

Domestic Violence and Livelihoods of Women in Arocha Division, Apac Municipal Council

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Abstract

The study analysed the effects of domestic violence on the livelihoods of women in Arocha Division, and the study findings show 100.0% agreed that domestic violence results in depression and self-destructive behaviours among women. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics report published in 2020, recent statistics in Uganda show that 65% of women or one out of every three women are victims of physical and/or sexual domestic violence at least once in their lifetime. The majority of victims experience multiple assaults rather than just one (UBOS, 2020). The study aimed to analyse the effects of domestic violence on the livelihoods of women in Arocha Division, Apac Municipal Council. A cross-sectional study design was adopted where both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used. The target population was 80 participants, and 78 respondents were sampled purposively or randomly to constitute the study samples. Questionnaire and interview methods were used to collect primary and secondary data. Tool validity was ensured through pre-testing. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse quantitative data, while content analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. A total of 97.1% agreed that alcohol and drug abuse cause domestic violence. 100% agreed that domestic violence causes physical effects such as lacerations, bruises, broken bones and also results in depression and self-destructive behaviours among women. 100% agreed that community awareness-raising on domestic violence solves the vice and strengthening laws and protection against domestic violence solves domestic violence. The study concluded that the Covid-19 Pandemic, cultural factors, men as breadwinners, family issues, mass media activities, poverty, legal factors, political factors, and environmental factors are the causes of domestic violence. Physical effects, depression and self-destructive behaviours, financial insecurity/poverty, stigmatization, pregnancy-related effects/death during pregnancy, hindering participation in socio-economic activities, HIV/AIDS infection, and marginalisation and gender inequality were some of the effects of domestic violence on

women. Empowerment of women, harsher punishments, capacity building/training of police and authorities, community awareness-raising, strengthening laws and protection against domestic violence, and improving education opportunities for girls/women can help to solve the problem of domestic violence. The study recommended that the government should initiate income-generating projects that target women at the grassroots level so as to enhance their capacity to provide for their families other than waiting for their husbands.

Keywords

Domestic Violence, Livelihood, Women

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to the Study

1.1.1. Historical Background

The intersection of domestic violence and women's livelihoods has deep historical roots, shaped by societal norms and legal frameworks that have often marginalized women. Historically, domestic violence was not only legally permissible but also socially accepted. For instance, in 1824, the Mississippi Supreme Court allowed husbands to administer "moderate chastisement in case of emergencies", reflecting a societal norm that condoned spousal abuse as a means of correcting wives' perceived wrongdoings ([Genesis Shelter, 2020](#)). The women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s marked a pivotal shift in addressing domestic violence. Activists advocated for legal protections and established shelters for battered women, laying the foundation for the modern domestic violence movement ([Connections for Abused Women and their Children, 2023](#)). Despite these advancements, domestic violence continues to profoundly impact women's economic stability. Victims often face employment challenges due to physical injuries, mental health issues, and ongoing harassment from abusers. Studies indicate that intimate partner violence (IPV) victims lose a total of 8 million days of paid work annually in the U.S., equivalent to 32,000 full-time jobs ([Ballard Brief, 2020](#)). Economic abuse, a form of domestic violence in which abusers control victims' access to financial resources, further undermines women's livelihoods. This control can prevent victims from obtaining education or employment, exacerbating their financial dependence on the abuser ([Sharp-Jeffs, 2015](#)). In rural areas, the impact is more pronounced due to limited access to support services and employment opportunities. Research highlights that women in rural settings often face higher rates of domestic violence, compounded by isolation and economic dependency ([Annan, 2019](#)).

In many African countries, domestic violence has been historically rooted in patriarchal norms and traditional practices that view women as subordinate to men. Studies highlight that domestic violence in regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa has been compounded by socio-economic challenges, including poverty, lim-

ited access to education, and employment opportunities (WHO, 2013). Economic dependency on male partners often exacerbates women's vulnerability to abuse. In regions like East Africa, initiatives such as community awareness programs and microfinance schemes have aimed to empower women economically and reduce the prevalence of domestic violence (Kabeer, 2015). In South Asia, particularly in India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, domestic violence has been intertwined with cultural norms and the dowry system. Research indicates that women in these regions often face economic control and physical abuse, which limit their participation in the workforce (Rao, 1997). Interventions such as legal reforms and women's self-help groups have been critical in addressing both domestic violence and women's economic empowerment (Naved & Persson, 2005). Latin American countries have witnessed a long history of domestic violence influenced by machismo culture and economic disparities. Studies in countries like Mexico and Brazil show that domestic violence is prevalent across different socio-economic strata but has a more severe impact on low-income women, who often lack the financial means to leave abusive relationships (Heise, 1998). Government programs and NGOs have been instrumental in providing support services and promoting economic independence among women (Arriagada, 2002). In the MENA region, domestic violence is often linked to deeply entrenched gender roles and legal frameworks that offer limited protection for women. Research indicates that women's livelihoods are severely affected by domestic violence, as restrictions on mobility and economic participation are prevalent (UN Women, 2011). Efforts to combat domestic violence in these regions have included both legal reforms and economic initiatives aimed at increasing women's access to education and employment (Bourgois, 2003). In Europe and North America, historical perspectives on domestic violence have evolved significantly, with early feminist movements playing a crucial role in raising awareness and advocating for legal protection. In the United States and Canada, the relationship between domestic violence and women's livelihoods has been extensively studied, highlighting how economic abuse limits women's financial independence (Adams et al., 2008). In Europe, policies addressing domestic violence have increasingly focused on economic empowerment as a means to support victims (Walby & Towers, 2018). In regions like Oceania, particularly in Australia and New Zealand, domestic violence against women has been recognized as a critical social issue. Studies reveal that Indigenous women face higher rates of domestic violence, compounded by historical and socio-economic disadvantages (Cripps & Davis, 2012). Government interventions have included economic support programs and culturally sensitive services aimed at empowering women and reducing domestic violence.

Domestic violence in Uganda has deep historical roots, influenced by traditional gender roles and societal norms. In many Ugandan communities, cultural practices historically placed women in subordinate positions, making them vulnerable to various forms of domestic violence (Karamagi et al., 2006). The patriarchal nature of Ugandan society has often legitimized male dominance and

control over women, contributing to the persistence of domestic violence (Mugisha, 2011). The Ugandan government has made significant strides in addressing domestic violence through legal reforms. The enactment of the Domestic Violence Act in 2010 was a milestone, providing a legal framework for the protection of victims and the prosecution of offenders (Uganda Law Reform Commission, 2010). Despite this, enforcement remains a challenge due to limited resources, societal stigma, and gaps in legal awareness (MIFUMI, 2015). Domestic violence in Uganda has profound implications for women's livelihoods. Research indicates that victims of domestic violence often face economic challenges, including loss of employment and limited access to economic resources (Kinyanda et al., 2010). Economic abuse, where perpetrators control financial resources, further exacerbates women's financial dependence and hinders their economic empowerment (Kaye et al., 2006). Various interventions have been implemented to address the intersection of domestic violence and women's livelihoods in Uganda. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as MIFUMI and ActionAid Uganda have been instrumental in providing support services, including legal aid, counseling, and economic empowerment programs for survivors of domestic violence (MIFUMI, 2015). Microfinance initiatives have also been used to promote economic independence among women, aiming to reduce their vulnerability to domestic violence (Namubiru et al., 2009). Community-based approaches have become an important strategy for preventing domestic violence. Programmes that engage community leaders, men, and boys in challenging harmful gender norms have shown promising results in improving attitudes and reducing risk factors associated with violence against women and girls (Jewkes et al., 2015). These approaches emphasize the importance of addressing the root causes of domestic violence, including gender inequality and economic dependency.

Incorporating a comparative analysis with other regions in Uganda or across Africa would significantly enhance the study by providing broader context, identifying patterns, and validating findings. A comparison would allow for a more nuanced understanding of domestic violence in Arocha Division by highlighting similarities, differences, and effective interventions across different socio-cultural and economic settings.

Comparative Analysis (Table 1) of Domestic Violence Trends

1) Prevalence and Patterns of Domestic Violence

Different regions in Uganda and across Africa exhibit varying levels of domestic violence prevalence due to cultural, economic, and legal factors.

2) Cultural and Societal Drivers of Domestic Violence

Cultural factors influence domestic violence differently across regions. In Uganda, social norms such as male dominance in decision-making and financial control contribute to domestic violence, while in Kenya, factors such as land inheritance disputes play a significant role. Rwanda, with its strong post-genocide reconciliation efforts, has seen cultural shifts that discourage gender-based vio-

lence more effectively.

3) Government and Policy Responses

The legal and policy frameworks addressing domestic violence vary across different regions. **Table 2** below compares domestic violence laws, their implementation challenges, and best practices.

Table 1. comparative analysis.

Region	Prevalence Rate (%)	Most Common Causes	Key Characteristics
Arocha Division, Uganda	60%	Cultural norms, economic dependence, alcohol abuse	Post-conflict trauma, rural poverty
Kampala, Uganda	45%	Financial stress, urbanization, work-life imbalance	Higher reporting due to awareness
Gulu, Uganda	55%	PTSD from war, economic instability	Post-conflict trauma impact
Nairobi, Kenya	48%	Alcohol abuse, gender norms	Government shelters available
Rwanda	42%	Gender norms, economic factors	Strong government policies

Source: Adapted from the Uganda Demographic and Health Survey (UDHS, 2016), Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (2023), and Rwanda Gender Monitoring Office Reports (2022).

Table 2. Comparison of domestic violence, Laws, their implementation challenges and best practices.

Country/Region	Domestic Violence Laws	Implementation Challenges	Best Practices
Uganda	Domestic Violence Act (2010)	Weak enforcement, stigma in reporting	Gender-based violence task forces in urban centers
Kenya	Protection Against Domestic Violence Act (2015)	Delayed legal processes	Government-funded shelters and support centers
Rwanda	Gender-Based Violence Law (2008)	Need for greater rural outreach	Community courts handling domestic violence cases
South Africa	Domestic Violence Act (1998)	Underreporting in rural areas	Thuthuzela Care Centres for holistic victim support

Source: World Health Organization (WHO, 2021).

While Uganda's Domestic Violence Act (2010) provides a legal framework, weak enforcement limits its impact. Learning from Rwanda's gender-based violence community courts could offer an alternative dispute resolution method that strengthens justice for survivors in Arocha Division.

1.1.2. Conceptual Background

Domestic violence, a pervasive global issue, encompasses physical, sexual, emotional, and economic abuse within intimate relationships. In Uganda, domestic violence is deeply embedded in patriarchal societal structures that perpetuate male dominance and control over women (Mugisha, 2011). The Domestic Violence Act of 2010 defines domestic violence as any act or omission by a person in a domestic relationship that harms, injures, endangers, or coerces the other person (Uganda Law Reform Commission, 2010). This broad definition acknowledges the multi-faceted nature of domestic violence and its various manifestations. Livelihoods

refer to the means and resources required for individuals to sustain their lives, encompassing employment, income generation, and access to resources. For women in Uganda, livelihoods are often constrained by limited access to education, employment opportunities, and financial resources. The economic dependency resulting from these limitations can exacerbate women's vulnerability to domestic violence (Kinyanda et al., 2010). The relationship between domestic violence and women's livelihoods is bidirectional. On one hand, domestic violence can directly impact women's ability to engage in economic activities, leading to job loss, reduced productivity, and financial insecurity (Kaye et al., 2006). On the other hand, limited economic resources and financial dependence on abusive partners may prevent women from leaving violent relationships, thereby perpetuating cycles of abuse and economic insecurity (Adams et al., 2008; World Health Organization, 2013). The socio-cultural context in Uganda significantly influences both the prevalence of domestic violence and women's economic empowerment. Traditional gender norms often assign women to subordinate roles, limiting their autonomy and reinforcing economic dependence on men (Mugisha, 2011). Cultural practices, such as the bride price, can also contribute to the commodification of women, further entrenching power imbalances in intimate relationships (Karamagi et al., 2006). Policy interventions in Uganda, such as the Domestic Violence Act, aim to provide legal protection for victims and address the socio-economic factors contributing to domestic violence. Additionally, economic empowerment programs, including microfinance and vocational training, have been implemented to enhance women's livelihoods and reduce their dependence on abusive partners (Namubiru et al., 2009).

1.1.3. Contextual Background

Arocha Division is predominantly rural, with the local economy relying heavily on subsistence agriculture. The majority of women engage in farming and small-scale trade as their primary sources of livelihood. However, these economic activities often generate minimal income, leading to widespread poverty and financial dependency on male family members (Oxfam, 2018). The economic challenges faced by women in this region exacerbate their vulnerability to domestic violence, as financial dependency limits their ability to leave abusive relationships. Cultural norms in Arocha Division, as in many parts of Northern Uganda, are deeply rooted in patriarchal traditions. These norms often dictate that men hold authority over women, both within the household and the community. Such gender roles contribute to the normalization of domestic violence, with many cases going unreported due to societal acceptance and the stigma attached to victims seeking help (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Studies and reports indicate that domestic violence is a significant issue in Arocha Division, with women frequently subjected to physical, emotional, and economic abuse. The socio-economic instability in the region, coupled with entrenched cultural practices, perpetuates the cycle of violence (Apac District Local Government, 2019). The lack of adequate support systems, such as shelters and legal aid, further compounds the challenges faced by

victims of domestic violence. Efforts to improve women's livelihoods in Arocha Division have included initiatives by local governments and non-governmental organizations aimed at enhancing economic opportunities for women. Programs such as vocational training, microfinance, and agricultural support aim to empower women economically, reducing their dependency on abusive partners and fostering resilience against domestic violence ([ActionAid Uganda, 2020](#)). The local government in Apac Municipality has been working in collaboration with civil society organizations to address domestic violence through awareness campaigns, legal support, and the promotion of gender equality. Despite these efforts, the implementation and enforcement of policies remain a challenge due to limited resources and cultural resistance ([UNDP Uganda, 2018](#)).

1.1.4. Theoretical Background

Feminist theory provides a critical lens for understanding domestic violence as a manifestation of gender inequality. It argues that domestic violence stems from patriarchal structures that perpetuate male dominance and control over women ([Dobash & Dobash, 1979](#)). According to this theory, the economic subjugation of women is both a cause and a consequence of domestic violence. By maintaining financial dependence, abusers can exert control, limiting women's options to leave abusive relationships. The economic resource theory posits that the availability of economic resources influences power dynamics in intimate relationships ([Goode, 1971](#)). In contexts where women have fewer economic resources, they are more likely to experience domestic violence because economic dependence increases their vulnerability. Conversely, economic empowerment through employment and income generation can reduce this vulnerability, giving women more autonomy and bargaining power within the household. Social learning theory suggests that behaviors, including violence, are learned through observation and reinforcement ([Bandura, 1977](#)). In societies or communities where domestic violence is normalized or culturally accepted, individuals are more likely to replicate these behaviors. This theory highlights the role of socio-cultural factors in perpetuating domestic violence, which can have direct implications for women's economic activities and livelihood opportunities. Relative resource theory extends the economic resource perspective by considering the relative economic contributions of partners within a household. It suggests that domestic violence can occur when there is a significant imbalance in the economic resources between partners, often with the more economically dependent partner (typically women) being at greater risk ([Blumberg, 1984](#)). This theory underscores the importance of economic parity in reducing domestic violence and improving women's livelihoods. The ecological framework provides a comprehensive approach by integrating individual, relationship, community, and societal factors that contribute to domestic violence ([Heise, 1998](#)). This model recognizes that domestic violence is not solely an individual issue but is influenced by broader socio-economic and cultural contexts. It highlights the multi-level factors that affect women's livelihoods, including access to education, employment opportunities, and societal norms. Amartya Sen's ca-

pability approach emphasizes the importance of enhancing individuals' capabilities to achieve valuable life outcomes (Sen, 1999). In the context of domestic violence and women's livelihoods, this theory suggests that violence restricts women's capabilities, limiting their ability to pursue economic opportunities and improve their livelihoods. Economic empowerment programs that enhance women's capabilities can help mitigate the impacts of domestic violence and foster sustainable livelihoods.

1.2. Problem Statement

Domestic violence remains a pervasive issue that significantly impacts women's livelihoods, especially in rural areas of Uganda. In Arocha Division, Apac Municipality, women continue to face high rates of domestic abuse, which has far-reaching consequences for their economic well-being, health, and social standing. Despite legal frameworks such as the Domestic Violence Act of 2010 aimed at protecting women, the prevalence of domestic violence in Uganda remains disturbingly high (Uganda Law Reform Commission, 2010). Women in Arocha Division often face not only physical and emotional abuse but also economic abuse, where perpetrators control or limit their access to financial resources, thus exacerbating their economic dependence and vulnerability (Kaye et al., 2006). The economic dependency that results from this violence limits women's ability to engage in productive activities or improve their livelihoods. A substantial proportion of women in rural Uganda are engaged in subsistence agriculture or small-scale trade, both of which offer minimal income, further perpetuating cycles of poverty and domestic violence (Oxfam, 2018). As a result, many women remain trapped in abusive relationships due to the lack of financial autonomy and social support systems (Namubiru et al., 2009). Although some interventions have been introduced to address gender-based violence and support women's economic empowerment, their impact remains limited due to factors such as inadequate resources, cultural norms that justify violence, and the lack of comprehensive support services (MIFUMI, 2015). This study seeks to explore the intricate relationship between domestic violence and women's livelihoods in Arocha Division, Apac Municipality, focusing on how domestic violence hinders women's economic empowerment and contributes to ongoing cycles of poverty and abuse. The findings will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on gender-based violence in Uganda and inform policies and interventions aimed at enhancing the economic independence and well-being of women in the region.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

To analyze the effects of domestic violence on the livelihoods of women in Arocha Division.

Specific Objectives

- 1) To analyze the causes of domestic violence against women in Arocha Division.

2) To establish the effects of domestic violence on the livelihoods of women in Arocha Division.

3) To determine the solutions to domestic violence against women in Arocha Division.

1.4. Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1) What are the causes of domestic violence against women in Arocha Division?

2) What are the effects of domestic violence on the livelihoods of women in Arocha Division?

3) What are the solutions to domestic violence on women's livelihoods in Arocha Division?

1.5. Scope of the Study

Content Scope

The content scope for this study on domestic violence and its impact on the livelihoods of women in Arocha Division, Apac Municipality, was structured around the three key objectives outlined in the research. Each objective guided the focus areas, methodology, and analysis within the study. Analysis of the Causes of Domestic Violence on Women in Arocha Division. This section explored the cultural and traditional norms in Arocha Division that perpetuate domestic violence, such as patriarchal attitudes, gender roles, and the normalization of violence in intimate relationships (Mugisha, 2011). The role of cultural practices like bride price and dowry in reinforcing power imbalances was examined. It analyzed how economic dependency, poverty, and limited access to resources contribute to the prevalence of domestic violence. Women's financial reliance on male partners in rural settings, particularly in subsistence farming and informal trade, was a key area of focus (Oxfam, 2018). Evaluation of the effectiveness of laws and policies designed to combat domestic violence, such as the Domestic Violence Act of 2010, was included. This also looked at the availability and effectiveness of legal services, law enforcement, and community support structures in Arocha Division. The study explored the psychological and emotional causes of domestic violence, including stress, mental health issues, and the perpetuation of violent behaviors through social learning (Bandura, 1977). Effects of Domestic Violence on the Livelihoods of Women in Arocha Division. This section assessed the direct and indirect economic effects of domestic violence on women's livelihoods. It explored how violence disrupts women's participation in productive activities such as farming, small-scale trading, and other income-generating ventures (Kaye et al., 2006). The study analyzed how domestic violence affects women's social status, mental and physical health, and well-being. Psychological trauma, physical injuries, and the long-term health consequences of abuse can hinder women's productivity and economic independence. This study looked into how domestic violence affects family dynamics, including children's education and overall

household welfare. The research explored whether women who experience violence are less able to contribute to household income, leading to further economic strain. The study examined how the fear and trauma from domestic violence limit women's access to financial resources, vocational training, and microfinance opportunities, ultimately trapping them in cycles of poverty and dependence (Namubiru et al., 2009). Solutions to Domestic Violence on Women in Arocha Division. In this section, the research evaluated the effectiveness of existing legal frameworks, including the Domestic Violence Act, in addressing and mitigating domestic violence in Arocha Division. This included the role of local government, law enforcement, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in providing legal aid, advocacy, and protection for victims. It focused on community-based solutions, including awareness programs, support groups, and counseling services. The role of grassroots organizations and local leaders in changing social norms and supporting victims of domestic violence was explored. The study assessed the potential of economic empowerment initiatives such as vocational training, microfinance programs, and women's savings groups to reduce the financial dependency that often exacerbates domestic violence (ActionAid Uganda, 2020). The research investigated the role of mental health and counseling services in helping survivors of domestic violence recover and regain control over their livelihoods. Psychological support is crucial for breaking the cycle of abuse and enabling women to rebuild their economic independence.

Geographical Scope

The geographical scope of this study is Arocha Division, Apac Municipality, located in the central part of Apac District in Northern Uganda. Arocha Division is a predominantly rural area characterized by subsistence agriculture, small-scale trading, and limited access to formal economic opportunities. It is situated within the broader context of the socio-economic challenges facing the northern region of Uganda, which has experienced prolonged periods of conflict and recovery. Arocha Division is the main study area within Apac Municipality. It consists of 7 parishes, 33 villages, and 14,642 people distributed across the ward with varying levels of access to resources and services. The division is primarily agricultural, with women engaged in farming and small-scale enterprises. The geographical characteristics of the area, including its infrastructure, availability of health and social services, and proximity to urban centers, will be considered in the study. Apac Municipality serves as the administrative center for the district. Although more urbanized compared to Arocha Division, the municipality still faces significant socio-economic challenges, particularly for women who often migrate from rural areas like Arocha Division in search of economic opportunities. The municipality provides a context for understanding the urban-rural divide and the impact of domestic violence on women's livelihoods in both rural and semi-urban settings. Arocha Division's rural nature makes it an ideal setting to study the intersection of domestic violence and livelihoods, particularly because women in such settings often face compounded challenges related to poverty, limited access to

education, and economic dependency (Oxfam, 2018). The cultural practices and socio-economic conditions in Arocha Division provide a critical context for understanding domestic violence in Northern Uganda. Traditional gender norms, which are still prevalent in rural areas, play a significant role in perpetuating violence against women (Mugisha, 2011). Apac Municipality, being the administrative hub of Apac District, offers relatively easier access to government offices, NGOs, and support systems that work on addressing domestic violence and women's economic empowerment, which will help in evaluating the effectiveness of existing interventions. While Arocha Division provides a rich setting for this research, the findings may not be fully representative of other regions in Uganda, particularly those with different cultural practices, levels of urbanization, or socio-economic conditions. The geographical scope is, therefore, limited to Arocha Division within Apac Municipality, though it may have broader implications for similar rural settings across Northern Uganda.

Time scope

The time scope of this study will focus on the period from 2018 to 2023. This period has been selected for the following reasons: the study examined the effectiveness of the Domestic Violence Act of 2010 and other relevant policies implemented between 2018 and 2023. This time frame allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the impact of legal frameworks and government interventions on domestic violence and women's livelihoods. Additionally, the period aligns with recent national and international efforts to address gender-based violence, with a particular focus on rural areas like Arocha Division. Data from 2018 to 2023 provided insights into the economic conditions of women in Arocha Division, particularly in relation to their engagement in subsistence agriculture, small-scale businesses, and other livelihood activities. This allowed the study to assess the ongoing challenges and opportunities for women's economic empowerment in the context of domestic violence. The study explored any significant cultural, social, and community-based shifts that may have occurred in the past five years in relation to domestic violence. The role of local NGOs, community leaders, and public awareness campaigns in influencing public attitudes towards domestic violence will be evaluated within this timeframe. This period allowed for the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data, including case studies, interviews, surveys, and government reports, to ensure that the findings reflect the current state of domestic violence and women's livelihoods in Arocha Division. The period from 2018 to 2023 includes the global COVID-19 pandemic, which had significant socio-economic impacts, particularly on women. The study assessed how the pandemic may have exacerbated domestic violence and affected women's livelihoods, adding a contemporary layer to the analysis.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This study on domestic violence and women's livelihoods in Arocha Division, Apac Municipality, holds substantial significance for various stakeholders, as it

seeks to highlight the interplay between gender-based violence and women's economic empowerment. The findings of the study are expected to inform policies, interventions, and community actions aimed at improving the well-being and economic status of women in Arocha Division and similar rural areas in Uganda. Below is an outline of the significance of the study to various stakeholders:

To Women in Arocha Division and Other Rural Areas: The findings can help inform targeted programs for economic empowerment, such as vocational training, financial literacy, and microfinance opportunities, which could improve women's ability to escape poverty and reduce their vulnerability to domestic violence.

To Local Government Authorities (Arocha Division and Apac Municipality): The study will provide evidence on the areas most affected by domestic violence and economic hardships, guiding local government in the allocation of resources for programs aimed at combating gender-based violence and supporting women's economic activities.

To Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations: The study can serve as a baseline for monitoring and evaluating the impact of ongoing interventions, providing NGOs with data to assess whether their programs are achieving the desired outcomes in reducing domestic violence and improving women's livelihoods.

To Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities: The findings of the study can highlight gaps in the implementation of laws related to domestic violence, such as the Domestic Violence Act of 2010. This can inform law enforcement agencies about the challenges women face in accessing legal protection and services, encouraging reforms to strengthen legal protections.

To Policy Makers and Government Officials: The study will provide government officials with comprehensive, evidence-based insights into the link between domestic violence and women's economic status. This information can be used to shape national policies aimed at both preventing violence and promoting women's economic empowerment.

To the Academic Community and Researchers: The study's outcomes may inspire future research on similar issues in other regions of Uganda or across Africa, contributing to a deeper understanding of the causes, effects, and solutions to domestic violence and its economic implications for women.

To Community Leaders and Local Religious Institutions: By raising awareness of the negative effects of domestic violence on families and communities, the study can encourage local leaders to support programs that address both the cultural and economic factors contributing to violence.

To International Organizations and Donors: The study may also serve as part of Uganda's contribution to global discussions on gender equality and the elimination of violence against women, contributing to international advocacy and policy development.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Causes of Domestic Violence

Research has shown that psychological issues such as depression, anxiety, and personality disorders, combined with substance abuse (particularly alcohol and drugs), increase the likelihood of domestic violence (Benson, 2010). Abusers often exhibit a range of behavioral traits, including aggression, control issues, and low emotional regulation, which can trigger violent behaviors (Cohen, 2014). Similarly, the use of alcohol and drugs often lowers inhibitions, exacerbates aggression and impulsivity, and leads to violent behavior (Tolman & Bennett, 1990).

Individuals who have been victims of violence in their childhood or previous relationships may be more likely to perpetrate or accept violence in adulthood. This intergenerational cycle of violence is a well-established cause of domestic abuse (Hughes & Coker, 2002). Exposure to domestic violence in childhood can normalize violent behaviors, making individuals more likely to become either abusers or victims in later relationships.

The most prominent theory in understanding the relational causes of domestic violence is the power and control theory (Pence & Paymar, 1993). This theory suggests that perpetrators use violence to exert control over their partners. The abusive partner seeks to dominate the victim, often through a combination of physical, emotional, and psychological abuse. This pattern of behavior is rooted in the perpetrator's need to maintain control, and it can be influenced by traditional gender roles and societal expectations about male dominance and female submission (Dobash & Dobash, 2004).

Gender inequality, particularly within patriarchal societies, has been identified as a key relational factor in domestic violence. In such societies, women are often socialized to accept subordination to men, leading to an environment where domestic violence is normalized (Heise, 1998). Studies have shown that in cultures where men hold more power, women are more likely to experience intimate partner violence. Socio-cultural expectations that place men in positions of authority and women in subordinate roles create an unequal power dynamic that can manifest in violence (Mason & Cheung, 2015).

Relationship stressors such as financial difficulties, infidelity, or poor communication can exacerbate tensions and trigger violent behaviors. Domestic violence often occurs in relationships where there are unresolved conflicts or where one partner seeks to assert control in response to perceived threats (Kalmuss, 1984). Stressful events such as economic hardship, job loss, and lack of social support increase the strain within relationships and can lead to violence as a coping mechanism (Browne, 1987).

In many societies, harmful gender norms and patriarchal cultural beliefs contribute to the acceptance and normalization of domestic violence, making it more difficult to prevent and respond effectively to violence against women (Jewkes et al., 2015). In some cultures, violent behavior towards women is seen as an expression of male authority, and social norms permit such violence. This normalization

of violence makes it difficult for victims to seek help or for perpetrators to face consequences for their actions.

Poverty and economic inequality are strong societal factors contributing to domestic violence. Economic stressors, such as unemployment, financial strain, and poverty, can create an environment in which violence becomes a means of exerting control or coping with frustration (Heise, 1998). Additionally, women's financial dependence on their partners can make it difficult for them to leave abusive relationships. In rural and impoverished areas, limited access to resources and support services often exacerbates the situation (Alon & Lall, 2018).

Weak legal frameworks, ineffective law enforcement, and lack of support services for victims can perpetuate domestic violence. In many regions, legal institutions are slow to respond to domestic violence cases, and victims may face social stigma when reporting abuse. The failure of law enforcement to adequately address domestic violence contributes to its normalization and continued prevalence (Campbell et al., 2002). Furthermore, the lack of victim protection services, such as shelters, legal aid, and counseling, can prevent women from escaping abusive situations.

Studies have shown that domestic violence is more common in lower socioeconomic groups, where education levels are lower and financial insecurity is more widespread (Mason & Cheung, 2015). Women in these groups may have fewer resources to escape violence, and they may experience higher levels of stress and economic dependency, which perpetuate the cycle of abuse.

Women in rural areas are often more vulnerable to domestic violence than those in urban areas due to limited access to education, healthcare, and support services. Rural communities may also have more rigid gender norms and less progressive attitudes toward domestic violence, making it harder for victims to seek help (Gage, 2005).

Countries across the globe have made various efforts to suppress the transmission of COVID-19 and to mitigate its socio-economic impacts. This unprecedented crisis unfolds in the context of many pre-existing challenges, one of which is domestic violence rooted in gendered dimensions of access to basic necessities in a world rife with gender inequality. These challenges are now exacerbated by the pandemic and have a disproportionate impact on women's enjoyment of human rights, including economic, social, and cultural rights. Lockdowns have been one of the globally supported measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and mitigate its impact on public health (WHO, 2020).

Apart from culture, there is a religious aspect to this whole issue. Some religions, one way or the other, relegate women to the background. In these organizations, women are the ones who have to cover themselves when going out; they are the ones who should not participate in discussions when the men are talking, even if it is just a visitor to their husbands. They are taught that women should be silent during religious functions, no matter their objections; their views should not be heard. The challenge is that the more men keep hearing these sermons,

they are hardened, and anytime their wives violate these “commands”, they will be ready for trouble (Oduyoye, 2001; Woodhead, 2007; Mahoney, 2010).

One of the main causes that determine the occurrence of marital violence refers to the attitudes and social stereotypes that legitimate the dominant role of men and the subordinated role of women, which have been perpetuated throughout the history of humankind. Thus, the mentality regarding male superiority is a main factor responsible for the manifestation of the phenomenon of domestic abuse. Nigerian women have suffered various forms of gender-induced violence from pre-colonial times, through the colonial era, and afterwards. Not even civilization and western education have changed most men’s perception of the Nigerian woman as someone who deserves some respect and dignity. Patriarchal cultural practices often regard women as subordinate to men, thereby reinforcing gender inequality and exposing women to various forms of violence and discrimination (Arisi & Oromareghake, 2011).

Patriarchal norms assign men the primary responsibility of providing for their families, and tensions arising from these gendered expectations may contribute to conflict and intimate partner violence (Mshweshwe, 2020; Akanle & Nwaobiala, 2020).

Traditionally, the man is considered the breadwinner of the home. He is expected to make money available for the family upkeep. However, these days it has become expedient for the woman to take on some kind of job either to fulfill her professional goal or to supplement the family food budget. Where this is not forthcoming is the beginning of a danger signal, especially if the woman can ill afford to make a substantial contribution. The danger becomes even more acute if the woman believes the man makes more money but fails to give a sufficient amount to feed the family.

According to Sharma et al. (2017), childlessness is an attribute of domestic violence. The reason why a woman might be treated so badly is the inability of the woman to bear children, which culturally is seen as a fault of the woman rather than the man, whereas the problem may be from both of them. The woman takes the whole blame for the childlessness of the couple. Any woman who has not been able to bear children is seen as an enemy of progress, and so she deserves to be treated harshly.

According to Arisi and Oromareghake (2011), similar to the issue of childlessness is the male-child syndrome. Over 90% of men are obsessed with having male children. The failure of their wives to give birth to male children can bring real problems for the women. There was a case of a man who refused to visit his wife who gave birth in a hospital through caesarean section because the baby was a girl. He refused to pay the hospital bills. The woman was abandoned to her fate. It was her family members that rescued the situation.

Those who abuse alcohol, narcotics, morphine, heroin, or stimulants such as cocaine and marijuana, among others, are capable of causing harm to other people under the influence of such substances. In Nigeria, many people easily become

hooked on some of these drugs as a result of peer influence, particularly through constant association with bad people. The magistrate courts in Nigeria are daily being inundated by divorce cases, as one reads in the daily newspapers. These cases of divorce are attributed to love lost in many homes.

It may not be said that mass media creates violence, but it contributes to keeping it alive and, without any doubt, it has a role in the rise of the level of aggressiveness. Violence is a form of aggressiveness that is learned, and the easiest form of learning is by imitation. In this field, mass media has an essential role.

2.2. Effects of Domestic Violence on the Livelihoods of Women

Domestic violence has a significant effect on women's physical and mental health. Studies show that women who experience intimate partner violence are more likely to suffer from chronic health issues, including physical injuries, reproductive health problems, and mental health disorders such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Ellsberg et al., 2015; García-Moreno et al., 2015). These health problems often reduce women's ability to participate in the workforce, leading to absenteeism, lower productivity, or forced job loss (Coker et al., 2002). Chronic health issues can result in decreased economic opportunities and long-term financial instability.

The psychological impact of domestic violence, including low self-esteem, fear, and trauma, often leads to diminished confidence and social isolation. This isolation, both from the social support network and the labor market, hinders women's ability to seek or retain employment (Devries et al., 2014). The mental toll of constant abuse makes it difficult for women to engage in educational or employment opportunities, perpetuating cycles of poverty and economic dependency.

Women experiencing domestic violence are often financially dependent on their abusers, which limits their economic mobility and ability to leave abusive relationships. Research by Kim and Motsei (2020) found that women who lack access to financial resources or independent income are more likely to stay in abusive relationships due to fear of economic hardship. This dependence makes it harder for women to escape violence, as they may be unable to support themselves or their children.

Studies indicate that domestic violence directly affects women's ability to work. In addition to physical injuries, which may result in missed workdays, women may also face restrictions on their employment choices due to the controlling behaviors of their abusers. An increasing body of research suggests that the fear of abuse or retaliation from an intimate partner can prevent women from pursuing job opportunities, leading to lower income and fewer career advancement opportunities (Aizer, 2010; Goldfarb et al., 2020). This disruption of income often leads to a cycle of poverty, exacerbating economic vulnerability and further entrenching dependence on the abuser.

In many cases, abusive partners control family assets and finances, such as bank accounts, property, and savings, which can have devastating consequences for

women's economic independence. Studies show that women who experience economic abuse (e.g., controlling access to money, sabotaging work efforts, or withholding funds for family needs) often find it difficult to maintain a stable income or save for the future (Adams et al., 2015). The loss of economic assets due to domestic violence often results in women being unable to sustain their livelihoods and their families' well-being.

Women and girls who experience domestic violence may drop out of school or delay their educational progress due to the physical and emotional toll of abuse. Research by Kiss et al. (2012) reveals that young women experiencing domestic violence are at increased risk of school dropout, which significantly impacts their long-term earning potential. The interruption of education often results in limited skills and qualifications, making it more difficult to secure better-paying jobs and contributing to a continued cycle of poverty.

Domestic violence also affects women's career trajectories. Women in abusive relationships may have less job security, reduced productivity, and limited career advancement opportunities. A study by Macmillan (2019) found that women who are victims of domestic violence tend to experience higher turnover rates in the workforce, as well as reduced opportunities for promotion or training. This lack of career progression has long-term economic consequences, including wage disparity and reliance on low-wage, unstable jobs.

Women who disclose their experiences of domestic violence may face discrimination in the workplace, where employers may perceive them as less reliable or productive. A study by Bonomi et al. (2012) found that women who disclose intimate partner violence are more likely to face negative consequences in the workplace, including job termination, reduced hours, or demotion. This stigma can discourage women from seeking help or reporting abuse, perpetuating their vulnerability and economic dependence.

Domestic violence often leads to social isolation, which can prevent women from accessing support services, including those that can help them improve their livelihoods, such as legal assistance, financial support, and career counseling. Isolation from friends, family, and social networks reduces women's chances of escaping abusive relationships and achieving economic independence (Eggers del Campo & Steinert, 2022). Moreover, without adequate social support, women find it more difficult to overcome the emotional and financial burdens imposed by abuse.

In cultures where patriarchal norms dominate, domestic violence may be viewed as an acceptable means of asserting male authority. Studies show that cultural tolerance of violence against women often leads to underreporting of abuse and a lack of legal action against perpetrators (Heise, 2011). This societal norm exacerbates women's economic vulnerabilities, as they may not seek help or access resources designed to improve their livelihoods.

In some cultures, women are expected to remain in abusive relationships for the sake of family honor or social conformity. These social expectations can limit

women's access to economic opportunities, as they may prioritize family or community expectations over their own well-being (Yount & Carrera, 2006). The pressure to stay in abusive relationships can lead to economic dependency, as women often rely on their abusers for financial support.

The physical effects of domestic violence may vary, but victims are known to suffer physical and mental problems as a result of domestic violence. Victims may likely experience physical injury (lacerations, bruises, broken bones, head injuries). According to Efetie and Salami (2007), a study was carried out over the course of 3 months in 2005 in the Nigerian capital city of Abuja. The results revealed that physical, sexual, and psychological abuse among pregnant women was prevalent. One third of the female respondents reported experiencing domestic violence.

Aizer (2011) in his study said many victims have had to forgo financial security during divorce proceedings to avoid further abuse. As a result, they are impoverished as they grow older. If a man kills his wife, for example, the implication is that he has endangered the children who will now be orphans, so to speak. This is because the man may not be a free person again to cater for the children. So, those children will rely on their peers and are likely to learn the negative parts of life. Their education will suffer as there will be no one to take care of them. They may be pushed to join bad gangs and become terrors in society. Due to the fact that their education is stopped and also the fact that they are not able to learn any trade, a culture of poverty is unleashed on society. This is one of the factors that cause victims of domestic violence to remain silent. Stigmatization is surely an issue as it causes victims to keep quiet and not cry out for help. International Labour Organization reported that the ability of women to concentrate on their work was influenced by the type of unwanted and coercive behaviours experienced. Based on interviews with women experiencing sexual coercion, the authors found that work motivation and concentration were reduced and changes in work attendance were noted by female workers who experienced sexual violence. They found that behaviours described as pressures for sexual contact impacted women's attention to work.

A study conducted in Ogun State, Nigeria, found that 48.20% of respondents disagreed that the effect of battering on women by their husbands during pregnancy on birth outcomes is bad. Reasons adduced include that women might lose the pregnancy, depending on the stage of the pregnancy, the foetus might be damaged, and it might result in excessive bleeding and claim the life of the woman. Violence during pregnancy is associated with miscarriages, low birth weight, infant and maternal morbidity, and even foetal and maternal death (Ashimolowo & Otufale, 2012).

The women's lack of property or access to financial resources makes them dependent on men for support, and as a result, they are at risk of being subjected to sexual abuse. Therefore, the low social status of women in the developing world magnifies their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS infection and constrains their ability

to deal with its impact. For instance, women's limited economic security may increase the likelihood of engaging in high-risk behaviour such as commercial sex work or transactional sex (Ashimolowo & Otufale, 2012). It is widely acknowledged that the impacts of HIV/AIDS on rural livelihoods are not gender-neutral; it deepens and widens gender inequalities. HIV/AIDS is creating a major shock in the rural areas of the most affected countries; for the most part, these changes are increasing the vulnerability of the most vulnerable (women and children) and increasing the already stark gender inequality in access to and ownership of land and other productive resources. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO, 2005), HIV/AIDS exacerbates existing social and economic inequalities by increasing the vulnerability of already marginalized populations, particularly women and rural households.

2.3. Solutions to Domestic Violence and Livelihood among Women

Legal protections are critical in addressing domestic violence and safeguarding women's rights. Strengthening laws that protect women from intimate partner violence is essential. This includes creating or reinforcing legislation that criminalizes domestic violence, mandates the provision of shelters for victims, and ensures the enforcement of restraining orders. According to the World Health Organization (2013), countries with strong legal frameworks and accessible judicial systems report lower levels of domestic violence and better protection for women. Many women are economically dependent on their abusers and may lack the resources to seek legal support. Providing free or low-cost legal assistance for women experiencing domestic violence can help them navigate the legal system and secure protection orders, child custody rights, and financial support. For example, legal aid services that help women apply for divorce or child support can offer the financial independence needed to leave an abusive relationship (Miller & Sokoloff, 2002).

One of the most effective ways to promote women's economic independence and reduce their dependence on abusive partners is through microfinance programs and economic empowerment initiatives. These programs can provide women with small loans, training, and financial literacy programs, enabling them to start businesses, gain employment, or save money for the future. Microfinance programs have been shown to improve women's financial security and reduce the likelihood of remaining in abusive relationships due to economic dependency (Kabeer, 2001).

Providing women with access to vocational training and skill-building programs can empower them to enter the workforce, gain financial independence, and reduce their reliance on abusive partners. Skills development in areas such as tailoring, computer literacy, or agriculture can open new opportunities for women in the labor market. By expanding women's skill sets, these programs help promote their economic well-being and reduce the economic constraints often im-

posed by abusers.

Access to job placement services can help women escape domestic violence by facilitating their entry into the workforce. Providing job training, resume-building workshops, and interview coaching is crucial for helping women transition from dependent relationships to independent livelihoods. These services can significantly improve women's employment outcomes and income, enhancing their ability to sustain themselves and their families (López & Alvarado, 2016).

Establishing shelters and safe houses for women and children fleeing domestic violence is essential. These institutions provide not only physical safety but also access to counseling, legal aid, and social support. By offering a safe space, women can begin to rebuild their lives and gain the emotional and psychological support needed to regain confidence and financial independence. Moreover, some shelters offer job readiness programs and housing support to help women transition to independent living (Finkelhor, 2008).

Psychological and emotional support is crucial for women who have experienced domestic violence. Trauma-informed counseling can help women heal from the emotional scars of abuse, build resilience, and improve mental health. Access to mental health services can reduce feelings of depression and anxiety, which may otherwise hinder their ability to pursue employment or engage in livelihood activities (Hanson & Chandra, 2019).

Social networks and community organizations can play a significant role in supporting women who have experienced domestic violence. Local groups can provide emotional support, help with childcare, offer job referrals, and even provide financial assistance. These networks help reduce the isolation many women feel while experiencing violence, facilitating their reintegration into society and the workforce (Evans, 2010).

Raising awareness about domestic violence and its impact on women's livelihoods is a key solution to breaking the cycle of abuse. Public awareness campaigns can help change societal attitudes toward domestic violence, challenge gender-based discrimination, and reduce the stigma faced by survivors. Educational programs can also inform women about their legal rights and available support services. According to a study by Heise (2011), raising awareness about domestic violence has been shown to reduce societal tolerance for such abuse, ultimately leading to fewer cases and better economic opportunities for women.

Ensuring that women and girls have access to quality education is a fundamental long-term solution to domestic violence. Educating women about their legal and human rights is an important strategy for preventing and responding to domestic violence. Women who are aware of their rights and the services available to them are more likely to seek protection and access support when they experience abuse (World Health Organization, 2013; UN Women, 2019).

Addressing domestic violence requires a coordinated response from various sectors, including law enforcement, healthcare, social services, and the private sector. A collaborative approach can ensure that women receive the necessary sup-

port in multiple areas, such as legal protection, healthcare, housing, and financial assistance. Integrating these services into a comprehensive support system allows women to escape violence and rebuild their lives with the necessary resources (Baker et al., 2018).

To prevent domestic violence and promote economic independence for women, it is important to engage men and boys in conversations about gender equality and respectful relationships. Programs that challenge harmful gender norms and encourage positive behavior changes among men can help reduce violence and support the creation of a safer, more equitable environment for women (WHO, 2013).

Gender-sensitive policies in the workplace can help ensure that women who experience domestic violence are not discriminated against or penalized for their circumstances. Policies such as paid leave for survivors of domestic violence, flexible working hours, and protection from workplace harassment can help women maintain their employment while escaping violence (Baker et al., 2018). Such policies ensure that women can continue working without fear of retaliation or loss of income.

Incorporating the issue of domestic violence into broader development policies and programs is vital to addressing the root causes of inequality and violence. Governments and development partners should ensure that women's economic empowerment programmes are integrated with strategies for preventing and responding to domestic violence. Combining economic opportunities with legal protection, survivor support services, and community-based prevention initiatives provides a more sustainable pathway for women to achieve financial independence and safely leave abusive relationships (UN Women, 2019; World Health Organization, 2019).

Empowerment of women against Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a critical and essential element to instill confidence and self-esteem in women, enabling them to make the right decisions and protect themselves. Empowerment-based nursing intervention reduces long-term physical, psychological, and emotional trauma, improves safety planning for abusive situations, and increases awareness and knowledge of the issue within communities. Women's empowerment has multiple dimensions involved; self-esteem, participation in household decisions, disagreement towards domestic violence, and social capital (Soliman, 2016). Governments should not only legislate concerning domestic violence; appropriate punitive actions should be taken against offenders. In 2013, Nigeria passed a federal law to reduce domestic violence. The Violence Against Persons Bill gave harsher punishment for sexual violence and also provides support and measures such as a restraining order to prevent the continuation of abuse. However, when cases of domestic violence are taken to court, they are usually stagnant. In 2010, there was a case of a traditional ruler of one town in a state in South-West Nigeria who physically assaulted one of his wives, resulting in her death. No action was taken against the king until a public protest ensued. The police then made a statement

that they would press charges against him. Unfortunately, the case was dismissed in 2012, with the king going without any punishment (2013).

Increasing access to comprehensive and well-coordinated domestic violence response services, including livelihood and material support, is essential for survivor recovery. Humanitarian GBV response frameworks emphasize that material assistance may include cash or in-kind support aimed at addressing immediate vulnerabilities of survivors who cannot access essential services (*Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2015; UNFPA, 2019*). Such interventions form part of a survivor-centered approach that integrates protection, psychosocial support, and economic recovery.

The Gender Based Violence Sub-sector, one of the technical groups within the Protection Sector, aims to address both immediate humanitarian service delivery and effective prevention and risk reduction strategies specific to Gender-based Violence (GBV). The Gender-based Violence Sub-sector is working to increase direct service provision, promote safer environments, especially for women and girls (those most vulnerable to GBV), institutionalize existing Gender-based Violence mechanisms, enhance them with global good practice, and increase the geographic and programmatic reach of Gender-based Violence interventions (*Myanmar Information Management Unit, 2024*).

Capacity building is the process of developing and strengthening skills, instincts, abilities, processes, and resources. It is a necessary component of growing the field of violence prevention, as well as building a strong foundation for individuals and organizations to successfully and effectively design, plan, implement, and evaluate their prevention efforts (*Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2024*). In a study carried out by Mogstad in the South African township of Khayelitsha, it was revealed that it was not the inability of police to assist victims of domestic violence, the institutional failures, or the lack of training that caused challenges in the reporting of domestic violence cases. Rather, most victims did not report cases due to the norms and values held by the community members. While the authors were not quick to dismiss the need for training, knowledge and resources by the police staff were needed (*Kholofelo & Tirivangasi, 2022*). This is also one of the many ways through which domestic violence can be solved. *United Nations Volunteers (UNV, 2023)* reported that national UN Volunteers Fidelia Mendonca and Rogerio Lopes conducted prevention training in three target municipalities in Timor-Leste, reaching 60 remote villages. Their work focused on raising awareness of domestic violence legislation, access to justice, and gender-based violence prevention, thereby strengthening community capacity to prevent violence against women and girls. In 2022, they carried out a socialization campaign on the Law against Domestic Violence and access to formal justice systems in 40 villages within the target municipalities. In the process, they mainly educated people on what steps to take when experiencing any form of violence in their community. More than 2,100 participants, including Village Council Structures, Community Police, and the community,

reported cases of domestic violence that had not been revealed before, allowing victims to get justice.

Countries should make efforts now to strengthen laws and protections against domestic violence. Strong laws are critical to deterring violence against women, protecting victims of domestic violence, and promoting women's participation in the workforce. The main law aimed at preventing and combating domestic violence in Uganda is the Domestic Violence Act. That Act was enacted because the existing laws were not adequate in preventing and combating domestic violence. In drafting the Bill, the relevant parliamentary committee analyzed pieces of legislation on domestic violence from countries such as the United Kingdom, Botswana, Rwanda, Ghana, Namibia, and Seychelles. The legislators were very clear that the enactment of the law on domestic violence would not by itself bring an end to domestic violence. Other measures, such as sensitizing the public against domestic violence, had to be adopted. The legislators were in agreement that, in giving orders in domestic violence cases, 'we should be interested in keeping the families together, in spite of domestic violence' (Mujuzi, 2014).

Violence against women is a plague that can be fought through education. As the 16 Days of Activism against Domestic Violence Campaign rightly focuses on girls' education, let us all work together in the creation of better societies and raise awareness that domestic violence and education disparities are disproportionately targeting and affecting girls/women. Education, thus, is fundamental to the development of both aspirations and skills: an educated girl is more capable of managing property and her finances and has a higher chance of having access to credit. (World Bank, 2015).

2.4. Emerging Gaps in the Literature on Domestic Violence and Women's Livelihoods

While significant progress has been made in understanding the causes, effects, and solutions to domestic violence, there are still emerging gaps in the literature, particularly when examining the intersection between domestic violence and women's livelihoods. These gaps highlight areas where further research, policy development, and intervention are needed. A large portion of the existing literature focuses on urban settings, while there is a lack of in-depth research on how domestic violence affects women's livelihoods in rural and peri-urban areas, particularly in African contexts. For instance, studies in rural Uganda and other Sub-Saharan African regions are limited. As women in rural areas often face unique socio-cultural and economic challenges, including limited access to resources, education, and economic opportunities, further research is needed to understand how these factors intersect with domestic violence to influence women's livelihoods (Ali & Hossain, 2018). Understanding these dynamics can lead to more tailored interventions that are sensitive to the needs of rural women. Much of the existing literature tends to focus on formal employment sectors and the direct impact of domestic violence on women's ability to work in these areas. However,

there is limited research examining the effects of domestic violence on women's economic participation in informal sectors such as agriculture, petty trading, and domestic labor. In many low-income and developing countries, women predominantly work in the informal economy, where their working conditions are less regulated and more vulnerable to the effects of domestic violence. More studies are needed to explore how domestic violence affects women's engagement in these informal sectors and how interventions could promote their economic security in this context (Campbell et al., 2008). While domestic violence is widely researched as a form of intimate partner violence, there is a gap in the literature regarding the intersection of domestic violence and other forms of gender-based violence (GBV), such as sexual harassment, trafficking, and female genital mutilation. These intersecting forms of violence may exacerbate the effects of domestic violence, further diminishing women's ability to participate in the labor market and undermining their economic independence. Understanding the cumulative effects of multiple forms of violence on women's livelihoods is an emerging area that requires further exploration (Heise et al., 2019). While there is significant research on interventions to address domestic violence in high-income countries, there is a gap in studies focusing on the effectiveness of such interventions in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs), particularly in African contexts. The effectiveness of microfinance, vocational training, legal aid, and social protection programs needs to be explored in areas with limited resources. More research is required to determine whether these interventions can be successfully adapted and implemented in resource-constrained environments and whether they yield the desired outcomes for women's economic empowerment (Eggers del Campo & Steinert, 2022). There is a lack of longitudinal studies that track the long-term effects of domestic violence on women's livelihoods over time. Most existing research tends to focus on short-term impacts, which may overlook the sustained economic repercussions of domestic violence, such as long-term unemployment, chronic health conditions, and financial instability. Longitudinal studies could provide insights into how domestic violence affects women's livelihoods in the long run and how interventions could be designed to offer ongoing support (Chamberlain, 2018). While community-based support systems have been identified as an important component of addressing domestic violence, the specific role they play in enhancing women's livelihoods has not been extensively explored. More research is needed to understand how community support networks, including women's groups, local NGOs, and religious organizations, can help women regain their economic independence post-violence. Investigating the factors that make these community-based programs successful or ineffective could provide valuable insights into how they can be strengthened to better promote economic security for survivors (Kishor & Johnson, 2004). Cultural and societal norms play a significant role in shaping women's experiences with domestic violence and their economic independence. However, there is a gap in the literature regarding how cultural attitudes toward domestic violence and gender roles influ-

ence women's ability to escape abuse and secure livelihoods. In many cultures, traditional gender roles may dictate that women remain in abusive relationships due to social expectations or economic dependency. Further research on how cultural norms shape women's decision-making and their ability to escape violence and pursue economic independence is critical to designing culturally relevant solutions (Jewkes, 2002). The link between domestic violence and women's health is well established, but less research has been conducted on how health outcomes resulting from domestic violence influence women's economic livelihoods. Physical and mental health issues stemming from abuse, such as chronic pain, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), can undermine a woman's ability to engage in economic activities. Exploring the direct economic consequences of health issues related to domestic violence is crucial to understanding how these conditions affect women's ability to sustain livelihoods (Campbell, 2002).

3. Methodology

This section presents the research design, area of study, study population, sampling techniques, sample size, sources of data, methods of data collection, data collection tools/instruments, data processing, data analysis techniques and presentation, and the limitations and delimitations of the study.

3.1. Research Design

The study used a cross-sectional research design in determining the effects of domestic violence on the livelihoods of women in Arocha Division, Apac Municipal Council. The approach was mixed, where quantitative and qualitative approaches were adopted.

3.2. Area of Study

The study was conducted in Arocha Division, Apac Municipal Council, Northern Uganda. Arocha Division is one of the four divisions in Apac Municipal Council. It is bordered by Chegere Sub County to the north, Ibuje Sub County to the west, Akere Division to the south, and Apac Sub County to the east.

3.3. Study Population

The study population comprised 80 respondents who constituted the general population of the households that are being investigated. The target population of 80 were women aged 18 - 45 years, and the category of women were married, divorced, and widowed.

3.4. Sampling Techniques

The researcher used both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The researcher used simple random sampling to select those to participate in the study. Simple random sampling is a probability sampling method where the researcher randomly chooses participants from a population. The researcher writes

1 and 2 on a piece of paper, and respondents were allowed to pick randomly; only the participants who picked number 1 were selected to participate in the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The purposive sampling technique was applied to select the samples based purely on the researcher's knowledge of the topic under investigation.

3.5. Sample Size

The sample size (Table 3) for this study was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for sample size determination. Given a total population (NNN) of 80, the appropriate sample size (SSS) was identified as 74, ensuring sufficient representation of the study population. To enhance the representativeness of the sample, a stratified random sampling approach was used. The population was categorized into three distinct groups: married, divorced, and widowed women, to capture the diversity of experiences within the broader female population in Arocha Division. The proportionate allocation of respondents from each category, as shown in Table 1, ensured that no group was underrepresented, thereby improving the validity and generalizability of the findings. Additionally, while the study focuses on Arocha Division, the selection process aimed to reflect broader trends among women in Uganda by considering key demographic and socio-economic characteristics that are relevant nationwide.

Table 3. Sample size.

Status	Population (N)	Study Sample (S)
Married	40	36
Divorced	20	19
Widowed	20	19
Total	80	74

Source: Primary data, 2024.

This stratified sampling approach minimized selection bias and ensured that the sample accurately reflected the composition of the study population.

3.6. Sources of Data

The sources of data are physical or digital places where information is stored in a data table, data object, or some other storage format. In this study, the researcher used data from both primary and secondary sources.

Primary Sources

Here, primary data were collected by the researcher directly from the main sources through interviews and questionnaires. The researcher carried out field visitations during the study, where the researcher collected data through engaging interviews with the respondents/participants and administering questionnaires.

Secondary Sources

These store secondary data. Secondary data are data that have already been collected and made readily available. These sources may include news articles, government and other institution publications, journals, books, and public sector records.

3.7. Methods of Data Collection and Instruments

During the study, both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection were used. Quantitative methods of data collection are methods used to collect numerical data that can be analysed using statistical methods. They measure variables and establish relationships between variables. Qualitative methods are used to collect non-numerical data. In this study, the researcher used both the questionnaire and interview as data collection methods.

Questionnaires

This consists of a set of questions presented to respondents to answer. The respondents read the questions, interpreted what was expected, and answered themselves. In this study, the researcher used closed-ended questions/restricted choice questions. Also, in this study, the researcher used the questionnaire guide as a data collection instrument to collect data from respondents.

Interview

An interview is a qualitative method of data collection. It is a formal conversation between two or more people, typically with one person, the interviewer, asking questions to obtain information. This involves face-to-face interactions with the respondents to obtain data and information. In the study, the researcher used an interview guide as a data collection instrument. This is a logical sequence of topics and questions that helps the researcher conduct an interview session.

3.8. Data Processing, Analysis, and Presentation

Data were edited, coded, measured, and tabulated. A quantitative method was used in the computation of percentages and totals. Tables were used to present and summarize data for easy interpretation and display of information. Data from questionnaires were coded using tallies and analyzed using statistical methods. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software, which is appropriate for running descriptive statistics. Tables were used to provide a clearer outlook on domestic violence in Arocha Division. Also, a qualitative method of data analysis was used. Data from interviews were classified into broad themes and categories, and closely examined and compared for similarities. The data were presented using percentages, frequencies, and tables. Quantitative data were corroborated with qualitative data to clearly explain the phenomenon of domestic violence and its effects on the livelihoods of women in Arocha Division.

3.9. Ethical Considerations and Research Procedure.

The study involved working with different categories of people in Arocha Divi-

sion. In order to obtain the cooperation of respondents, government agencies, and the surrounding community, permission was sought from the Municipal Town Clerk in whose area of jurisdiction the research was conducted. At the beginning of each data collection session, all respondents were briefed on the purpose of the study and assured that it was simply a fact-finding exercise whose findings would be used only to identify the forms of domestic violence, the causes of domestic violence, the effects of domestic violence, and the solutions to domestic violence. They were also informed that no one else would have access to the information until it was translated into a report. The respondents' consent to participate in the study was also sought, and they were guaranteed confidentiality during the study. Potential biases in self-reporting during interviews and questionnaires, particularly when discussing sensitive topics like domestic violence, were controlled by assuring participants that their responses would remain anonymous and confidential to reduce fear of repercussions. No personally identifiable information was recorded, ensuring respondents felt safe to provide honest answers. Instead of directly asking "Have you experienced domestic violence?" participants were asked indirect and less confrontational questions, such as *"In your community, what are the common causes of domestic violence?"* *"What challenges do women face in their relationships?"* This approach helped respondents feel less targeted and more comfortable sharing their perspectives. Questions were worded neutrally to avoid implying judgment. Instead of "Do you think women should tolerate abuse?" the question was framed as "What are the common beliefs about women staying in abusive relationships?" This allowed respondents to express views based on community norms rather than feeling pressured to give socially acceptable answers. Interviewers were trained in trauma-informed and non-judgmental approaches. Female respondents were interviewed by female researchers when necessary, to foster trust and comfort. Some participants were given the option to complete surveys privately, reducing interviewer influence and allowing them to provide more candid responses. Findings were cross-validated with focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs), and secondary data from local organizations. This helped confirm the accuracy of responses and identify any inconsistencies. Interviews were conducted in safe, private spaces to ensure respondents felt secure. Respondents were given the choice to stop or skip any question they found uncomfortable. The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Dean Faculty of Management Sciences; thereafter, the researcher proceeded to the field to collect data.

3.10. Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

The research faced the following challenges during the study:

Some respondents demanded payment before and after giving the researcher information. This problem was solved by explaining to the respondents the ethical issues involved during research.

Language barrier also posed a challenge in the process of collecting data, especially when the researcher met a respondent who did not know or understand English but rather preferred the local language, owing to the fact that the research documents, including the tools like questionnaire guide and interview guide, were written in English. The problem of language barrier was solved through translating the research tools like questionnaires and interview guides into the desired local language of a given respondent.

4. Data Analysis, Interpretation, and Presentations

This section presents data analysis and results within the framework of the specific objectives of the study. Data were analyzed in relation to the study objective, and the findings are presented as follows in a systematic manner. Section 4.1 presents the response rate, 4.2 background characteristics; Section 4.3 gives the descriptive statistics of the causes of domestic violence; Section 4.4 gives the descriptive statistics of the effects of domestic violence; and Section 4.5 presents the descriptive statistics of solutions to domestic violence.

4.1. Response Rate

Table 4. Response rate.

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	00	00
Female	68	100
Age Bracket		
18 - 25 years	08	11.8
26 - 30 years	22	32.4
31 - 35 years	10	14.7
36 - 40 years	18	29.3
41 - 46 years	08	11.8
Highest level of education		
Primary	14	20.6
Secondary	22	32.4
Tertiary	23	33.8
University	09	13.3
Marital status		
Married	36	52.9
Divorced	19	27.9
Widowed	13	19.2

The sample size of this study was 74 respondents. Out of the 74 questionnaires administered, only 68 were returned, giving a response rate of 87.2 percent. The response rate conforms to [Mugenda and Mugenda \(2003\)](#) stipulation that a response rate of 50 percent is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60 percent is good, while a response rate of 70 percent and over is excellent ([Table 4](#)).

4.2. Background Characteristics

The background information regarding gender, age, level of education, and marital status has been primarily collected for the purpose of this study. The information of the respondents is summarized in [Table 5](#).

Table 5. Background characteristics.

Variables	Mean	SD	1 - 2	3	4 - 5
Covid-19 pandemic caused domestic violence.	3.49	0.71	22 (32.4)	0 (0.0)	46 (67.6)
Religious aspects and influences through the teaching of men's superiority cause domestic violence.	4.31	0.46	39 (57.4)	18 (26.5)	11 (16.1)
Cultural factors and gender norms that are harmful to women.	3.69	1.27	14 (20.6)	03 (4.4)	51 (75.0)
Men as breadwinners at home cause.	3.60	1.11	07 (10.3)	0 (0.0)	61 (89.7)
Family issues, especially childlessness and male child syndrome, cause domestic violence.	3.61	1.29	02 (29.7)	00 (19.8)	66 (50.5)
Alcohol and drug abuse cause domestic violence.	4.10	0.54	01 (2.9)	00 (00)	67 (97.1)
Mass media activities and influences.	3.60	0.69	20 (29.4)	14 (20.6)	34 (50.0)
Poverty is a lack of basic necessities such as food, clothing, and shelter.	4.16	0.41	04 (5.9)	00 (00)	64 (94.1)
Legal factors such as discriminatory laws and lack of training of prosecutors and psychologists.	3.91	0.52	08 (11.8)	02 (2.9)	58 (85.3)
Political factors such as the lack of political interest in women's problems and domestic abuse in society.	3.32	0.88	21 (30.9)	09 (13.2)	38 (55.9)
Environmental factors, such as growing up in an abusive environment and experiencing domestic abuse, make someone more likely to be abusive toward their intimate partners.	3.86	0.61	10 (14.7)	05 (7.4)	53 (77.9)
Average	3.79	0.77	-	-	-

Source: Primary data, 2022.

As shown in [Table 4](#), the total number of respondents was 68, all of whom 68 (100%) were women. The study also revealed that the majority of the respondents were aged between 26 and 30 years ($n = 22$, 32.4%), followed by those within the age group of 31-35 years ($n = 18$, 29.3%).

The majority of respondents had tertiary education ($n = 23$, 33.8%), followed by secondary holders ($n = 22$, 32.4%), and the greatest proportion of the respondents were married ($n = 36$, 52.9%).

4.3. Causes of Domestic Violence in Arocha Division, Apac Municipal Council

In order to assess the causes of domestic violence, respondents were assessed on the items on causes of domestic violence using percentages, means, and standard deviation. The results are presented in **Table 6**.

Table 6. Causes of domestic violence.

1 - 2 (%)	Strongly disagree to disagree
3 (%)	Neither disagree nor agree
4 - 5 (%)	Agree to strongly agree

As shown in **Table 6**, 67.6% agreed that the Covid-19 pandemic caused domestic violence. This finding agrees with WHO (2020), who noted that the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis unfolds in the context of many pre-existing challenges, one of which is the domestic violence rooted in gendered dimensions of access to basic necessities in a world rife with gender inequality. The study compared domestic violence reports before and during the pandemic using historical data from local authorities, NGOs, and police records. Survey responses, where participants were asked about their experiences before COVID-19 (pre-2020) and during the pandemic (2020-2022), were analyzed. This helped establish whether there was a significant increase in domestic violence cases specifically linked to pandemic-related factors such as lockdowns and economic stress. Participants were asked what factors contributed to domestic violence in their households and whether they noticed any changes during the pandemic. Responses that explicitly mentioned lockdowns, job loss, food insecurity, and movement restrictions were categorized as pandemic-related drivers. Pre-existing cultural norms, gender roles, and financial dependence were analyzed separately to determine long-term drivers of domestic violence. Interviews with local leaders, police officers, and social workers provided insights into changes in reporting trends. If they reported a spike in domestic violence cases during the lockdown period followed by a decline as restrictions eased, this indicated a pandemic-related influence. If cases remained consistently high before and after the pandemic, it suggested long-standing systemic issues rather than COVID-specific effects. Reports from Uganda's Ministry of Gender, Labour, and Social Development, as well as NGOs addressing gender-based violence, were analyzed. Data from health centers, legal aid services, and community-based organizations helped cross-check the study findings. The study examined whether there were new groups of victims or different forms of domestic violence emerging during the pandemic. For example, if there was an increase in cases involving financial stress, increased alcohol abuse, or restricted move-

ment, these were flagged as pandemic-driven.

The study also revealed that 75% agreed that cultural factors and gender norms that are harmful to women cause domestic violence. This finding agrees with [Arisi and Oromareghake \(2011\)](#), who argue that patriarchal cultural practices often regard women as subordinate to men, thereby reinforcing gender inequality and exposing women to various forms of violence and discrimination. In Arocha Division, as in many parts of Uganda, society largely follows a patriarchal structure, where men are seen as the heads of households and primary decision-makers. This often leads to gender power imbalances, with women having limited autonomy over family and personal decisions. The expectation that women should be submissive to their husbands can result in the normalization of violence as a form of control or discipline. The tradition of bride price reinforces the perception that women are property of their husbands. In cases where a husband feels that his expectations (e.g., obedience, bearing children) are not met, domestic violence may be used as a means of exerting control. In some cases, a high bride price places financial pressure on men, leading to frustration and violence, especially if economic hardships arise. Women in Arocha Division may face severe social stigma if they seek separation from an abusive partner. This discourages reporting of domestic violence and forces women to stay in violent relationships. Elders and family members often encourage women to “endure” abuse for the sake of family stability. Women are expected to take on domestic roles, while men are the primary breadwinners. If a man experiences financial stress or fails to meet societal expectations, frustration may lead to violence. Women’s economic dependence on their husbands further limits their ability to escape abusive relationships.

In more urbanized areas, such as Kampala, education levels are higher, and exposure to women’s rights movements is greater. As a result, women may be more empowered to report domestic violence and seek legal redress. In rural settings like Arocha Division, traditional beliefs are more deeply ingrained, and access to legal or support systems is more limited, leading to higher tolerance for domestic violence. In some regions of Western Uganda, bride price is extremely high, making women’s return to their families difficult if a marriage fails. In contrast, in Arocha Division, cultural expectations around bride price are present but may not be as restrictive. In some regions, religious teachings strongly advocate against divorce, making it even harder for women to leave abusive relationships. Different ethnic groups have varied customs regarding marriage, inheritance, and gender roles, influencing the prevalence and nature of domestic violence. In central Uganda, there is greater access to NGOs, shelters, and legal aid for victims of domestic violence. In Arocha Division, limited access to such services means that many women endure abuse without seeking help.

According to the outcome of the study, 89.7% agreed that men as breadwinners at home cause domestic violence. This finding is consistent with studies indicating that patriarchal norms assign men the primary responsibility of providing for their families, and tensions arising from these gendered expectations may con-

tribute to conflict and intimate partner violence (Mshweshwe, 2020; Akanle & Nwaobiala, 2020). Similarly, 50.5% agreed that family issues, especially childlessness and male child syndrome, cause domestic violence. This result agrees with Sharma et al. (2017), who state that childlessness is an attribute of domestic violence. The reason why a woman might be treated so badly is because of the inability of the woman to bear children, which, culturally, is seen as a fault of the woman rather than the man, whereas the problem may be from both of them. The woman takes the whole blame for the childlessness of the couple. Relatedly, 97.1% agreed that alcohol and drug abuse cause domestic violence, 50% also agreed that mass media activities and influences cause domestic violence, 94.1% agreed that poverty causes domestic violence, and 85.3% agreed that legal factors such as discriminatory laws and lack of training of prosecutors and psychologists cause domestic violence. The finding also revealed that political factors such as lack of political interest in women's problems and domestic abuse in society lead to domestic violence, and 77.9% agreed that environmental factors such as growing up in an abusive environment and experiencing domestic abuse make someone more likely to be abusive toward their intimate partners. The study, however, revealed that 57.4% disagreed that religious aspects and influences through teaching of men's superiority cause domestic violence. The overall mean of 3.79 (SD=0.77) indicates that generally, most of the factors used to analyse the causes of poverty cause poverty. According to the interview held with the key informants, *"drinking alcohol, misunderstandings, poverty and cultural factors were some of the causes of domestic violence that emerged out. However, the form of domestic violence highlighted from the interview included physical and emotional violence"*.

4.4. Effects of Domestic Violence

In order to establish the effect of domestic violence on women's livelihoods, the respondents were assessed on the items related to the effects of domestic violence using percentages, means, and standard deviation. The results are presented in Table 7.

As shown in Table 7, 100% agreed that domestic violence causes physical effects such as lacerations, bruises, and broken bones. This result agrees with Efetie and Salami (2007), who also noted that victims of domestic violence may likely experience physical injuries like lacerations, bruises, broken bones, and head injuries. Similarly, 100.0% also agreed that domestic violence results in depression and self-destructive behaviours among women, and 89.7% agreed that domestic violence leads to financial insecurity/poverty. The study also indicated that 85.3% agreed that domestic violence leads to stigmatization such as social stigma and exclusion, and 75% agreed that domestic violence leads to pregnancy-related effects/death during pregnancy. This is supported by Ashimolowo and Otufale (2012), who noted that violence during pregnancy is associated with miscarriages, low birth weight, infant and maternal morbidity, and even foetal and maternal death. Similarly, 67.6% agreed that domestic violence affects women's participation in socio-economic activities, 67.4% supported that domestic violence leads to HIV/AIDS

infection among women, and 86.8% agreed that domestic violence leads to marginalisation and gender inequality of women. According to [Ashimolowo and Otu-fale \(2012\)](#), women's limited economic security may increase the likelihood of engaging in high-risk behaviour such as commercial sex work or transactional sex. The overall mean of 4.08 (SD = 0.89) indicates a high level of agreement among the respondents on the items used to assess the effect of domestic violence on women. According to the interview held with the key informants on the effect of domestic violence, poverty, lameness, dropout of children from school, hunger, and death were some of the common effects that emerged from the interview.

Table 7. Effect of domestic violence.

Variables	Mean	SD	1 - 2	3	4 - 5
Domestic violence causes physical effects such as lacerations, bruises, and broken bones.	5.00	1.51	00 (0.0)	00 (0.0)	68 (100)
Domestic violence results in depression and self-destructive behaviours among women.	5.00	0.30	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	100 (100.0)
Domestic violence leads to financial insecurity/poverty.	3.80	0.60	07 (10.3)	00 (0.0)	61 (89.7)
Domestic violence leads to stigmatization such as social stigma and exclusion.	3.50	1.50	10 (14.7)	00 (0.0)	58 (85.3)
Domestic violence leads to pregnancy-related effects/death during pregnancy.	4.11	1.14	13 (19.1)	04 (5.9)	51 (75.0)
Domestic violence affects women's participation in socio-economic activities.	4.50	0.92	13 (19.1)	09 (13.3)	46 (67.6)
Domestic violence leads to HIV/AIDS infection among women.	3.51	0.62	15 (22.1)	09 (13.2)	44 (64.7)
Domestic violence leads to marginalisation and gender inequality of women.	3.82	0.51	06 (8.8)	03 (4.4)	59 (86.8)
Average	4.08	0.89			

1 - 2 (%): Strongly disagree to disagree; 3 (%): Neither disagree nor agree; *4 - 5 (%): Agree to strongly agree.

4.5. Solution to Domestic Violence

In order to assess solutions to domestic violence, respondents were assessed on the items on solutions to domestic violence using percentages, means, and standard deviation. The results are presented in [Table 8](#).

As shown in [Table 8](#), 55.9% agreed that the empowerment of women against domestic violence is a solution to domestic violence. This finding agrees with [Soliman \(2016\)](#), who noted that empowerment-based nursing intervention reduces long-term physical, psychological, and emotional trauma, improves safety planning for the abusive situation, and increases awareness and knowledge of the issue within communities.

To assess whether education and training programs effectively reduce domestic

Table 8. Solution to domestic violence.

Variables	Mean	SD	1 - 2	3	4 - 5
Empowerment of women against domestic violence is a solution to domestic violence.	3.49	0.90	16 (23.5)	14 (20.6)	38 (55.9)
Harsher punishments for offenders solve domestic violence.	3.79	0.58	12 (17.6)	00 (0.0)	56 (82.4)
Access to comprehensive and well-coordinated domestic violence response services solves domestic violence.	3.90	0.49	15 (22.1)	09 (13.2)	44 (64.7)
Capacity building/training of police and authorities so that they intervene in a survivor-centered way to solve domestic violence	4.26	0.21	06 (8.8)	00 (0.0)	62 (91.2)
Community awareness-raising on Domestic Violence solves the vice.	5.00	0.00	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	100 (100.0)
Strengthening laws and protection against domestic violence solves domestic violence.	3.91	0.53	06 (8.8)	00 (0.0)	62 (91.2)
Improving Education Opportunities for Girls/Women solves the problem of Domestic Violence	4.21	0.44	17 (25)	09 (13.2)	42 (61.8)
Average	4.08	0.45			

1 - 2 (%): Strongly disagree to disagree; 3 (%): Neither disagree nor agree; *4 - 5 (%): Agree to strongly.

violence in Arocha Division, this study employed a multi-method evaluation approach using both quantitative and qualitative measures. The effectiveness of these initiatives was evaluated based on changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors over time. A baseline survey was conducted before the training, in which participants completed structured questionnaires assessing their knowledge of domestic violence laws, gender equality, and available support services before the intervention. The same survey was administered to measure changes in knowledge, attitudes, and self-reported experiences. Local police and community reports on domestic violence cases were compared before and after the intervention. The number of women seeking support services (e.g., legal aid, shelters, community counseling) was tracked before and after empowerment initiatives. Employment rates among trained women were monitored before and after empowerment programs. Focus group discussions (FGDs) with men and women were conducted to assess shifts in attitudes toward domestic violence and gender roles. Community perception surveys were used to measure changes in public acceptance of domestic violence.

82.4% agreed that harsher punishments for offenders solve domestic violence. The result similarly concurs with Soliman (2016), who revealed that appropriate punitive actions should be taken against offenders. The study also indicated that

64.7% agreed that access to comprehensive and well-coordinated domestic violence response services solves domestic violence. This result agrees with the [Inter-Agency Standing Committee \(IASC\) \(2015\)](#) and [UNFPA \(2019\)](#), which indicated that increasing access to comprehensive and well-coordinated domestic violence response services, including livelihood support for survivors, helps to handle cases of domestic violence. Relatedly, 91.2% agreed that capacity building/training of police and authorities so that they intervene in a survivor-centred way solves domestic violence. This result agrees with the [Delaware Coalition Against Domestic Violence \(2024\)](#), which indicated that capacity building is a necessary component of growing the field of violence prevention, as well as building a strong foundation for individuals and organizations to successfully and effectively design, plan, implement, and evaluate their prevention efforts. The study also revealed that 100% agreed that community awareness-raising on domestic violence solves the vice. This result concurs with [Mujuzi \(2014\)](#), who noted that sensitizing the public against domestic violence had to be adopted as a measure to fight domestic violence.

In order to strengthen the recommendations on community-based solutions for addressing domestic violence in Arocha Division, this study draws on successful case studies and best practices from other regions that have effectively implemented community-driven approaches. These examples provide a practical framework for how such solutions could be tailored and applied in Arocha Division. In Kenya, Community-Based Sensitization and Awareness Programs, for example the “MenEngage Alliance”, work with local communities to challenge gender norms and patriarchal practices that perpetuate violence against women. The program involves both men and women in dialogues that focus on healthy relationships, shared responsibilities, and the prevention of gender-based violence. The initiative uses community radio, group discussions, and theater performances to engage people at the grassroots level, fostering awareness of domestic violence and creating platforms for victims to safely report and seek help. Men and women in participating communities reported increased awareness of domestic violence, and many male participants became advocates for women’s rights and family health. A similar approach could be used in Arocha Division to engage community members, especially men, in understanding and changing harmful gender norms. In Uganda, Local Women’s Empowerment Programs, through the “Legal Literacy” Program in Northern Uganda, provided legal literacy training to women in rural areas, particularly focusing on domestic violence laws, inheritance rights, and access to justice. The program used community-based workshops led by trained paralegals to teach women about their legal rights, provide emotional support, and connect them to legal services. Women were also trained in financial literacy, helping them to become more economically independent, thus reducing their vulnerability to domestic violence. As a result, there was an increase in women seeking legal recourse in cases of domestic violence and a reduction in incidents of violence due to greater awareness of

legal protections. A similar legal literacy program could be implemented in Arocha Division, focusing on empowering women through knowledge of their rights and providing avenues for support and justice. In South Africa, Community Policing and Collaborative Law Enforcement involve local communities working together with police officers to address crime, including domestic violence. It fosters a collaborative relationship between law enforcement and community members, allowing for more community-driven responses to domestic violence incidents. Community Policy Forums (CPFs) hold regular meetings to discuss crime trends, share information, and organize community patrols to address security concerns. In the case of domestic violence, the CPFs help identify victims, provide support, and connect them with relevant resources (e.g., shelters, counseling). The program led to increased trust between the community and police, and as a result, more domestic violence cases were reported and properly addressed by authorities. A similar community-policing approach could be adopted in Arocha Division, where local leaders and law enforcement agencies collaborate to reduce domestic violence and offer immediate support to victims.

Accordingly, 91.2% supported that strengthening laws and protection against domestic violence solves domestic violence. This result is in agreement with [United Nations Volunteers \(2023\)](#), which indicated that countries should take efforts now to strengthen laws and protections against domestic violence. Lastly, the study revealed that 61.8% agreed that improving education opportunities for girls/women solves the problem of domestic violence. According to the [World Bank \(2015\)](#), violence against women is a plague that can be fought through education. Generally, the overall mean of 4.08 (SD=0.45) indicates that the respondents were generally in support of the items used to determine the solutions to domestic violence. The key informants were also interviewed on some of the possible solutions to domestic violence and, according to their views, domestic violence can be handled through sensitisation of the local community, strengthening laws on domestic violence, prosecuting the offenders of domestic violence, and controlling the level of intake of alcohol.

5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter consists of three sections, which are: summary, conclusion, and recommendations of the study respectively. The first section provides a summary of the important elements of the study, including the objectives of the study, methodology, and the findings. The second part contains the conclusions based on the specific objectives, and this is done by making use of the findings and results that were obtained in the previous chapter, that is, chapter four. The last sub-section provides the recommendations on the effect of domestic violence, which are indeed based on the specific objective as well as recommendations for further studies.

5.1. Summary

5.1.1. Causes of Domestic Violence against Women

The results of descriptive statistics on the causes of domestic violence revealed that Covid-19 Pandemic, cultural factors, men as breadwinners, family issues, mass media activities, poverty, legal factors, political factors, and environmental factors are some of the causes of domestic violence among women in Arocha division.

5.1.2. Effects of Domestic Violence on Women in Arocha Division, Apac Municipal Council

The results of descriptive statistics on the effect of domestic violence revealed that physical effects, depression and self-destructive behaviours, financial insecurity/poverty, stigmatization, pregnancy-related effects/death during pregnancy, hindering participation in socio-economic activities, HIV/AIDS infection, and marginalisation and gender inequality are some of the effects of domestic violence among women in Arocha division.

5.1.3. Solutions to Domestic Violence against Women

The results of descriptive statistics on the solution to domestic violence revealed that the empowerment of women, harsher punishments, capacity building/training of police and authorities, community awareness-raising, strengthening laws and protection against domestic violence, and improving education opportunities for girls/women are some of the solutions to domestic violence that emerged from the study.

5.2. Conclusion

The study also concluded that the Covid-19 Pandemic, cultural factors, men as breadwinners, family issues, mass media activities, poverty, legal factors, political factors, and environmental factors are the causes of domestic violence among women in Arocha Division in Apac Municipality. Physical effects, depression and self-destructive behaviours, financial insecurity/poverty, stigmatization, pregnancy-related effects/death during pregnancy, hindering participation in socio-economic activities, HIV/AIDS infection, and marginalisation and gender inequality were some of the effects of domestic violence on women in Arocha Division in Apac Municipality. Empowerment of women, harsher punishments, capacity building/training of police and authorities, community awareness-raising, strengthening laws and protection against domestic violence, and improving educational opportunities for girls/women can help to solve the problem of domestic violence among women.

5.3. Recommendations

The Local Government of Apac Municipality should empower women through training as a way to combat the problem of domestic violence among women.

The local leaders should create awareness in their community about the dangers

that domestic violence brings to the community.

Law enforcers, like the police, should enforce the relevant domestic violence laws on the culprits of domestic violence in the community.

The government should initiate income-generating projects that target women at the grassroots level so as to enhance their capacity to provide for their families rather than waiting for their husbands.

5.4. Recommendations for Further Research

Future studies should be conducted on the role of local leaders in combating domestic violence in the community.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

COVID	Coronavirus Disease
DV	Domestic Violence
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UN	United Nations
W.H.O	World Health Organization
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CRSV	Conflict-related Sexual Violence
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UDHS	Uganda Demographic and Health Survey
WB	World Bank
CEDAW	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women