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**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE URBAN INFORMAL  
SETTLEMENTS OF NAIROBI A CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW**

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SETTLEMENTS OF NAIROBI A CRITICAL LITERATURE REVIEW**

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**Abstract**

**Purpose:** Violence against women is one of the most widespread problems facing Kenyan women today. The central problem of this study is the way women react to domestic violence and in particular why they do not seek redress through the available channels. Whilst women are particularly affected by domestic violence, they are also the primary victims of rape or sexual attacks by strangers. The purpose of this study is to investigate the status of domestic violence against women in urban informal settlements of Nairobi and why the women do not seek any redress.

**Methodology:** The paper used a desk study review methodology where relevant empirical literature was reviewed to identify main themes and to extract knowledge gaps.

**Findings:** Though GBV is a well-known vice that pervades all social strata all over the world, most women suffer in silence. This is mainly due to cultural beliefs, poverty, lack of resources or weak and unsupportive community structures, discriminatory laws governing marriage and divorce, social stigma, their economic dependency on men as well as their ignorance of their rights. Due to their low levels of education, most women believe that their husbands have a right to beat them. They do not know that they have available options, which can save them from abusive relationships.

**Unique Contribution to Theory and Practice:** When developing and putting up interventions to help survivors of gender-based violence, these interventions should be designed in partnership with the women they are intended to benefit.

**Keywords:** *Domestic violence, Gender- Based Violence, informal settlements*

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence can be described as both physical and psychological abuse by a man upon a woman in the family (home). The United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF, 2020), defines domestic violence “as the various situations which take place in the home, and which are characterized by their brutality”. These are incidences amounting to physical attacks, sexual violations such as pushing, punching, spitting, kicking, hitting, choking, burning, clubbing, stabbing, throwing boiling water or acid.

The United Nations (UN) defines domestic violence as the physical or mental assault of women by their male partners. Wife assaults have only been problematized as a social priority since the universal subordination of women and the sanctity of the family as a private domain under the absolute control of the male household head and therefore beyond public scrutiny/intervention, have been widely and openly challenged in the last quarter of the 20th century. It is now clear that the family is not a very safe place for women and that there are three correlations between violence against women and their economic vulnerability (Peterman, 2020). Four conditions are mutually reinforcing as predictors of violence against women by their spouses. These include a habit of violent interpersonal conflict resolution, lack of free access to divorce by the wife, male authority and control of decision making in the home and economic inequality between men and women. Violence against women detrimentally affects their ability to gain education, earn a livelihood, develop personal relationships and enjoy fully human rights to which they are entitled.

Whether they live in the northern or southern hemisphere, in rich or poor countries, women are subjected to domestic violence that results in the deprivation of their fundamental human rights. Domestic violence against women in Kenya should not be underrated. For example, between 1995 and 1996, men killed 55 women. This form of violence is neither confined within the family, nor within a particular country, class, race, age, religion, ethnicity or education. Rather it is a problem that cuts across all such boundaries and is a problem of international proportions. Largely due to the activism and advocacy of women in conscious organizations all over the world who have been brought into solidarity by the UN women’s decade and its three conferences as well as the 1993 4th UN World Human Rights Conference, governments and international institutions have begun to seriously respond to the need to challenge this problem.

Domestic violence against women is seen as a manifestation of male power perpetuating the inferior position of women. It is as a result of male domination over women. It is an expression of the sexual, economic and social inequality, which exists in today’s society. Violence within the family is generally accepted and tolerated. Women’s social, political and economic dependence on men provides an environment favorable for their abuse. Violence against women in general became topical internationally as a development concern during the global feminist activism as a result of the success of the 1985 Nairobi Conference which marked the end of the UN Decade for Women.

In Kenya, domestic violence against women is rampant. It is a reality that has permeated all sectors of the society as a consequence of the unequal treatment of women and men. Violence against women is both a historical and cultural phenomenon. Domestic violence cuts across all statuses of

women, the rich, the poor, the educated, the uneducated, the employed, the unemployed, in urban, rural and in all ethnic communities. The men who commit violence against women are of all ages, religions, income levels, educational levels, married, single, divorced, separated and come from all ethnic communities. Violence against women will occur everywhere in this country at any time of the day or night. Most of the time, it goes unrecognized, unreported or under-reported and is therefore invisible. In Kenya, many societies view domestic violence on women as a personal and private affair which is promoted and accepted by cultural practices. In essence, some cultures like the Kamba and the Gikuyu tolerate it and even expect some level of physical violence in intimate relationships.

According to Afework, (2015), among the different forms of violence against women in Kenya, domestic violence takes the lead. In traditional African societies, wife beating was acknowledged and viewed as a serious problem and though condoned by the culture to a certain extent, there were sanctions imposed on such behavior. Violence against women is a common practice within the family which hitherto has been considered as the cornerstone of society. Given the attitudes to and beliefs in domestic violence against women, many women have no one to turn to and no place to go to. Often there is no way out. Female focused violence such as domestic violence is the result of deep-rooted systematic inequality between men and women in this country. The cause of this violence against women is deep-rooted in the patriarchal system. In the family, women become targets of abuse in their roles as mothers, daughters, sister's ex-wife or ex-lover. The perpetrators of the abuse are usually men of the family- husbands, lovers (ex) fathers, uncles or brothers.

In Kenya today, traditional socio-cultural norms and practices which served to regulate or restrain violence against women are fast disintegrating (Dumbili, 2015). This, coupled with the ever-increasing gap between the poor and the rich, the educated and the uneducated, the rural and the urban and the powerful and the powerless, has led to an escalation of wife battery. Domestic violence often results in humiliation, demoralization, severe physical injuries and low self-esteem of the woman. It robs her of her potential to effectively engage in productive, social, political or economic activities.

The 1995 UN Decade for women conference in Nairobi identified domestic violence as an obstacle to the achievement of the decade's objectives, which were peace, equality and development. Domestic violence against women was therefore declared a major area of study, concern and research in international meetings.

What is crucial to the total eradication of violence against women is the commitment of the government to take responsibility for the necessary social change and development that must take root at community levels to alter the public's tolerance and therefore acquiescence in violence against women. The gravity and extent of the problem of family violence are universal. Although the family is the first and the most important social-institution which educates and protects its members, it can often become a place of suffering and violence. This is because domestic violence is a hidden problem

In urban areas, domestic violence is as a result of many factors. According to Opoko, (2016), subsistence urbanization occurs when a very high density of individuals lives in conditions that

are even worse than those in the rural areas from which they came. The concept of subsistence urbanization evinces a situation whereby the urban dwellers lack good jobs and consequently lack access to good living conditions and other necessities of urban life. People living in these conditions could easily be exposed to violent behavior since they are reduced to the level of mere survival. More vulnerable to this violence are women. It can therefore be said that poor urban management is a catalyst to domestic violence.

### **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The central problem of this study is the way women react to domestic violence and in particular why they do not seek redress through the available channels. Violence against women is one of the most widespread problems facing Kenyan women today. Thus, the Convention on violence Against Women (COVAW 2015) impresses upon the Government to put mechanisms in place to ensure the safety of women in both their private and public lives. It believes that if more stem measures were put in place, they would deter perpetrators of violence against women from carrying out violence on women, be it their wives, daughters or mothers. Such measures would include reviewing of laws that are not adequate in deterring further perpetuation of violence.

The question of violence is multifaceted. Violence inhibits women from freedom of movement besides the other effects. Whilst women are particularly affected by domestic violence, they are also the primary victims of rape or sexual attacks by strangers. Feeling afraid and unsafe is a situation experienced by all women whatever their age, ethnic origin or social class. The fear women feel in urban areas is quite particular in that it has all to do with physical and psychological honor. In all societies of the world, women are in subordinate status. Because physical force and violence are the last resort to keep subordinate groups in their place, women have remained victims of physical assault (Ashraf, 2017)

In Kenya, police records show that a significant proportion of criminal acts are never reported to them or not all the different forms of violence reported to them are registered by them. The questions one would then ask are: Are battered women helpless? Why do battered women choose to remain silent and continue to live with abusive husbands, partners and /or boyfriends even after being subjected to long-term severe physical, emotional and sexual abuse? Why do women not take the available options to them to get redress for the violence meted against them within their homes?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

To investigate the status of domestic violence against women in urban informal settlements of Nairobi and why the women do not seek any redress.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

The results from this study will provide relevant information on matters to do with domestic violence that will benefit victims, survivors, local authorities and governments so as to address the matter and promote the rights of women as fully capable members of the society. Domestic violence is a violation of women's human rights. All forms of violence against women constitute the most pervasive violation of universal human rights. Thus, efforts to address this problem should be seen as a critical yardstick against which to measure overall advances in empowerment and in the promotion and enjoyment of fundamental human rights by all in the society.

Kenya is a signatory to various conventions with regard to ensuring the safety of women's human rights and their enjoyment to these rights. These include the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on Violence Against Women (COVAW), which calls for women's safety in both their private and public lives. Kenya has not domesticated these conventions into actual laws or national policies, which can be used to combat violence against women. So far there is no legislation that reflects the government's commitment to CEDAW or COVAW. Violence against women in the home can lead to death. Besides, it has physical, psychological and social consequences for women. Worldwide, it has been estimated that violence against women is as serious cause of death and incapacity among women of reproductive age as cancer, and a greater cause of ill-health than traffic accidents and malaria combined.

The subject of domestic violence remains sensitive among many societies. However, societies have to learn the techniques of putting this age-old practice of wife beating to an end. This study will help to contribute in availing more ideas that can help put domestic violence to an end. It will help other researchers carry out more investigations on the subject of domestic violence besides helping women in informal settlements to realize that they have options available to them instead of staying in potentially deadly relationships.

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Causes of domestic violence**

According to USAID, causes of gender- based violence include traditional gender norms that support male superiority, social norms that tolerate violence against women, weak community sanctions against perpetrators, poverty, high levels of crime and conflict in the society, attitudes that justify violence against women among others. Gender-based violence tends to be highest in settings where social norms support gender inequality, where communities fail to punish men who use physical or sexual violence against women, and where violence against women is considered normal or justified.

Domestic violence occurs as a result of male domination over women. It is an expression of the sexual, economic and social inequality, which exists in today's society. The causes of domestic violence are complex and numerous, they include alcohol or drugs, stress, frustration and mental breakdown. Besides, social and structural elements in society would appear to carry the bulk of the causes of domestic violence. Other causes may be cultural, economic, legal, political and



physical. Cultural causes include gender specific socialization, cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles, belief in the inherent superiority of males, values that give men proprietary rights over women, notion of the family as the private sphere beyond state but under male control, fear of and control over female sexuality and changing roles of men and women as a result of the urbanization process which adversely effects women's empowerment in male dominated societies.

Economic causes include women's economic dependence on men, limited access to cash and credit, discriminatory laws and practices regarding inheritance and property rights, limited access to employment and limited access to education. Legal causes of domestic violence include lower legal status of women either by written law or by practice, laws regarding divorce, child custody, maintenance and inheritance, legal definitions of rape and domestic abuse, low levels of legal literacy of women and insensitive treatment of women by police and the judiciary. On the other hand, political causes include under - representation of women in power, politics and the media and in the legal and medical professions, violence against women not taken seriously, risk of challenge to the status quo, religious laws, and limited organization of women as a political force, and limited participation of women in organized political systems.

Physical causes of domestic violence include basing urban planning and design on male norms and needs, neglecting the higher vulnerability and fear of crime and violence as the differing urban needs of women and as such contributing to highest risks and fears amongst women ((UNICEF, 2020).

Acts of brutality against women are a reflection of the structures underlying the prevailing sexual and economic inequality in our society. Far from being an aberration, violence within the family is generally accepted and tolerated. The abuse of women is seen as a manifestation of male power, perpetuating the inferior position of women. Women's social, political and economic dependence on men provides an environment favorable to their abuse. There is a correlation between economic difficulties and domestic violence. In houses where women have a regular income, there are less incidences of domestic violence. On the other hand, women with low or no incomes at all, experience domestic violence on a daily basis. The less financial resources the family has to meet its needs, the more susceptible it is to becoming violent. However, a woman's economic success does not necessarily guarantee her freedom from domestic violence. A jealous husband may try to control the economic resources of the household and thereby maintain his power (Mbwambo, 2015) The cultural aspect in a society's values, beliefs and traditions play a fundamental role in the perception and comprehension of domestic violence. On the other hand, traditionally in Kenya, it is believed that women provoke, tolerate and even appreciate a certain amount of violence from their husbands. The Kenyan society is essentially male dominated despite the fact that women work extremely hard. Productive resources belong to men. Arguments that men who abuse women have impaired masculinity as a result of growing up in a violent household do not hold much water. Girls are six times more likely to experience sexual abuse than boys, yet most sexual abuse is perpetrated by male and not female adults (Turner, 2016). The processes by which witnessing violence as a child affects one's adult relationships are themselves gendered. Others see men's violence against women as being caused by external factors such as poverty, conflict, economic or political change. Gender analysis of human development shows that the root cause of domestic

violence against women is not psychological damage to individuals, or external economic or political factors. Rather it lies in the unequal power relations between women and men which ensure male dominance over women. Domestic violence against women consolidates men's political, economic and social dominance. Other factors which perpetuate domestic violence against women include house hold employment, the state, sexuality and culture (Yeboah, 2015)

## **2.2 Why women do not seek redress through the available channels**

In patriarchal societies, domestic violence is seen as a natural way of disciplining women. Due to cultural beliefs, domestic violence is confined to the intimacy and privacy of the home, to admit domestic violence within the family amounts to publicizing marital breakdown. Women try to hide the problem because they are the ones responsible for maintaining harmony within the family. Should they make the situation public, they would be stigmatized by society. The victim is therefore confronted by huge social and cultural pressure, which forces her to keep quiet. She decides not to press charges against her aggressor because she knows she will have to relive her experience within a judicial system well known for its sexism. Within the family, there exists a differential responsibility and authority that gives the husband both the perceived right and obligation to control his wife's behavior and justify beating her (Gupta, 2020). Women often believe in the authority of their husbands and that it is right to consult them on everything. This defense is reinforced by the church through the marriage contract, which includes the threat of rightful control over those who disobey.

Women with the fewest independent resources and alternatives are more likely to remain in abusive relationships and fail to seek redress. This economic powerlessness makes it more difficult for women to meet their obligations under the double burden of productive and reproductive labor. Women seeking help and shelter face the stigma associated with turning to "outsiders" for help on issues related to the family. Unfortunately, in Kenya, such shelters are not many and are not known to many women experiencing domestic violence. There is need to create awareness among women about the existence of the shelters so that they can seek immediate help when the need arises. Lack of such awareness may force a woman to remain in an abusive relationship and fail to seek redress.

There are many reasons why a woman may decide to stay in an abusive relationship and not seek redress. A woman may have invested a lot in her relationship with her husband or partner. She may retain emotional attachments to him and his family. She may continue hoping for a change in his behavior with or without counselling from family, friends or organizations. Cultural constraints against divorce and seeking redress may have tangible effects on a woman's options.

Lack of property rights, discriminatory laws governing marriage and divorce, lack of economic options for an independent livelihood all may lead a woman to dismiss the idea of seeking redress or leaving. When no safe alternative can be ensured, seeking redress or leaving can be dangerous. Finishing a relationship does not necessarily mean an end to violence, and may make a woman vulnerable to new forms of abuse. Women are at particular risk once they have announced their intentions to leave, but remain within the household. In Kenya, laws relating to land and property ownership discriminate against women and play a significant part in preventing women from



seeking redress and overcoming the suffering caused by domestic violence. Women's lack of knowledge about their rights exacerbates the aggression directed towards them.

Cultural stigma attached to domestic violence is another reason why women decide to remain in abusive relationships instead of seeking redress. Domestic violence is viewed as a woman's failure to fulfil her roles as wife or mother, in some way. Women fear that seeking redress may damage her own family's reputation. Besides, women may not define domestic violence against them as a crime even when they feel it is wrong (WHO, 2017). The belief that domestic violence is an indicator of love makes cultures tolerate it and assume it is a normal aspect of relationships between men and women. Overwhelming feelings of humiliation prevent women from seeking help for their violence related problems because of the fear of being further humiliated both by the in-laws and the social institutions (Bailey, 2020)

Women's failure to seek redress is also due to the failure of formal institutions to provide effective protection for women. In countries like Kenya where there are no legal or social sanctions against domestic violence by an intimate partner, or where such sanctions are ineffective, women decide that it is pointless to try and seek redress. Feelings of guilt, fear, repulsion, mental blocks and aggression put women off from seeking redress. Although the physical symptoms of torture tend to lessen over time, the psychological, behavioral and social problems persist for years. Abused women find it difficult to convince the law enforcers and the judiciary that an offence has taken place. Police response to domestic violence has always been inadequate. Police are not seen to offer adequate protection to women. They underestimate the violence and dismiss some appeals for help. They are reluctant to intervene in domestic violence since they place greater value on privacy and on marriage rights than on a woman's rights to freedom of assault and fear of assault. They are unaware of sources of help and support that could be available to the women. The police attempt to mediate or counsel the parties rather than to fulfil a role of law enforcement. Police response stressing peace making rather than law enforcement often puts women off and bars them from seeking redress or reporting the crime. They handle cases of domestic violence in a dismissive manner. This makes women coil back and continue to tolerate domestic violence.

Women's economic dependency on men and the cultural value attributed to women being a "proper wife" or a good mother and loyal to the family may lead women to decide that the repercussions of seeking redress and contradicting these gender ideologies are worse than those of staying with violent husbands. Women living in poverty have limited access to formal institutions that might offer assistance in resisting domestic violence. These include health, education, social, psychological, legal and police services. Costs associated with such services deter women from seeking assistance or redress. Besides financial costs, social disapproval for having made the violence public also acts as a deterrent (Kahan, 2019)

Women seeking help from organizations outside the family usually face enormous social pressures opposing their actions. For example, women who seek professional help outside the extended family network are seen to be betraying their family and community. A woman who files a complaint with the police or runs away from her abusive husband may be ostracized from the family and the social networks on which she depends. Women's ability to act against domestic violence is constrained and there is total lack of community responsibility towards the violence.

Besides, the majority of abused women are encouraged to remain with their abusers even when they seek for help. Male bias inherent in the family, the household and the community can also mitigate against women who speak out against domestic violence. If the response from the family and the community is inadequate, this can increase women's sense of helplessness, lack of control and fear. Any woman seeking for redress or help has to weigh the consequences of fear of breaking a family, losing her children, isolation from kin and neighborhood networks and fear of stigmatization by society for her failure to live up to circumscribed ideals of womanhood.

### **2.3 Empirical Review**

Mutahi (2017), conducted a study on the factors contributing to domestic violence against male partners in Kenya: a case study of rural Nyeri county, Central Kenya Region. In Kenya, male victims of intimate partner violence have become a serious issue. Approximately, 3.8 women and 1.3 men per 1000 are victims of intimate partner violence each year. This translates to 1,181 women and 329 men are victims of intimate partner homicide. The purpose of the study was to determine factors contributing to increased domestic violence against men in Nyeri County, Central Kenya. The objectives of the study were to determine the influence of women socio-economic empowerment on domestic violence against men, establish the effect of illicit brew on the domestic violence against men and to examine the role of relative gender power relation in domestic violence against men. The study adopted a survey research design in which the target population was 87,000 households in Nyeri. The study sampled 211 respondents including equal numbers of both men and women. The data was collected using both questionnaires and interview schedules. Data was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequency distribution. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis. The results of the study showed that that the socio-economic factors such as taking over financial responsibilities among others influenced the increased domestic violence against men in Nyeri. The readily available illicit brew in the region which men have given themselves to excessive drinking thereby neglecting their responsibilities in the families was a major cause of increased domestic violence against men in Nyeri. Finally, the relative gender power relations such as the empowerment of the women by the law, economic empowerment, women in leadership among others have to some extent influenced the increased domestic violence against men in Nyeri.

Chelangat (2016), conducted a study on domestic violence against men in Kiambu East Sub-County, Kenya. Men experience domestic abuse in different forms affecting them in many ways. For instance, they are exposed to physical injuries, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, psychological torture, financial constraints and many other forms. They are also be abused through law or administrative accusation. The project main aim was to explore domestic violence against men in Kiambu East Sub-County. The study used a cross-sectional design on domestic violence against men in Kiambu East Sub-County. It was carried out in Kiambu Subcounty Hospital Gender Based Violence Recovery Centre. The study sought to determine the men violation by the partners, the various types or forms of domestic violence and find out the consequences of domestic violence against men in Kiambu Subcounty. The results of the study showed that domestic violence is understood by the study subjects as acts of raping, beating, pushing, economic deprivation, verbal

abuse and coerced sexual intercourse by someone they are quite intimate with. Domestic violence has resulted into the feeling of anxiety, fear, depression, injuries to the victims and economic turmoil for the families entangled in violence. Moreover, male victims of domestic violence expressed x losing the 'community image of masculinity' hence stigmatized by the peers. This has a negative impact on reporting incidences of domestic violence.

Ndong (2013), conducted a study on the influence of domestic violence on the socio- economic development of women: a study of Eldoret town, Uasin Gishu County. This study sought to investigate the influence of domestic violence on socio-economic development of women in Eldoret town, Uasin Gishu County. The study was meant to achieve four objectives: To investigate the influence of physical violence on the socio-economic development of women, investigate the influence of social violence on the socio-economic development of women, investigate the influence of psychological violence on socio-economic development of women and to investigate the influence of economic violence on socio-economic development of women. This research employed mainly random sampling. Analysis of data collected was mainly from snowball design using both qualitative and quantitative tools. 175 women were the target of the study. A sample size of 120 women 30 from each of the designated institutions was used for the study mainly from Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital, Ngeria Prisons, Eldoret Prisons and Eldoret Police Station; gender section. In addition, the researcher prepared questionnaires which were administered during the data collection process. The data helped in generating frequencies and percentage of the variable values. The results of the study showed that domestic violence is a vice that affects women from all regions in the nation. It was quite prevalent from households where women had low educational levels, young, unemployed, large families which they could not attend to and men who abused drugs.

## 2.5 Research Gaps

A knowledge gap occurs when desired research findings provide a different perspective on the issue discussed. For instance, Ndong (2013), conducted a study on the influence of domestic violence on the socio- economic development of women: a study of Eldoret town, Uasin Gishu County. This research employed mainly random sampling. Analysis of data collected was mainly from snowball design using both qualitative and quantitative tools. 175 women were the target of the study. A sample size of 120 women 30 from each of the designated institutions was used for the study mainly from Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital, Ngeria Prisons, Eldoret Prisons and Eldoret Police Station; gender section. In addition, the researcher prepared questionnaires which were administered during the data collection process. The data helped in generating frequencies and percentage of the variable values. The results of the study showed that domestic violence is a vice that affects women from all regions in the nation. It was quite prevalent from households where women had low educational levels, young, unemployed, large families which they could not attend to and men who abused drugs. On the other hand, our current study focused on investigating the status of domestic violence against women in urban informal settlements of Nairobi and why the women do not seek any redress.

In addition to that, a methodological gap can be identified as the above researchers for example Chelangat (2016), conducted a study on domestic violence against men in Kiambu East Sub-

County, Kenya using a cross-sectional design on domestic violence against men in Kiambu East Sub-County. The results of the study showed that domestic violence is understood by the study subjects as acts of raping, beating, pushing, economic deprivation, verbal abuse and coerced sexual intercourse by someone they are quite intimate with. Whereas our current study adopted a desktop literature review method to investigate the status of domestic violence against women in urban informal settlements in Nairobi.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a desktop literature review method (desk study). This involved an in-depth review of studies related to domestic violence in the urban informal settlements in Nairobi. Three sorting stages were implemented on the subject under study in order to determine the viability of the subject for research. This is the first stage that comprised the initial identification of all articles that were based domestic violence in the urban informal settlements in Nairobi. The search was done generally by searching the articles in the article title, abstract, keywords. A second search involved fully available publications on the subject on domestic violence in the urban informal settlements in Nairobi. The third step involved the selection of fully accessible publications. Reduction of the literature to only fully accessible publications yielded specificity and allowed the researcher to focus on the articles that related to domestic violence in the urban informal settlements in Nairobi which was split into top key words. After an in- depth search into the top key words (domestic violence, informal settlements, gender-based violence), the researcher arrived at 3 articles that were suitable for analysis:

Mutahi (2017), conducted a study on the factors contributing to domestic violence against male partners in Kenya: a case study of rural Nyeri county, Central Kenya Region. The study adopted a survey research design in which the target population was 87,000 households in Nyeri. The study sampled 211 respondents including equal numbers of both men and women. The data was collected using both questionnaires and interview schedules. Data was analyzed both quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages and frequency distribution. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis. The results of the study showed that that the socio-economic factors such as taking over financial responsibilities among others influenced the increased domestic violence against men in Nyeri. The readily available illicit brew in the region which men have given themselves to excessive drinking thereby neglecting their responsibilities in the families was a major cause of increased domestic violence against men in Nyeri. Finally, the relative gender power relations such as the empowerment of the women by the law, economic empowerment, women in leadership among others have to some extent influenced the increased domestic violence against men in Nyeri.

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#### **4.0 SUMARRY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

##### **4.1 Conclusion**

Though GBV is a well-known vice that pervades all social strata all over the world, most women suffer in silence. This is mainly due to cultural beliefs, poverty, lack of resources or weak and unsupportive community structures, discriminatory laws governing marriage and divorce, social stigma, their economic dependency on men as well as their ignorance of their rights. Due to their low levels of education, most women believe that their husbands have a right to beat them. They do not know that they have available options, which can save them from abusive relationships. However, options such as the community shelters or women's organizations or even the law demand a lot of courage for a woman to understand and to rescue from them. Due to cultural constraints, a majority of women decline to seek redress from the available options. Fear of repercussions as a result of seeking redress acts as a further deterrence for women. All the above render abused women helpless and force them to remain in abusive relationships.

Though there are options available to women experiencing GBV, these are few, and unknown to most women. For example, family and community shelters offer only temporary remedies to women's suffering. They do not have long-term solutions to survivors of domestic violence. It is unfortunate that the police, who are the law enforcers in any country, do not take/see domestic violence as an issue affecting the whole community, and hence tend to take a mediator's role rather than enforcing the law.

Gender based violence has serious health consequences which in most cases can lead to death. Being culturally disempowered, with low educational levels and having no independent income of their own, survivors of GBV face a very hopeless situation which forces them to remain in abusive relationships. The threat of the HIV/AIDS pandemic is real among women who live in abusive relationships.

Since it is therefore evident that many women are trapped in abusive relationships, and are not able to free themselves from the violence, it is the duty of everyone to advocate for a society that is free of GBV. The society has a responsibility in ending GBV. Leaders need to advocate for a society which is free of violence, instead of their being perpetrators. Community programs should focus on everybody's needs including the needs of women suffering from GBV. Communities should partner with development agencies to advocate for a zero tolerance of GBV. Education and training on matters of GBV is very crucial to women so that they can know that violence is a crime like any other and is punishable by law. They also need to be aware of their rights, and their entitlements. The study therefore concludes that education, resources- financial or any other- are



crucial elements in liberating women from abusive relationships. Besides, the society and the state have to step up and put-up remedial measures to address the issue of GBV. Without their intervention, GBV will continue to have its toll on women.

#### **4.2 Recommendations**

When developing and putting up interventions to help survivors of gender-based violence, these interventions should be designed in partnership with the women they are intended to benefit. The community should play a role in challenging male violence and the community members should give paramount importance to the safety of the survivors of violence. There is also need to create awareness to the public on matters Gender Based Violence.

In addition to that, the legal systems need to be reformed to be sensitive to women's plight as far as Gender- Based Violence is concerned. Strategies should be developed by both the government NGOs and women's organizations to offer training and support to state officials to build awareness and behavior change on Gender- Based Violence. The state should train para-legal workers to help in handling survivors of GBV.

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