

High Income Levels and Domestic Violence among Couples in Mbarara City, Mbarara District

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated High Income levels and Domestic Violence among married Couples in Uganda. The objectives of the study were: to establish the relationship between high investment and domestic violence among married couples, high asset base and domestic violence among married couples, high financial base and domestic violence among married couples in Mbarara district. The study took a case study design where both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis were used. Data was collected (n=232) using questionnaire and interview guide. Validity and reliability of research instruments were tested. Both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques of analyses were used. The study revealed a moderate positive correlation between high income levels and domestic violence. The study concluded that high income levels is associated mostly with blame, isolation, threats and intimidation among married couples. The study recommends that laws prohibiting violence of whatever kind should be enforced and the affected people should be sensitized and educated on their rights such that in case their rights are violated, they should seek justice in the courts of law to ensure creation of harmony in all homes.

Key words: High income levels, Domestic violence, married couples

INTRODUCTION

Around the globe, the issue of domestic violence among couples is increasingly posing a significant problem within various households. This escalation is contributing to the sluggish development of communities and the world at large Southern, S., & Sullivan, R. D. (2021). The current study focuses on examining the relationship between high income levels and domestic violence among married couples in Mbarara city.

In ancient Rome during the reign of Romulus in 1962, wife beating was sanctioned under the Laws of Chastisement, granting husbands absolute rights to physically discipline their wives. This practice continued through English Common Law and much of Europe, where husbands were permitted to beat their wives within certain parameters Mahase, E. (2020). Similarly, during Ivan the Terrible's rule in Russia in 1968, the State Church endorsed the oppression of women through a Household Ordinance, allowing husbands to effectively discipline their wives, even to the point of killing them for disciplinary purposes. Over time, resistance to such violence grew, with instances of women fighting back against their abusive husbands Chenoweth, E., & Marks, Z. (2022). In England during the late 1500s, violence against wives was encouraged, perpetuating a culture where women and children were taught to obey the male head of the household Berghorst, L. M. (2020). By the mid-1990s, attention began to be directed towards the widespread problem of domestic violence in many African countries, including Ghana, Tanzania, and South

Africa. Activist groups in countries like Ghana, Uganda, and Kenya advocated for the passage of domestic violence codes, although only South Africa and Mauritius have enacted such statutes to date (Strack, 2010). Traditional cultures in Africa, particularly Uganda, often placed husbands as sole decision-makers over financial matters, with wives expected to seek permission for financial needs Kaase-Bwanga, E. (2021). Instances of wife beating were sometimes encouraged by traditional leaders, albeit with calls for moderation in punishment Namukwaya, L., Lutwama-Rukundo, E., & Mpiima, D. M. (2021).

In Mbarara city, domestic violence among couples has emerged as a significant health issue, with reported cases of violence occurring across high income earners. There are legal and structural provisions and initiatives aimed at addressing domestic violence. The church and local government structures and authorities have put efforts to address domestic violence through sensitization campaigns and training programs but instances of violence have persisted disrupting the peace and comfort of many families Atuhaire. C et al G. (2021). The researcher sought to investigate the relationship between high income levels and domestic violence among couples in the city.

Theory

The study was guided by Resource Theory, proposed by William Goode (2010), which posits that decision-making power within families is derived from the value of the resources each person brings to the relationship. This theory suggests that in situations where married men experience domestic violence, it may indicate that women possess strong financial bases within the family, leading to dependency dynamics. Stress arising from financial strain or other family problems can exacerbate tensions and contribute to violent behavior (Sachs, 2009).

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

High income levels and Domestic Violence

According to Marques, A. C., & Caetano, R. (2020), high investment on the side of the country refers to a situation where a big portion of the national income is invested in capital infrastructure, such as roads, dams, railways, airports, schools, hospitals and less money in consumption expenditures. At individual level Nielsen et.al (2021). found out that high investment comes when one postpones consumption today for more consumption in future. It takes place when one invests heavily in capital assets whose returns are expected to be very high. According to World Bank, (2021) it is people who are entrepreneurs that tend to invest heavily in ventures that are expected to bring high returns though with high levels of risks.

Grénman et.al (2024) found out that peoples' wish is always to be very rich with the intention of living confirmable lives with luxuries enjoyed beyond the basic necessities by all. However, Prilleltensky, I., & Prilleltensky, O. (2021) found out that high income earners take themselves to be achievers who need to be appreciated and praised. In homes where the praising is lacking, men tend to be violent by abusing their family members, turn downs, threatening with the aim of creating the state of recognition, respect and admiration.

Ahmadabadi et al (2020), found out that domestic violence is situated in all income levels but more prevalent in high income earners and low income earners. This observation is supported by (Sareen et al (2020) who found out that domestic violence is also found in United States of America yet it is the richest country in the World where there are high levels of investments, high asset base and high financial base.

However, Chatha, S. A., & Ahmad, D. K. (2020), in his study of economic violence and domestic violence, did not find any relationship between high income levels and domestic violence. He found out that violence is caused by a combination of many factors of which economic status is among but it is hard to isolate the

actual contribution of high investment with high income levels and domestic violence. His argument was supported by Sharot, T., & Sunstein, C. R. (2020) who found out that individual character, whether rich or poor determines the way he or she treats others. In a situation where somebody's character is not to associate with others, does not have respect for others, does not value others, there are high chances of such person to cause violence wherever he or she is, something that may not be associated with some bodies richness. Therefore, this study tried to find out the extent to which high income levels contribute to domestic violence.

High Asset Base

Kling et.al (2022), define asset base as any item of economic value owned by an individual or corporation, especially that which could be converted to cash. He gave examples as cash, securities, accounts receivable, inventory, office equipment, real estate, a car, and other property. On the other hand, Goode (2010) said that on a balance sheet, assets are equal to the sum of liabilities, common stock, preferred stock, and retained earnings. From an accounting perspective, assets are divided into the following categories: current assets (cash and other liquid items), long-term assets (real estate, plant, equipment), prepaid and deferred assets (expenditures for future costs such as insurance, rent, interest), and intangible assets (trademarks, patents, copyrights, goodwill).

Assets are stocks of resources. They are what people accumulate and hold over time. Assets provide for future consumption and are a source of security against contingencies. As investments, they also generate returns that generally increase aggregate lifetime consumption and improve a household's well-being over an extended time horizon. (WHO, 2023).

World Bank (2023) study observed that economic abuse is a form of abuse when one intimate partner has control over the other partner's access to economic resources. Economic abuse may involve preventing a spouse from resource acquisition, limiting the amount of resources to use by the victim, or by exploiting economic resources of the victim. The motive behind preventing a spouse from acquiring resources is to diminish victim's capacity to support him/herself, thus forcing him/her to depend on the perpetrator with high asset base, which includes preventing the victim from obtaining education, finding employment, maintaining or advancing their careers, and acquiring assets Shihata, I. F., & Wolfensohn, J. D. (2023). In addition, the abuser may also put the victim on an allowance, closely monitor how the victim spends money, spend victim's money without his/her consent and creating debt, or completely spend victim's savings to limit available resources.

When a person gets unexpected riches through investments and accumulation of high asset base, his/her behavior changes as a result of finding him/herself in a position he/she did not dream of therefore. In most cases such people want to assure others that they have power and this is done through ensuring control and commanding respect Etienne, M. (2023). Mullens, F., & Glorieux, I. (2023), observed that rich people found themselves in a situation where they are thinking of how to consolidate their resources and therefore do not have time to engage in family affairs in terms of conflict resolution. This is because according to them, everybody at home should take their pieces of advice without question something that promotes domestic violence in homes.

High Financial Base

Goode (2010) found out that financial base to an individual is a situation where there is constant flow of income uninterrupted to meet and exceed someone's financial obligations. Goode further observed that financial base is achieved as a return from heavy investment whose return as profit is high.

According to National Domestic Violence Hotline Godin, M. (2020), one out of every three women around

the world has been beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused during her lifetime. Four million American women experience serious assault by their partners during an average of 12-months period yet America is the richest country in the world with high financial base where comfortable living of all family members is expected Kim, C., & Schmuhl, M. (2020).

One of the main causes of domestic violence in high income earners is lack of respect for others. This is because people who are rich think that money is everything to them Mullens, F., & Glorieux, I. (2023). As a result, no engagement of their family members in planning, negotiation, consultation and above all respecting the family members' demands. In an effort of directing the family members to take their line of thinking, those who tend to oppose or question end up being beaten, threatened, abused and sometimes imposing financial sanction something that causes domestic violence Kim, C., & Schmuhl, M. (2020). This argument was also supported by (Agarwal and Panda, 2022) who found out that high income earners with high asset base especially who become rich unexpectedly tend to behave in a manner that violet the rights of whose they are either living with or staying with since they take their riches to be everything.

Findings of the municipal women's federation Culvin, A. (2023) in England show that there are more cases of domestic violence among well-educated and high-income households. High income earners tend to behave as masters in everything they do and think and whoever tries to deviate from their thinking tend to be handled mercilessly including battering, abuses and threats because they tend to see themselves above everybody else Frieze et.al (2020). However, domestic violence based on resource ownership has no gender. Whether it is the man or women at home who possess wealth he or she may want to use that as a tool to drive anybody around him/her something that results into violence Culvin, A. (2023).

High-income earners are often totally focused on their careers and regard themselves as being high achievers. When they have problems at work and in their businesses they take them out on their partners at homes who are taken as shock absorbers of their problems thus creating unhealthy situation that includes abuse, threats, turn down including battering Mullens, F., & Glorieux, I. (2023).

Akhter et. al (2022). observed that things were different decades ago when three generations lived under one roof. In those days, parents or neighbors would mediate in domestic disputes. But as today's high-income families live in the classic nuclear family mode, husbands and wives are left to deal with their problems themselves, which is increasing the situation and creating discomfort in such rich families.

METHODOLOGY

The study used a case study design where both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection analysis were used. A case study was preferred because it helped the researcher analyze situations in depth and to relate them to similar situations in other places (Oso and Onen, 2009). Quantitative approach enabled collection of numerical data in order to explain, describe, understand, predict or control the phenomenon of interest. This design helped the researcher to quantify the views of respondents towards certain variables and draw statistical conclusions ((Amin, 2005 p215). However, the quantitative research design lacks the ability to understand the respondents' point of view. Qualitative design filled the gap by enabling the researcher to capture feelings, opinions and other subjective variables (Amin, 2005 p 216).

Study Population

The study population included; teachers, Lawyers, Doctors, Engineers, business men, common men and women, church leaders, and political leaders. The targeted total population was 147 from which the sample was selected.

Sample Size Determination

The sample size for teachers was 40, lawyers 10, Engineers 15, Doctors 12, church leaders 20, business men 25, common man & woman 25 and political leaders 5. The sample size was determined by the use of the Taro Yamane’s formula (Miaoulis and Michener 1976). The acceptable sampling error was 0.05 with confidence level of 95%.

Taro Yamane’s formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where

n= sample size

N= population size

e= sampling error

^= raised to the power of Yamane statistical formula; and the confidence level will be 95%

Therefore, the sample size of the study will be

$$n = 232 / [1 + 232(0.05)^2]$$

$$n = 147$$

Table 1: Showing the sample size and selection of respondents

Category	Access population	Sample size	Sampling technique
Teachers	58	41	Simple random sampling
Lawyers	18	10	Simple random sampling
Engineers	21	11	Simple random sampling
Business men	39	25	Simple random sampling
Common man & woman	39	25	Simple random sampling
Doctors	21	11	Simple random sampling
Opinion Leaders	02	02	Purposive sampling
Local leaders	02	02	Purposive sampling
Political leaders	05	05	Purposive sampling
Church leaders	27	15	Simple random sampling
TOTAL	232	147	

Sampling Techniques

Stratified sampling

The population was divided into mutually exclusive groups that are relevant, appropriate and meaningful (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003). The population was divided into sub populations i.e. teachers, business men,

Doctors, Engineers, Lawyers, common man & woman, church leaders and political leaders to make the population in each stratum homogeneous then in each category, simple random sampling was used to select the required sample size.

Simple Random Sampling

Stratified random sampling was employed to select different categories of the targeted population that included: teachers, layers, engineers, business persons, common men and women, doctors, political leaders and church leaders, each category taken as tratum to obtain the required samples for the study. (Kothari, 2004) said that this method is used when the population is not homogeneous. The technique was employed to facilitate the study to include all groups in the study so that the data collected represents the study population. Then in each stratum, simple random sampling was employed to select the required sample that participated in the study. This technique was preferred because it ensures that each member of the target population has an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample (Amin, 2005). It also helps to select the sample without bias from the population.

Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling was used to select opinion leaders and local leaders. This technique was preferred because it enables a researcher select the only targeted respondent who are needed for being knowledgeable about the subject matter under investigation.

DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative data analysis

With quantitative data analysis, data will be converted into numerical codes representing measurement of variables (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003). There after results will be summarized using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics in trying to establish the relationship between the variables. Spearman's rank correlation will be used. In trying to establish the contribution of each predictor variable on the dependent variable linear regression will be used.

Qualitative data analysis

Data from the field will be organized and edited for similar errors like in quantitative data. Data will be analyzed in a systematic way in order to come up with useful conclusions and recommendations as well as establishing relationships from the information got. Content analysis will be used by coding and establishing relationship among the variables in order to come out with in-depth explanation and interpretation. Data will be presented in form of tables, charts and graphs.

RESULTS

High income levels and domestic violence

The respondents were asked to reveal whether high incomes are related with domestic violence. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) using 5-likert scale. The analysis was done using the mean and standard deviation. A mean above 3 indicates an agreement of respondents; a mean of 3 shows undecided and a mean of below 3 shows disagree by respondents. The standard deviation (SD) of close to 1 shows agreement, while the standard deviation of close to 0 indicates disagreement of the respondents. The analysis further grouped strongly agrees and agree to mean agree and strongly disagree and disagree to mean disagree. The

elicited results were shown on table 4.4

Table 4: Descriptive statistic results for high incomes on domestic violence (N=134)

High income levels for domestic violence	Response Category					Mean	S.D
	SA (%)	A (%)	UD (%)	D (%)	SD (%)		
High income earners are people with high investments that take most of their time and find no time to spend with their families to resolve conflict and this influences domestic violence	47 (34.0%)	51 (38.0%)	0 (0.0%)	20 (14.9%)	16 (11.9%)	3.75	1.20
High income earners are often totally focused on their carriers and being high achievers which makes them less cooperative to family members and this influences domestic violence	41 (30.6%)	56 (41.8%)	5 (3.7%)	14 (10.4%)	18 (13.4%)	4.02	1.23
High income earners are people with high asset base which make them feel they should be in lead in whatever they do at home something that influences domestic violence	59 (44.0%)	61 (45.5%)	0 (0.0%)	8 (6.0%)	6 (4.5%)	4.67	1.11
People who get unexpected riches tend to behave in an inhumane way as a result of finding themselves in positions they did not dream of which influences domestic violence	46 (34.3%)	45 (33.6%)	0 (0.0%)	23 (17.2%)	20 (14.9%)	3.56	1.01
High income earners are people who are financially sound & feel they should always be appreciated in their homes & this influences domestic violence	50 (37.3%)	59 (44.0%)	0 (0.0%)	13 (9.7%)	12 (8.9%)	4.78	1.21

Source: Survey

The table above shows that all the respondents agreed that high incomes have effect on domestic violence. This is explained by the fact that the means of the responses were above 3, while the standard deviations were close to 1. The study revealed that high income was explained and responded to by the respondents as follows: High income earners are people with high investments that take most of their time and find no time to spend with their families to resolve conflict and this influences domestic violence (72%), high income earners are often totally focused on their carriers and being high achievers which makes them less cooperative to family members and this influences domestic violence (72.4%), high income earners are people with high asset base which make them feel they should be in lead in whatever they do at home something that influences domestic violence (89.5%), people who get unexpected riches tend to behave in inhumane way as a result of finding themselves in positions they did not dream of which influences domestic violence (67.6%) and high income earners are people who are financially sound and feel they should always be appreciated in their homes and this influences domestic violence (81.3%).

This observation shows that high incomes have influence on domestic violence. This analysis was also confirmed by one of the respondents who had this to say “rich people tend not to have enough time for their families and as such they have a habit of commanding, using hash language for anything they feel they should have or want to be done and this normally triggers domestic violence”.

Domestic Violence

The respondents were asked to reveal whether domestic violence among married couples exists in homes. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD) using 5-likert scale. The analysis was done using the mean and standard deviation. A mean above 3 indicates an agreement of respondents; a mean of 3 shows undecided and a mean of below 3 shows disagree by respondents. The standard deviation (SD) of close to 1 shows agreement, while the standard deviation of close to 0 indicates disagreement of the respondents. The analysis further grouped strongly agrees and agree to mean agree and strongly disagree and disagree to disagree. The elicited results were shown on table 4.5

Table 5: Descriptive statistics results on Domestic violence (N =134)

Domestic Violence	Response Category					Mean	S.D
	SA (%)	A (%)	UD (%)	D (%)	SD (%)		
Battering among couples in homes as a form of domestic violence is increasing	41 (30.6%)	57 (42.5%)	0 (0.0%)	23 (17.2%)	13 (9.7%)	3.87	1.12
There is marital rate or forced rape after physical beating in homes as a form of domestic violence	53 (39.5%)	54 (40.3%)	4 (3.0%)	21 (15.7%)	20 (14.9%)	3.97	1.02
There is intimidation or threatening physical harm as a form of violence among couples	58 (43.3%)	61 (45.5%)	0 (0.0%)	10 (7.5%)	05 (3.7%)	4.67	1.11
Some couples experience constant criticism or insults, put downs as a form of domestic violence in homes	49 (36.6%)	57 (42.5%)	0 (0.0%)	16 (11.9%)	12 (8.9%)	3.41	1.01
There is maintenance of total control over finances including victim's earned income or resources as a form of domestic violence in homes among couples	35 (26.1%)	56 (41.8%)	8 (6.0%)	20 (14.9%)	15 (11.2%)	3.42	1.03
Isolation as a form of domestic violence is common among couples in homes	37 (27.6%)	49 (36.6%)	8 (6.0%)	23 (17.2%)	17 (12.7%)	3.34	1.32
Some couples withhold access to resources necessary to maintain health services of the other couple as a form of domestic violence in homes	52 (38.8%)	59 (44.0%)	4 (3.0%)	11 (8.2%)	09 (6.7%)	4.23	1.13

Source: Survey

Table 5 shows that respondents agreed that domestic violence among married couples exist in some homes. This is explained by the fact that the means of the responses were above 3, while the standard deviations were close to 1. The study revealed that respondents agreed that cases of domestic violence among married couples are: battering (73.1%), marital rate or forced rape after physical beating (79.8%), intimidation or threatening (88.8%), constant criticism or insults, put downs (79.1%), maintenance of total control over

finances including victim’s earned income or resources (67.9%), isolation (64.2%), withholding access to resources necessary to maintain a partner’s health services (82.8%).

This analysis revealed that domestic violence exists in homes and it is experienced in various forms. This analysis was also confirmed by one of the respondents who had this to say “*domestic violence exists in almost every home since it is experienced in various ways. It should also be noted that this domestic violence is experienced by everybody in homes irrespective of gender*”.

Relationship between High Income Levels and Domestic Violence

The study tried to find out whether there was any relationship between high income levels and domestic violence among married couples. The analysis was made using Spearman’s coefficient of rank correlation. The elicited response was presented in table 6

Table 6: correlation results of high income levels and domestic violence among married couples

	High income levels	Domestic violence
Spearman’s rho High income levels Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.421**
Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.004
N	134	134
Domestic violence Spearman’s Correlation	.421**	1.000
Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.
N	134	134
** Correlation is Significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed)		
** Correlation is significant at the 0.05 (1-tailed)		

Source: Primary data

Table 6 shows a moderate positive correlation between high income levels and domestic violence among married couples ($r=0.421$; $p<0.05$). This analysis shows if there is a unit improvement in income levels, other factors remaining constant, domestic violence is likely to increase by 17.7% (r squared, coefficient of variation). This analysis was also confirmed by key informants who revealed that high income levels are associated with intimidation, abuse, and turn down as forms of domestic violence found with people who are very rich. This is because they feel as people who have it all and therefore everyone should obey and behave in certain way dictated by them and failure to do so results into abuse, intimidation, turn down and sometimes battering.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

High Income Levels and Domestic Violence in Mbarara Municipality

The study findings revealed a significant positive moderate correlation between high income levels and domestic violence among married couples ($r=0.421$; $p<0.05$). This analysis shows that one being in high income level increases violence by 17.7% (r squared, coefficient of determination). The finding was in

conformity with that of Frieze et.al (2020) who found out that high income earners take themselves to be achievers who need to be appreciated and praised. In homes where the praising is lacking, men tend to be violent by abusing their family members, turn downs, threatening with the aim of creating the state of recognition, respect and admiration. The finding is also in agreement with that of Mullens, F., & Glorieux, I. (2023), who found out that one of the main causes of domestic violence in high income earners is lack of respect for each partner. This is because a partners who are rich believe that money is everything to them. As a result, no engagement/involvement of the of his or her wife/husband in planning, negotiation, consultation. This argument was also supported by (Agarwal and Panda, 2022) who found out that high income earners especially those who become rich unexpectedly tend to behave in a manner that violate the rights of those they are either living with or staying with since they take their riches to be everything.

The study finding is further in agreement with that of Municipal women's federation Culvin, A. (2023) in England who found out that there are more cases of domestic violence among well-educated and high-income households. The finding is also in agreement with that of Frieze et.al (2020) who found out that high income earners tend to behave as masters in everything they do and think and whoever tries to deviate from their thinking tend to be handled mercilessly including battering, abuses and threats because they tend to see themselves above everybody else. The study is also in conformity with that of Culvin, A. (2023) who found out that domestic violence based on resource ownership has no gender. Whether it is the man or women at home who possess wealth he or she may want to use that as a tool to drive anybody around him/her something that results into violence.

CONCLUSION

Since the study findings revealed a significant positive moderate correlation between high income levels and domestic violence, the study concluded that high income levels are likely to be associated with domestic violence because they are found associated with intimidation, abuse, and turn down as forms of domestic violence found with people who are very rich. This is because they feel as if they are people who have it all and therefore everyone should obey and behave in certain way dictated by them and the methods used ends up fueling domestic violence.

RECOMMENDATION

Since high income earners feel as if they are people who have it all and therefore everyone should obey and behave in certain way dictated by them and the methods used end up fueling domestic violence, the study recommends that laws prohibiting violence of whatever kind should be enforced and the affected people should be sensitized and educated on their rights such that in case their rights are violated, they should seek justice in the courts of law. This will reduce the violent acts exhibited by the people who think that because they are rich they are above the law and therefore capable of doing whatever they want without any effect on them. Besides the law on inheritance should be enforced that guarantees equal ownership of resources between the married couples. This equal ownership of property will create the respect for each other and eventually minimizing domestic violence.

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