

Data Driven Review of Commonalities and Differences in Gender and Self-Reported Victimization in Ugandan Urban sample and Western Published Literature.

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Abstract.

Although there are many theories on domestic violence and battering applicable in Europe and the USA these are often regarded as carrying little currency in the African context (Robinson, 2006). Many African scholars writing on domestic violence emphasize battering and domestic violence as falling under the rubric of ‘culture’ rather than offering psychological explanations. This is because most theories on domestic violence have been derived from research conducted in western countries and by professionals working with male batterers, however, such programmes are rare or absent in Africa. This is confirmed by Dutton (1998; 2011) who indicated that psychological research, for example on the notion of the ‘abusive personality’, has not been conducted in Africa and that psychology-based explanations are generally overlooked in favour of cultural explanations. The review revealed that although there are some commonalities about the domestic violence globally. However, the differences were noted mainly in over emphasis of cultural rather than psychological causes by African scholars. Thus, this review recommends that African scholars and policy makers need also to adopt an approach that views domestic violence using a psychological lens, if they must continue to use psychological interventions developed using western empirical studies to help victims and perpetrators of domestic violence in the African setting.

Key Words: Domestic violence, Victimization, Psychological, Uganda, Western Literature.

1. INTRODUCTION

For domestic violence, this article adopted the broad definition as ‘a pattern of coercive behaviours used by one partner to control and subordinate another in intimate relationships’ (Oregon Domestic Violence Council, 1995 cited in Margi, 2008). This definition also sits together with the more extensive definition which describes domestic violence as the experience of physical violence (e.g. slapping, hitting, kicking and beating), sexual violence (e.g. forced intercourse and other forms of coerced sex) and emotional or psychological violence (e.g. intimidation and humiliation) by a current or former partner (WHO, 2013, p.5). In addition, domestic violence in Uganda, is defined as physical, sexual economic or psychological violations which are subjected to individuals and /or groups of persons based on social expectations of men and women (National Policy on Elimination of GBV in Uganda, 2019).

The supreme Law of the constitution of the Republic of Uganda provides a strong legal foundation for the formulation of the national policy on elimination of GBV in Uganda. The domestic violence Act 2010 and its regulations 2011 of the constitution of Republic of Uganda mandates the state to fulfil the fundamental rights of all Ugandans to social justice and economic development and in particular to ensure that all development efforts are directed at guaranteeing maximum social and cultural wellbeing of the people and protect all citizens against Human rights abuse.

Similarly, in the United States, domestic violence, otherwise termed intimate partner violence or domestic abuse, has been defined as a pattern of coercive behaviours used by one person to control and subordinate another in an intimate relationship (Oregon Domestic Violence Council, 1995 cited in Margi, 2008). The fact is that there exist different definitions for different countries, which fits well with Muehlenhard&Kimes’ (1999) argument that domestic violence is socially

constructed, developed over time and reflects prevailing understandings, power sharing and the specific interests of the stakeholders concerned.

Regarding the prevalence rates globally, domestic violence has been treated as a crime in most parts of the world. For instance, in a study conducted among couples in the UK among victims' and perpetrators' in which description of the same incidents were analysed; it was found that there was a *higher prevalence* of violent acts attributed to women (Barnish, 2004). In contrast however, whereas men were said to have humiliated and/or physically abused their partners, none of the women carried out similar attacks. The few women who assaulted their partners did so during a psychotic breakdown or after experiencing severe repeated beatings, while others attacked their partners in self-defence. These findings link to this study especially the insights into psychological characteristics for victims and perpetrators.

Women's experiences of abuse and supporting research evidence continue to expand conceptualisations of domestic violence as physically injurious by highlighting a range of abusive, coercive, controlling behaviours often causing psychological, sexual or physical harm and often accompanying or preceding the use or threat of physical abuse. However, there has been less attention to sexual and psychological forms of abuse among others (Bergen, 1999; O'Leary, 1999; Dekeseredy, 2000; Barnish, 2004). Similarly, some issues of terminology remain actively contested, such as whether domestic violence should be a gender-specific or neutral referent and/or encompass all forms and incidence of abuse in all types of intimate relationships (Muehlenhard & Kimes, 1999; Barnish, 2004).

Gender Symmetry (GBV) and current research gaps/limitations in Uganda

In the 1996 British Crime Survey self-completion questionnaire (Mirrlees-Black, 1999) equal proportions (4.2%) of both men and women revealed that they had been assaulted by a current/former partner during the past year. Similarly, equal or near equal victimisation has been found in many other large-scale national surveys, particularly in North America, some of which report higher levels of violence by women. For example, a meta-analysis of 82 studies (mainly from the US) found that women were more likely than men to use acts of physical violence/aggression. However, such studies have been criticised for claiming domestic violence gender symmetry and for ignoring the meaning, nature, context and consequences of aggressive behaviour (Dobash, et al 1992; Nazaroo 1995; Hagemann-White 2001; Dasgupta 2002; Saunders, 2002).

The current study

This article presents a data driven analysis of the wider literature to explore what is known about the impact of gender and domestic violence role self-reported victimisation in other countries. This is because, unlike a traditional review, a data driven review has a clear stated purpose and a defined search approach stating inclusion and exclusion criteria; though it claims to be objective, balanced and unbiased (Jesson, Matheson & Lacy, 2011 p.12, 103) the focus and scope of the review is determined by the study results. As recommended by Jesson et al. (2011 p.27), that since the information from text books becomes out of date quickly, the use of online resources and library resources ensure that most up-to-date sources for the search were obtained. Key terms derived from the study aims and results (e.g. gender, forms and causes of domestic violence, gender differences in personality traits, coping strategies and attitudes towards coercive behaviours,

psychological characteristics of victims and perpetrators of domestic violence etc.) were used to retrieve articles from the University of Huddersfield's Summon database. In line with Jesson et al.'s (2011 p.27) recommendation, additional designated keywords attached to the article were used to search for related articles. Where articles were retrieved that had the key words appearing in the article but where the content was not relevant, the search results were considered not relevant and not used. Boolean operators, mainly 'AND', were used to search for articles with two words (for example, 'gender' and 'role in domestic violence' in the case of this study). As published Articles similar to the present study in Uganda could not be found, comparison on victims and perpetrators psychological characteristics are made from the western literature. The rationale for focusing on a review of characteristics is also supported by Canter and Young (2009) who argue that, through exploring general behaviour patterns and offence actions (domestic violence in this case), one gains insight into offender characteristics, and victims too in the case of this current study. Hence, the published literature reviewed has been structured as follows:

METHOD

Procedure

As recommended by Jesson et al. (2011 p.27), that since the information from text books becomes out of date quickly, the use of online resources and library resources ensure that most up-to-date sources for the search were obtained. Key terms derived from the study aims and results (e.g. gender, forms and causes of domestic violence, gender differences in personality traits, coping strategies and attitudes towards coercive behaviours, psychological characteristics of victims and perpetrators of domestic violence etc.) were used to retrieve articles from the University of Huddersfield's Summon database. In line with Jesson et al.'s (2011 p.27) recommendation, additional designated keywords attached to the article were used to search for related articles.

Where articles were retrieved that had the key words appearing in the article but where the content was not relevant, the search results were considered not relevant and not used.

Selection Process, Data Extraction and Analysis

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RESULTS

Summary of Ugandan urban sample results on Gender and self-reported victimisation

In summary this section briefly discusses the under-researching of this topic, as evidenced by the few available studies on female perpetrators and male victims of domestic violence. A conclusion is then provided to acknowledge any commonalities or differences within the western literature and the Ugandan sample.

In reviewing the literature, studies have been sourced from the UK and other western countries to explore the extent to which the Ugandan results reflect broader commonalities or describe a picture distinct to the African context. The main results of this study have shown that: (i) domestic violence in Uganda is not only cultural (Bowman, 2003, 2006) but also psychological and (ii) domestic violence victimisation is more gender symmetrical in Uganda than has previously been understood (although the notion of gender

symmetry masks the extent of gender inequalities and differential needs and is not particularly helpful in designing policy or interventions. While women are more likely to be subjected to domestic violence, men too are victims and that for both genders, like victims, perpetrators may have been victims before or experienced victimisation. Furthermore, in studying psychological concepts reported by victims and perpetrators of both genders, insights have been gained into the-participants' psychological characteristics. The Ugandan sample results have revealed that, to some extent, the same and/or similar psychological concepts are significantly correlated for males and females, victims and perpetrators

Domestic violence in western countries and how Ugandan urban results link to the current study

Forms of Violence and Gender Symmetry (Equal Victimization)

In the 1996 British Crime Survey self-completion questionnaire (Mirrlees-Black, 1999) equal proportions (4.2%) of both men and women revealed that they had been assaulted by a current/former partner during the past year. Similarly, equal or near equal victimisation has been found in many other large-scale national surveys, particularly in North America, some of which report higher levels of violence by women. For example, a meta-analysis of 82 studies (mainly from the US) found that women were more likely than men to use acts of physical violence/aggression (Archer, 2000). However, such studies have been criticised for claiming domestic violence gender symmetry and for ignoring the meaning, nature, context and consequences of aggressive behaviour (Dobash, et al 1992).

Furthermore, research that supports a gender symmetry hypothesis fails to impartially acknowledge men's disproportionate use of violence and aggressive behaviour relative to women's in every other sphere of life (Barnish, 2004). Moreover, some methodological research (analysing the body of methods and principles in gender symmetry) has shown that women are more reliable

respondents who tend to report their own violence more completely (Romkens, 1997). The reliability of male survey responses is also cast into doubt by a follow-up study of men reporting violence by their partners in the Scottish Crime Survey (Gadd et al., 2002) which had initially indicated that 1 in 3 of those experiencing domestic violence were men (Macpherson, 2002). When these men were retraced, 28% said they had never experienced any form of partner violence but had misunderstood the self-completion form questions about domestic violence/abuse and were referring to other crimes committed around their homes.

In addition, research and analysis that explored and differentiated some of the issues integral to men's and women's experiences of domestic violence has shown that women abused by partners or former partners are more victimised than men (Barnish, 2004). These women experienced significantly higher rates of severe and dangerous violence i.e. being beaten up, choked, strangled, suffocated, threatened/assaulted, sexually assaulted, killed, injured and hospitalised.

There is evidence indicating that women experience a more negative impact than men as a result of abuse/violence, including emotional/psychological consequences (Budd & Mattinson, 2000; Bunge & Locke, 2000; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000a; Johnson & Bunge). In contrast, however, women have been shown to initiate violence and call the police more often than men (Mirrlees-Black, 1999; Hamberger & Guse, 2002). The 1996 British Crime Survey shows that men who reported victimisation were more likely than women to say they felt wholly or partly to blame for the last incident (over 75%) and very few saw domestic violence incidents as crimes (Mirrlees-Black, 1999 cited in Barnish, 2004).

Research that assesses female violence to partners from both objective and subjective accounts indicates that many women who assault their male partners are themselves victims of ongoing

abuse and use violence to try to escape or stop it (Dobash et al, 1992; Dasgupta, 2002; Saunders, 2002). Furthermore, Saunders, 1989 cited in Barnish, 2004 notes that in spousal homicide studies women are more likely to use violence in self-defence than men. Although both genders use violence to achieve control, women try to secure short term command over an immediate situation whereas men tend to establish widespread authority over a much longer time-period and men are generally motivated by jealousy (Archer, 2000 & Saunders, 2002).

Perhaps one of the most important studies to question the notion of gender symmetry is Hester's 2009 research, '*Who does what to whom? Gender and domestic violence perpetrators*', which builds on the data from two previous research projects focused on attrition and domestic violence cases going through the criminal justice system, and the profiles and needs of perpetrators (Hester et al.2006). It used longitudinal and comparative samples which involved 96 cases overall from 692 perpetrators profiles. This included a total of 126 individuals identified as perpetrators. The cases were tracked from 2001 to 2007 thus providing a picture of up to six years of involvement with the police (Hester 2009). Hester argues that this allowed the data to cover the period since new police guidance in 2004, and January 2006 when common assault became an arrestable offence in the UK. The study also drew upon the Northumbria domestic violence database, which was set up in 2001 as a victim-led record of incidents. According to Hester, a separate record was made for each incident reported to Northumbria police, and the police decided who to record as victim and who as offender. There were instances where police decided that the woman was the victim in one incident but her male partner was the victim in another incident, each were recorded as victim in their relevant incident record. Thus where one or more incidents were recorded involving the same parties the overall pattern of incidents was one of the following:

1. *'sole perpetrator' involving the man as perpetrator and man as victim;*
2. *'sole perpetrator involving the woman as perpetrator and man as victim;*
3. *'dual perpetrator' where both male and female partners are recorded at **some a time** as the perpetrator.*

In order to explore issues related to gender and domestic violence perpetrators, three separate sample cases involving sole male, sole female and dual male/female perpetrators were developed to allow direct comparisons. This resulted in a sample of 32 sole female perpetrators in heterosexual relationships, 32 sole male perpetrators and 32 dual perpetrator cases where both men and women had at some time been recorded as perpetrator and as victim. In addition, narratives (description of incident as related by the parties, summary of incident from police perspective, police comments, action taken and history of the cases) recorded on the police domestic violence database in relation to the 96 were downloaded thus providing a unique picture of progression of cases overtime. In addition to victim interviews, a range of demographic features and criminal justice progression and outcomes relating individual perpetrators and cases were included in the analysis.

The findings from comparison of 96 cases where men, women or both were recorded by police as domestic violence perpetrators, revealed a number of clear differences between these groups as well as important patterns (Hester, 2009). Also, analysis of police and interview revealed differences by gender, including nature of incidents, levels of repeat perpetration, arrest and conviction. Furthermore, regarding gender and incidents, findings revealed that individuals were recorded as having been perpetrators in between one and 52 incidents of domestic violence. However, the differences were stark, with men significantly more likely to be repeat perpetrators. For example, although the majority of men had at least two incidents recorded (83%), many had

more than that, and one man had 52 incidents recorded within the six-year tracking period. In contrast, nearly two thirds of women reported as perpetrators had only one incident recorded (62%), and the highest number of repeat incident for any women was eight. Hester concluded that these data reveal that the intensity and severity of violence and abuse behaviours from the men was much more extreme. This is also reflected in the nature of the violence used as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Types of abusive behaviour by gender

	% of male perpetrators	% of female perpetrators
Verbal abuse	94	83
Physical violence *	61	37
Threat *	29	13
Harassment *	29	11
Damage to partners' property	30	16
Use of weapon	11	24
Damage to own property	6	11

* Statistically significant differences between men and women. *Source: Hester 2009*

From incidents described in table 1, men were significantly more likely than women to use physical violence, threats and harassment. While verbal abuse was used in most incidents by both men and women, men were slightly more likely to be verbally abusive. Men were more likely to damage the woman's property, while women were more likely to damage their own property. Whereas men tended to create a context of fear and related to that, control, this was not similarly the case where women were perpetrators. Incidents with women as perpetrators mainly involved verbal abuse, some physical violence, and only small proportion involved threat or harassment. However, women were much more likely to use a weapon, although this was at times in order to stop further

violence-protecting themselves from their partners (Hester, 2009 p.8, 18). Thus Emphasise lack of psychological approach to study domestic violence vs published literature on GBV.

Victim or Perpetrator? (Role in Domestic Violence)

There is scant research on the extent to which, like victims, perpetrators may have experienced victimisation before and/or, are still subject to ongoing victimisation. However, where this has been explored, the percentage of persons affected by prior or ongoing victimisation is significant. For instance, in national surveys, around half of domestic violence perpetrators reported that they were also victims of partner assaults e.g., 49% of respondents to the 1985 National Family Violence Resurvey who reported perpetrating domestic violence also stated that they were victimised by their partners (Stets & Straus, 1990 cited in Anderson, 2002). Furthermore, analyses done on the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH), in addition to interviewing both partners in heterosexual marital and cohabiting relationships, found that 64% of respondents who reported perpetrating domestic violence also reported being victimised by violence (Umberson, Anderson, Glick, & Shapiro, 1998 cited in Anderson, 2002).

However, researchers who examine partner violence within national survey data normally focus on either perpetration or victimisation (e.g. Galles& Straus, 1990; Straus, 1991; Anderson, 2002). Anderson (2002) argued that this separation creates problems for researching partner violence, such as problems identifying causal order, masking the ways in which experiences of intimate violence may differ by gender and other social locations. Anderson's (2002) study on perpetrators and victims was carried out among a subsample of 7,395 married and cohabiting heterosexual couples drawn from Wave 1 of the National Survey of Families and Households (NSFH-1), a nationally representative sample of the US (Anderson, 2002 p.855). Anderson's (2002) findings

revealed gender symmetry in intimate partner violence victimisation and also perpetration (See Table 2). For this review, attention is paid to gender symmetry in intimate partner violence victimisation since this was an important finding from a previous study (Karugahe, 2016).

Perpetrator or Victim?

Table 2: Variable Means and Standard Deviations

Variables	Men M (SD)	Women M (SD)
Partner violence perpetration	0.08	0.08
Partner violence victimisation	0.09	0.07
Types of Partner Violence		
Mutual violence	0.07	0.06
Respondent perpetration	0.01	0.02
Partner victimisation	0.02	0.01
Neither partner perpetrated violence	0.90	0.91
Psychosocial		
Depression	11.60 (14.67)	14.89(16.27)
Drug and alcohol problems	0.03	0.01
Self-esteem	15.31 (1.80)	15.28 (1.90)
Sociodemographic		
Age	42.74 (15.53)	40.06 (14.71)
Education (years)	12.84 (3.35)	12.67 (2.77)
Household income (log)	10.27 (1.09)	10.33 (1.02)
Unemployment	0.10	0.10
Cohabitation	0.09	0.09
Total	3,132	3,726

Source: Extracted from Anderson (2002 pg. 857)

The findings revealed in table 2 above shows that eight percent of men and women reported perpetrating intimate partner violence in the year prior to the study. However, victimisation rates were slightly higher amongst men than amongst women (9% vs 7%) (Anderson, 2002 p.857). Furthermore, the aforementioned study results revealed that when intimate partner violence cases were categorised according to both victimisation and perpetration data, the majority of cases of intimate partner violence involved mutual violence. However, regarding cases involving perpetration by only one partner, more women than men were identified as perpetrators (2% vs 1%), and more men than women were identified as victims only (2% vs 1%). Hence, the findings that women are more likely than men to be only perpetrators contradicts results from previous research (Lanhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 1995 cited in Anderson, 2002 p.856). However, the higher

rates of victimisation reported amongst men in the National Survey of Families and Household (NSFH-1) is consistent with previous national survey sample results (Straus, 1993 cited in Anderson, 2002). Whereas this finding may reflect a context in western countries where considerable improvements have been made with regard to gender equality, in Uganda male dominance, characterised by a patriarchal family system results in females often being controlled by men and hence, women are more likely to be victims than perpetrators. This is not to say however, that males cannot be victims or females do not perpetrate violence in Uganda (a finding of this study) but to raise questions about the importance of local context in studies of domestic violence.

Although this current study in Uganda did not collect data on the causes of domestic violence, Anderson's (2002) analysis gives an insight into the association that exists between psychosocial factors and domestic violence. For example, there was a significant positive association between violence perpetration and mental health / drug and alcohol problems for men and women respectively, thus suggesting that mental health and substance abuse are associated with an increased risk of domestic violence. However, when violence is not controlled, the odds of violence perpetration are increased by about 2% ($\exp [.017] = 1.016$) for men and 3% for women ($\exp [.025] = 1.025$) for each unit increase in depression (Anderson, 2002). This finding suggests that depression and substance abuse are associated with a risk of domestic violence perpetration not only for men but also for women. This finding gives an insight into some of the psychosocial factors that influence perpetrating domestic violence.

Similarly, Caetano, Vaeth, & Ramisetty-Mikler (2008) carried out a study on the socio-demographic characteristics, drinking and selected psychological attributes of perpetrators,

victims and those involved in mutual intimate partner violence (IPV) among couples in the US. The participants in the study included a multistage area probability sample representative of married and cohabiting couples from 48 states of the US. The study involved a diverse sample of 1,925 couples, including black couples (203), white couples (375), Hispanic couples (362) and mixed race couples (106). The interview process used a standardised questionnaire in English or Spanish and participants were interviewed separately at their homes. This methodology increases the likelihood of domestic violence being identified in comparison to those methodologies that rely only on one person's report (Caetano, Vaeth, & Ramisetty-Mikler, 2008, p.509). The results indicated that age was the only variable that appeared to reveal a consistent effect for men and women across violence related statuses (victims, perpetrators and those who engaged in mutual violence) (Caetano, Vaeth & Ramisetty-Mikler, 2008 p.507). Older individuals in age were less likely to be victims or perpetrators and less likely to be involved in mutually violent relationships. In contrast, this study's findings show other variables such as ethnicity, marital status, drinking, impulsivity, depression and powerlessness are gender or status specific in their ability to predict victimisation, perpetration and victimisation/perpetration (Caetano, Vaeth, & Ramisetty-Mikler, 2008). Overall, the study's findings did not identify gender as a more significant factor than other variables in predicting victimisation. The findings from the Caetano, Vaeth, & Ramisetty-Mikler (2008) study are partly in agreement with the Ugandan sample, especially on non-significant gender differences and correlation between some self-reported domestic violence victimisation forms and other variables reported by males and females. However, to some extent the aforementioned study findings contradict the Ugandan sample findings that revealed role specific (victims and perpetrators) significant differences and significant correlations between self-reported domestic violence victimisation forms and psychological sub-scales.

Summary of findings (Commonalities or differences) in gender and self-reported victimisation how these relate to results from Ugandan sample.

Uncontestably, a common point of agreement between the Ugandan sample findings and this review of western literature is on the gender -symmetric phenomenon, much of the work regarding this, has centred on the premise that, at least in its more extreme forms, women are more likely victims (Dobash&Dobash, 1998; Jacobson and Gottman, 1998; Johnson 1995; Straus &Gelles, 1990 cited in Outlaw, 2009). Indeed, Ugandan sample findings show no differences regarding domestic violence victimisation (presence of gender symmetry) but more importantly the females than males had higher mean scores on all forms of domestic violence victimisation. This suggests and affirms higher levels among females than males as the case is in the global lens on domestic violence. Furthermore, through reviewing western literature, research has indicated that domestic violence is less dependant on gender than it is often made out to be (Outlaw, 2009 P.267). Similarly, the Ugandan sample results show that mostly women are victims but some men to reported victimisation. Indeed, the results revealed no significant gender differences regarding domestic violence victimisation. However, there were some noticeable differences regarding females having higher mean levels on most forms of violence mainly physical violence. Universally, drawing from western literature/studies in comparison with Ugandan sample, point of agreement seems to suggest that domestic violence affects mainly women but men too are victims to a range of forms of domestic violence especially psychological violence. Thus, this study recommends a gender inclusive and sensitive approach for Uganda's practice and policy organs. This study, also makes an interesting contribution through global lens literature and Uganda's findings by pointing out the need to understand domestic violence beyond physical

violence (wife beating-common form according Speizer, 2010) through furthering research to other non-physical forms of domestic violence.

DISCUSSION

This article is the first of its kind in Uganda to review western literature in comparison with African scholarly literature on domestic violence particularly with emphasis to domestic violence victimisation among victims and perpetrators. Thus, making a significant contribution to scholarship in Uganda and more widely, to Africa in various ways. Firstly, this article draws from an empirical study on domestic violence in Uganda (Karugahe, 2016) which employed sampling and recruitment procedures that deviates from the common traditional cultural belief in Uganda and Africa, from viewing victimisation as being an experience that only women are subjected to, to viewing the roles of victim and perpetrator in domestic violence cases as being held by *both* women and men. Thus, similar to western literature that view domestic violence as gender neutral, in Uganda context it's clear that females are more prone to being victims of domestic violence but acknowledging that men too can be victims is a paramount step.

Indeed, previous studies in Africademonstrates that there is greater gender symmetry in domestic violence than has previously been presumed, thus raising questions about the over-reliance on culture (the ways in which patriarchal domination and female subjugation are sustained through cultural values and traditions) as an explanation(Bowen 2003). This contribution opens up the pathways for looking at the significance of gender in a more nuanced way in future studies of domestic violence in Uganda. This would be of great importance. For example, females who are the most impacted by domestic violence would through such studies be able to reveal suitable coping strategies-interventions that meet specific gender-individual characteristics. But more importantly, male victim's needs could be more accepted and incorporated within Ugandan

policies as; within the current Uganda GBV Guidelines (2013) male victims are invisible. To achieve this, requires a gender sensitive approach, one that would go beyond merely being gender inclusive to engaging males into GBV programmes in ways that meant they were able to acknowledge their victim status and seek help without feeling that their masculine identity was threatened.

Recommendations and Implications for Future Research (Future Directions)

Firstly, the wider systematic literature review has been a significant contribution to the African scholarship on domestic violence. This review was mainly carried out to compare the Ugandan findings to identify any commonalities and differences in nature and forms of domestic violence, gender symmetry in domestic violence, male and female psychological characteristics for victims. The commonalities identified within the literature dispute the myth that domestic violence in Africa is different from what it is elsewhere in the Western world (Straus, 2010). However, in contrast, the differences identified within the wider literature reviewed that contradict the Ugandan sample findings, reflect patterns that are distinct to the Ugandan-African context. Further systematic reviews on domestic violence topics could help scholars to gain in-depth insights into cross-cultural differences and commonalities

Secondly, the Ugandan urban sample findings have revealed that both men and women in Uganda self-reported victimisation (Karugahe, 2016), study findings are in agreement with gender symmetry studies that have argued that victimisation is not gender specific, that both males and females are victims (White et al, 2006). Moreover, male victims are rarely heard of publically in Uganda (UDHS, 2011). Therefore, this study has made a significant contribution to better understanding this 'newest' Ugandan crime in order to prevent or stop it. More importantly, these

findings could aid the Government policy makers and implementers, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), police and other professionals to be gender bias-free in service provision but could also open new avenues of researching domestic violence.

Conclusion and Limitations

The literature reviewed supports my finding that there are more male victims in Uganda than has previously been realised and that there are some commonalities between males and females regarding victimisation. The literature also shows that although males are victims, females experience more victimisation. However, literature has revealed self-reported domestic violence victimisation not only by victims but also by perpetrators who report having been assaulted and victimised. In other words, victims of violence can also be perpetrators of violence and in the case of women in particular, acts of violence are often associated with prior experiences of victimisation or self-defence. The literature reviewed reveals much information about perpetrators' psychological characteristics but scant information about characteristics of victims. Although there are similarities in forms of domestic violence and evidence of gender symmetry, we therefore know little about the psychological similarities between victims and perpetrators. Nevertheless, from what we can discern from research that has been carried out in western countries, the significance of psychological characteristics identified by scholars mirrors their importance in the Ugandan context and arguably, in other post-conflict African countries too. My contention therefore is that while cultural factors and social environment are essential in understanding domestic violence in Uganda, so too are the psychological characteristics portrayed by victims and perpetrators. Thus, only in taking a synergistic, holistic approach that accounts for these different elements of the problem, can effective policy and services be established.

Limitation of Literature Review: Although NVAW Survey includes measure of sexual violence by an intimate partner, they were intentionally left out of these analyses being considered physical and it so inherently gendered. Consequently, Outlaw, 2009 recommends that given emphasis on multifaceted abuse, the omission of any variables relating to sexual violence needs to be addressed. This article addresses this by including sexual violence among the forms of domestic violence thus making a contribution to knowledge on this form of violence.

Conflict of interest

Authors declares that there is no conflict of interest.

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