality. Unfavourable youth encounters, especially seeing abusive behaviour at home and encountering physical and sexual maltreatment, have been distinguished as components that put youngsters in danger. Unnecessary utilization of liquor and different medications has likewise been noted as a predictable factor occurrence of IPV. They also added that lack of economic resources and dependence is a great cause of IPV as women who are economically dependent on their husbands are stuck in these abusive relationships. Cultural, economic, legal, political and personal factors like being a drunkard are all credited as triggers of IPV (Patra, Prakash, Patra and Khanna 2018).

According to Johnson (2008), economic-related support is an important aspect in terms of providing a positive contribution to women enabling them to escape from abusive relationships. This economic dependence might be a key driver of intimate partner violence. In addition to that, lack happened to be the most enemy in creating and fostering dependence syndrome in many women and as such, in order for them to provide for the family, they need a male figure in their life. By so doing, they are putting themselves under the control of men. This narrative proved to be very prevalent in most African countries. It is therefore imperative to note that, a relationship where a male is controlling the financial and economic welfare of the family has got the potential to deter a non-working female to leave an abusive relationship due to the fear of the unknown. The general abuse that is likely to be faced by women in such relationships varies from having no or limited access to opportunities to employment, access to money and credits as well as exclusion from being part of the financial decision-making issues.

Some schools of thought argue that intimate partner violence can be fuelled by a lack of resources since circumstances of the economic status of women can expose or protect them from intimate partner violence. This is sufficient to say, working-class women's vulnerability to intimate partner violence is lower than the non-working women in some settings. However, Panda & Agarwal (2014) in contrast are of the view that, even if working women and those financially sound women are said to experience less IPV or any other form of GBV, it is not always the case across the globe. This is so because according to these scholars it varies from society to society where in some contexts financially stable might expose women to gender-based violence and the opposite is true in other settings. In Bangladesh, women's significant contribution economically is associated with physical in violence an area.

Psychological factors are often downplayed in the African setting which may also be a key factor in influencing intimate partner violence. Men and women both do not have an effective way of coping with stress that results from their socioeconomic issues. Thus, men become the perpetrators when they engage in drinking alcohol, resulting in violence while women become the victims. Kelly & Johnson (2008), note that male-controlling interactive violence starts from verbal arguments and progresses to a physical struggle. In this case, violence may be initiated by either partner; however, women can be overpowered. Jealousy is also a key factor that incites intimate partner violence. This can be supported by Johnston & Campbell (1993) in their view that psychotic and paranoid are a result of distorted thinking.

Simona, Muchindu & Ntalasha (2015), found in a study conducted in Zambia that factors such as household wealth, witnessing parental violence and attitudes justifying wife beating were significantly associated with intimate partner violence. Furthermore, the study found that gender inequality and problematic cultural norms privilege men with power over women, thus IPV prevention strategies should incorporate adjustment of cultural norms. Commonly reported sociodemographic factors that are positively associated with IPV include having a low level of education, being unemployed, financial dependence on the partner (Dutton and Browning 1988; Macmillan and Gartner 1999; Smith 1990), and using drugs or drinking alcohol.

Intimate partner violence rates remain at an all-time high world over, which in most cases has resulted in child-headed families, depression, injury, post-traumatic stress and even death. The phenomenon is not unique to the Epmafara and Hopley districts. It is important to note that though intimate partner violence occurs in all settings its most common in low-income homes due to the fact that the use of violence is socially acceptable. Relationship conflict that occurs due to finances and gender role transgressions are more violent than peaceful. An appreciation of the fact that there are multiple causes for one being a perpetrator or victim of intimate partner violence is essential in order to help with coming up

with possible interventions. It is against this backdrop that this study is conducted.

#### *Objectives*

- To identify the economic triggers of IPV,
- To examine socio-cultural drivers of intimate partner violence (IPV).
- To determine the psychological implications of intimate partner violence (IPV).
- To establish possible intervention strategies to curb IPV.

#### *Theoretical Framework*

##### *Social learning theory*

Social learning theorists try to explain that violent ways of flustering family conflicts are often learned through observing parental and peer relationships during childhood. The theories propose that victims and perpetrators of IPV have either witnessed or experienced physical abuse during childhood, resulting in the individuals either developing acceptance or tolerance of violence within the family (Bradel, Rosenbaum & Orcutt, 2019). The social learning theorist assumes that family violence arises due to many contextual and situational factors. Examples of contextual factors include individual/couple characteristics, stress, or an aggressive personality. Situational factors include substance abuse and financial difficulties. Social learning theory also extends these factors onto the influence of children growing up in families in which these external forces exist.

##### *Learned Helplessness Theory*

One of the questions that often arise within the context of domestic violence is “why do women stay in abusive relationships?” There is a classic theory by Seligman. The theory of learned helplessness was originally proposed to explain the loss of will that accompanies repeated barriers to escape from an aversive situation. Seligman discovered that sometimes dogs would “learn” that their behaviour did not bring about the expected or desired outcome in situations where barriers (electric shock) were present (Beckmann & Heckhausen, 2018). As a result, the dogs would stop engaging in the behaviour even once the barriers were removed. Women who are victims of domestic abuse may experience similar feelings of helplessness and incapacitation. This is not to suggest that there is a lack of hope as many women are able to leave situations in which there has been intimate partner violence.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### *Research Design*

The purpose of this study was to understand the triggers of intimate partner violence (IPV) in and psychological and social triggers of IPV assessed the economic triggers, and psychological and social triggers of IPV, in a quest to understand the triggers from all aspects of life. For the

purposes of this paper, the most suitable design to use was a phenomenology approach. This was adopted as it is used to identify phenomena and focus on subjective experiences and understanding the structure of those lived experiences. Likewise, the researchers aimed to understand the experiences of the victims of IPV and also understand the triggers of IPV from the perspective of the victims. Phenomenology was founded in the early 20th century by Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger and originated from philosophy. Phenomenology is used to describe, in-depth, the common characteristics of the phenomena that have occurred (Statistical solutions, 2021). Thus, this methodology was found to be fit to explore trends associated with the triggers of intimate partner violence.

### *Population and Sampling*

Sauro (2015) states that for a phenomenological study, the expected sample size is 25 to 60 participants. The researchers used purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling, which is a type of non-probability sampling technique. Lund Researchers (2012), state that the main goal of purposive sampling is to focus on particular characteristics of a population that are of interest, which will best enable one to answer their research questions. The sample being studied is not representative of the population, but for researchers pursuing it and this is not considered to be a weakness. For this reason, the researchers opted for purposive sampling. To be specific, the homogeneous purposive sampling technique is used as it aims to achieve a homogeneous sample of people with the same or similar characteristics (Ames, Glenton and Lewin, 2019). Since the researchers wanted to understand the triggers of IPV, a homogeneous sample was used as the research questions addressed specific characteristics of the particular group of interest.

In a nutshell, a qualitative approach was used to explore the triggers of IPV. The study objectives were constantly referred to as in line with the demands of the research questions. Ethical considerations were also followed throughout the sampling and data collection processes to impede harm.

### *Instrumentation*

In a phenomenological study, one can use a combination of data collection methods, so as to understand the meaning participants place on whatever is being examined. So the researchers used in-depth interviews and focus groups to understand the triggers of IPV and the experiences of IPV victims. In-depth interviews were mainly used to build a sufficient database to look for emerging themes and we used other participants in focus groups to validate our findings. Since it's exploratory research, the in-depth interviews were characterized by open-ended questions and probing which gives participants the opportunity to respond in their own words, rather than forcing them to choose from a range of fixed responses as quantitative methods do.

### Data Analysis

Thematic analysis applies to a set of texts, such as interview transcripts. The researcher closely examined and collected data to identify common themes, topics, ideas and patterns of significance that came up repeatedly from the data. This approach was guided by the following steps, familiarization, coding, generation of themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and writing up, thus thematic domains of the research were generated. In this regard, data was analysed to determine themes that emerge from the data set in a comparative fashion. The aim of the analysis approach was to harness and come up with data codes as well as to generate themes in accordance with the collected data per question. A clear step-by-step process was then followed by the researcher concerning what is involved when analysing data using thematic analysis. Below is an illustration of how themes were generated concerning triggers of intimate partner violence.

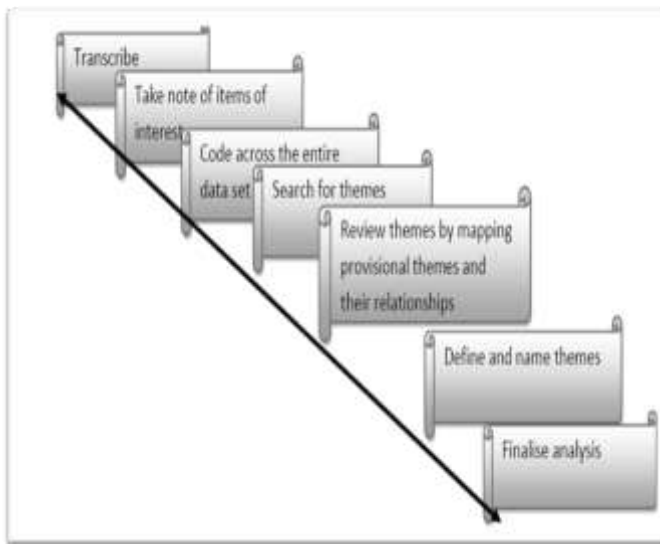


Figure 3.1 Steps in thematic analysis (Adapted from Patton 2006)

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Severe poverty and IPV nexus

Research findings established that too much poverty and its related stressors worsen the risk of intimate partner violence. For instance, the lower the level of household income, the higher the reported cases of intimate partner violence in different households and communities. In addition to that, the findings of this research have established that reductions in terms of assistance or assistance from aid programmes were found to be associated with a notable increase in partner violence.

*“lack of and financial constraints is causing a lot of domestic disputes between me and my husband”*

*“Poverty related disputes is a key driver of intimate partner violence with the potential problem of causing mental problems to the survivor”*

*“shortage of basic needs in the house is putting many women at risk of experiencing intimate partner violence”*

It has been established that many women who have experienced serious abuse due to poverty might be facing overwhelming emotional and mental distress. This follows that, apart from the physical harm as a result of intimate partner violence, there is serious concern about mental health “damage” were a lot of women attested to be the most affected ones by such a menace behaviour.

#### Alcohol and abuse of drugs

Drug and substance abuse is causing untold suffering to many. After intoxication evidence is showing that, men under the influence of alcohol might not be able to think rationally or control their emotions. Alcohol and other drugs from the research findings may act on brain mechanisms that cause a high-risk individual to engage in aggressive and violent behaviour whereas women are found to always in the receiving end.

*“Alcohol is a key driver of intimate partner violence”*

*“My partner is a drug dealer and anytime he failed to handle his customers he can be very violent at home to me and the kids”*

There is indisputable evidence from this research that, substance abuse is one of the greatest contributors to intimate partner violence, and has been associated with violent behaviour for many decades. This follows that the relationship between substance abuse and IPV in the past and what it is like today is more or less the same. This is in light of the pervasiveness of the association according to the research findings, and the consequences have debilitating effects on the survivor. There are two ways to consider in terms of how alcohol and substance abuse is related to intimate partner violence. First, intimate partner violence is perpetrated and can be a result of the influence of substances, and secondly, IPV related to alcohol and substance abuse is something that stems from drug-related trading. Therefore, intimate partner violence as indicated by the findings is a product of drug and substance abuse.

#### Loss of livelihood activities

*“We spend the whole day looking at each other, ever since he lost his job he finds fault in all I do, even in the things he used to praise me like my cooking”*

This statement clearly supports the saying which says “an idle mind is the devil's workshop and one is prone to renting out their mind to the first bidder”. In this case, the first bidder is finding fault in everything that the wife does, thus leading to violence in the homestead. Using wishful thinking, one can conclude that the husband is the sole breadwinner and he is probably transferring his anger and frustrations to his wife. The husband is using sublimation as his defence mechanism as his wife is not the target of his strong negative emotions,

but reacting to them is likely less problematic than confronting his former bosses.

#### *A culture that enshrines infidelity and IPV*

It has been indicated throughout this research that, most societies seem to condone infidelity especially when it is done by men. In this regard, infidelity can cause a particular form of suspiciousness, where the instant trigger of both the serious violent incident and resulting injuries to survivors were persistently raised by the combined efforts of perpetrators and survivors as a continuous relationship stressor.

*“A notable number of men are involved in extramarital affairs and as ladies, we sometimes tend to question the integrity of such behaviour merely to be answered by a lot of threats and beating especially owing to the culture of silence that we have taught by our mothers and aunties”*

*“It is not an easy thing to always remain silent when you are suspicious to the behaviour of your spouse thinking the person is having extra sexual relationship such statements highlighted that, there are plentiful key drivers of infidelity where in each case is different from the other. While some women are of the belief that, infidelity is emanating from loveless with no to limited emotional relationship, some do believe that, such behaviour results from a hurried decision of something that cannot be undone and others believe that infidelity is a total manifestation of communication deficiencies in a relationship be it marriage or cohabiting and a true testimony of the failure to resolve differences in a relationship.*

#### *Lack of Emotional Connection*

Many participants reported that the most common cause of infidelity is a sense of emotional disconnection from your partner. In the absence of emotional connection, people ended up committing infidelity as complementary to the feelings of unappreciated, ignored, unloved and overall sadness. This is also coupled with feelings of insecurity which led the victims to cheat on their partners

*“... to be honest there is no connection between us as lovers”*

*“I am very emotionally attached and connected to my small house”*

All these statements from the participants show that emotions lead to secondary feelings of anger and resentment which prompt people in a relationship to do something which is not right and which they even regret later on. However, it is also important at this juncture to note that, people seem to have the feeling of trying something different that leads to infidelity. This is something that makes it difficult if not impossible to determine what actually leads to infidelity or how people end up cheating their partners. It is this cheating that is fuelling

high levels of reported and unreported cases of intimate partner violence.

#### *Social norms*

Research findings have highlighted that intimate partner violence was and is a way of life in many African countries and the world over. In this case, IPV was seen to be a product of learning as evidenced by the social learning theory for both women and men. Children especially boys from physically, emotionally or financially abused women by their partners are likely to reproduce such behaviour later in life to their intimate partners. This is sufficient to say that, abusive behaviour can be passed from generation to generation, community to community through observation, imitation and modelling.

*“There is a general belief that, women can behave better only when they are beaten, even grandmothers and uncles understood such a language”*

*“Condoning of the use of violence as a disciplinary measure is putting us as women at great risk”*

*“Arranged marriage, manipulation of young girls and women in the name of what the Spirit says is unopposed in different Apostolic sects”*

*“Polygamy and women having to accept it and be abused by the other wives and husband seems to be an acceptable norm in our society*

The daughters of mothers who are survivors of violence being beaten by their husbands or partners are likely to experience the same in the adult stage. Women who used to be beaten during their childhood by their parents are also likely to be suffering from intimate partner violence as adults. Exposure to different forms of violence in the home environment during childhood has got a lasting impact on teaching children that, violence is normal behaviour and the only way to solve any dispute. Be that as it may, violence is a tool used by many men that women have learnt to endure and accept. Thus, tolerating aggressive behaviour.

#### *Depleted self-worth as an effect of IPV*

When spouses and husbands or wives intentionally degrade the value of their spouses through their behaviour or negative talk, this can turn the survivor of the abuse and ill-treatment into a shell of themselves.

*“My spouse says negative statements always about me like, oh my God, you are fat”*

*“Negative comments kills and destroy my confidence, especially when coming from someone whom you thought is there to protect you and to make you feel proud of yourself”*

Regardless of the intent, the victim who happened to be verbally and emotionally abused, can just watch as their confidence in themselves disappear. Every spoken negative word and insult thrown to them can “just chips away” at the very person that they are. It might be very difficult for the

victim to “stomach” the fact that, the person who supposed to love him or her unconditionally is not doing so. It causes a lot of psychological damage because, when someone is a victim of an emotionally abusive husband or wife for a certain length of time, it’s hard for them to see why anyone would love them ever.

#### *Sleep Disorders and Nightmares*

Intimate partner violence can cause insomnia. Participants pointed out that, violence in the house can cause someone to experience restless nights.

*“I cannot sleep at all because most of the time, it’s either I am crying or busy thinking about what tomorrow has in-store for me”*

The trauma as a result of emotional abuse can lead to endless sufferings to the survivors of intimate partner violence during bed time. Victims as indicated by the research might spend countless hours ruminating and pondering on someone’s abusive statements, words, actions or even reliving those hurting scenes again and again. With sleep deprivation it is inevitable that, survivors have less and limited energy remaining within them to come to terms with the level of abuse experienced. This means that, their optimal performance and mood might suffer, which makes them an easy target for even more abuse and finally keeps them awake when they desperately need the sleep

#### *Trauma and stress*

Intimate partner violence from the findings is not an easy task to deal with. Victims find themselves on the horns of the dilemma in terms of the need to report or not to report the perpetrator to the police in the guise of the need to maintain relationships.

*“When you report intimate partner violence, you may feel sad, blame yourself, or be afraid for your children and more violence. It may be difficult to be away from your family or friends, or to go to counselling.”*

From what has been said by the participants, it is clear that women suffer a lot psychologically and silently by virtue of being mum to a behaviour that is toxic to their lives. It also implies that, if intimate partner violence is not stopped, the victim may develop serious health and mental problems. Examples include but not limited to body pain, headache, sexually transmitted infection (STI and HIV/AIDS), and depression to mention just but a few. Therefore, intimate partner violence may lead to severe injuries or become life-threatening. Such practice proved to be able to put or left many children in precarious and unwarrantable position where they may experience severe trauma, distress, anxiety and depression.

#### *Possible intervention strategies*

##### *Education and screening programs.*

Intimate partner violence screening, education, and intervention needs to be put in place as a mitigatory measure as this can help to provide sanity regarding high cases of intimate partner violence experienced in different communities.

*“To be honest I don’t think if my husband knows what he is doing is wrong, he actually needs to be educated”*

*“with education, yes intimate partner violence can be reduced”*

This follows that, education regarding the dangers associated with intimate partner violence is key owing to the fact that, it ushers in the much needed capacity to the perpetrators of violence to decrease and unlearn violent behaviour. It is therefore clear that, such initiatives have the capacity to provide positive outcomes to survivors of intimate violence, their children and the perpetrators as well. Other interventions according to research findings that can be employed to lower the prevalence of partner violence are the ACTS like the Domestic Violence act in Zimbabwe as well as the Gender Based Violence Act that are enshrined to fight incidences and prevalence of gender based violence in a country like Zimbabwe.

##### *Strengthening women’s financial security in the household.*

The research findings speak to the huge existing gaps in terms of who owns the means of production and provide for the family as it happened to a tangible key driver of intimate partner violence.

*“My partner controls all the financial related issues and it puts not only me but many women at a compromising position since it makes us appear as if we are owned by men”*

Financial insecurity in relation to research findings increases the risk of intimate partner violence. Lack of money to support the family normally predisposes the survivor to remain in an abusive relationship due to the fear of the unknown. This is due to the lack of the ability to for instance, afford the costs of moving or paying for household expenses on the victim's own. By strengthening financial position of women, what it means is, one way or the other can empower women to let their voice be heard by their abusers and partners.

##### *Psycho-social support*

##### *Work-family support programs.*

Employers that offer policies such as maternity leave and sick leave for parents with ill children can help lower the incidence of intimate partner violence.

*“Organizations must always support maternity leave financially as unpaid maternity leave can increase intimate partner violence”*

*“I am on an unpaid maternity leave and my husband’s behaviour has changed and he is no longer supportive as he used to be and I don’t know why”*

Maternity leave has been found to increase the likelihood of women maintaining long-term employment. This helps victims of domestic abuse increase the household income. In other words, women who delay working after childbirth might be less likely to suffer from depression than those who return from maternity leave sooner.

#### *Programs that Support Survivors*

Survivors of intimate partner violence requires integrative intervention initiatives for them to be able to come to terms with their debilitating situations. Many participants have indicated that,

*“I need counselling and psychosocial support every now and then for it is so hard to live in an abusive environment day in day out with no one to talk to or share your story.”*

*“...as a survivor of intimate partner violence I also need physical treatment and psychosocial treatment”*

This is suffice to say, survivors of IPV suffers a lot of psychological damage, hence addressing the adverse impacts or outcomes of IPV such as sexually transmitted diseases, chronic pain, depression, substance abuse, PTSD, and more might have the power to effectively reduce the effects and rates of such a violence. On the other hand, children in families impacted by domestic violence are also at risk for depression, anxiety, and other emotional disorders. In this regard, survivors need help for everything from treating physical and emotional disorders, to getting support for housing instability in order to prevent future risk of abuse.

#### *Law and justice system reform*

It has been noted that, organizations like coalitions of women and human rights watchdogs and human rights groups have the remarkable potential to host successful campaigns and advocate for policy change and policy implementation to shun violence against women. Such campaign has the mandate to improve the justice system of the country in relation to criminal and civil laws related to rape, sexual assault and physical violence. Participants were of the view that, the aforementioned structures can usher in a wave of reform with positive impacts to the victims of IPV.

*“...laws in every reason must be adhered to and followed by responsible action where implementation of intimate partner violence defenders must be in full force to deter perpetrators”*

These justice systems have frequently broadened the legal meaning in terms of defining partner violence to take into consideration financial abuse and psychological abuse of a

partner as well as physical and sexual violence. The usefulness of this legal reform as a vehicle to redefine the boundaries of suitable and acceptable behaviour is theoretically strong, however, participants across different community like Epworth, Hopley, Mabvuku, Tafara and Caledonia pointed out that impact of the justice system seems to be largely absent in many communities concerning IPV related cases. Multi-sectoral work by different key stakeholders and government departments to evaluate the contribution of law to the reshaping of norms, attitudes and beliefs around partner violence and other forms of abuse could help strengthen the evidence base thereby informing intervention frameworks.

#### *Changing gender norms*

Societal norms and values of male dominance and general acceptance of domestic violence while women have to be obedient and submissive are the main culprits of escalating levels of intimate partner violence. These poor ideologies of male dominance are reinforced by friendships and social institutions, these norms increase the likelihood that individual men will engage in violence. Furthermore, factors like men being providers, the embarrassment associated with divorce, sexuality being an identifier of masculinity and family secrecy predispose men as perpetrators or violence. A number of strategies have been developed and used to try and change societal norms and attitudes towards these notions such as workshops that encourage debate and questioning some of these beliefs, and demonstrate the effectiveness of collective action. The use of edutainment has so been introduced though media like street theatre, peer discussions, and posters.

#### IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study has established that individuals are getting married for multiple reasons other than love but rather for financial support and economic benefits thus they are high levels of infidelity they cannot tolerate to be with each other more than needed. Coltrane and Collins, (2001) postulate that there are also situations where men do not pay attention to their wives and they do not live like normal couples. They do not do things such as going out together, or having a passionate relationship and ultimately one or both of them end up looking outside of their relationship for someone whom they want to be with. Research has found that Facebook is one of the key contributing factors to about a third of all divorces.

Violence is used to resolve issues of a male identity crisis, which is at times caused by poverty or the inability to control women. Ellsberg and Liljestrand posit violence is greatest in societies where the use of violence in many situations is socially accepted. Hence male dominance over his female partner in hand with unhealthy family dynamics, and antisocial and aggressive peers are factors that fuel intimate partner violence. In addition, jealousy and possessiveness with in an intimate relationship are also triggers for intimate partner violence. Thus intimate partner violence is a result of multiple factors such as individual, relational, communal and

social factors. Understanding the role of each and every one of these factors may assist in coming up with effective prevention methods.

This found that the female victims of intimate partner violence are not passive to the abuse as they have developed strategies to maximize their safety. Heise (2017) also found in a study that what may be interpreted as omen being inaction was actually a calculated assessment of how to protect themselves along with their children. Women cited the following as possible reasons they stay in relationships where there is violence, such as lack of financial support, concern for their children, societal shame of leaving a marriage, losing child custody and hope that their partner will change.

However, this study found that women have the strength to leave abusive relationships. Some of the reason women leave these relationships are escalated violence hence they fear for their lives and that of their children. And the realization that there are no visible attempts by their partner to change. In addition to that, intimate partner violence can cause sexual and reproductive health problems. Resseguie (2007) pointed out that, intimate partner violence can lead to a host of negative sexual and reproductive health consequences for women such as unintended pregnancy, abortion and unsafe abortion, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, pregnancy complications, pelvic inflammatory disease, urinary tract infections and sexual dysfunction. Thus, forced sexual intercourse that is often a result of not being able to negotiate for contraception can have a direct effect on reproductive health as it may result in sexually transmitted infections.

Intimate partner violence during pregnancy may result in miscarriage, stillbirth, premature labour, fetal injury and psychological disorders. Golding (2009) suggests to combat the effects of intimate partner violence during pregnancy responsible stakeholders should increase access to comprehensive service responses to survivors and their children. Heise (2011) posits women who experience intimate partner violence have complex needs and may need services from many different sectors, including health care, social services, legal entities and law enforcement. This is sufficing to say that; multi-sectoral collaboration is essential for ensuring survivors' access to comprehensive services. Evidence from this research indicates that the best way to improve the service response to survivors is to implement institution-wide reforms rather than narrow policy reforms or training a strategy sometimes referred to as a systemic or integrated approach.

Intervention may include psychoeducation this will involve teaching men and women about the effects of intimate partner violence and what it is. This may create a sense of togetherness and reconstruction of social norms that influence the community's perception of what is intimate partner violence. Last but not least, there are "agents of change." These are men and women who are active participants in challenging the current culture of inequality and violence

against women in order to create change at every level in the community in relation to the ecological model.

Therefore, there is the engagement of non-perpetrating men as supportive partners.

## V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, IPV is a sensitive issue, which is badly affect both men and women's physical, emotional, psychological and social health. Some of the underlying causes as established by the research are illiteracy, poverty, and socio-cultural beliefs. So there is an immense need to work on it in a collective manner to educate man and women and to eradicate those beliefs which give rise to intimate partner violence. It is important to realize the impact of intimate partner violence on the next generation, children raised in violent homes tend to repeat the cycle. It is pivotal for people to also recognize the impact of intimate partner violence on the socio-economic growth of a community or country. Therefore, comprehensive steps should be taken to eradicate or minimize IPV in order to make communities better places for their people.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Women and girls should be given equal economic, cultural, personal, political and social rights as men.
- Communities should have projects that can sustain families that might be facing economic/financial challenges,
- Schools, colleges and universities to continue to ensure they are programs on intimate partner violence and its repercussions, students should also be encouraged to speak out when they face such challenges at home
- To have the law enforcement treat intimate partners as an urgent matter before it leads to murder, for them to be trained as counsellors so as to provide assistance when reports are made to them.

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