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Impact of Intimate Partner Violence on the Performance of Police Officers in Uganda

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Abstract

The study investigates intimate partner violence (IPV) among police spouses in Uganda, focusing on both police-to-police and police-to-civilian relationships within police barracks. It explores the nature, prevalence, causes, and impacts of IPV on the performance of police partners at work. Using a mixed-method approach including surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, the study reveals extremely high rates of IPV in Nsambya and Masindi police barracks, negatively affecting the efficacy of officers. Despite education and economic opportunities, younger female officers are at higher risk, influenced by cultural norms and conflict settings. IPV manifests in various forms including physical, sexual, and economic violence, and even cyber-stalking post-relationship. Limited access to resources and education exacerbates the situation, impacting job performance. To address this issue, the study suggests implementing and enforcing specific laws, providing free counseling services, adjusting deployment policies to consider family ties, improving remuneration, and supporting spouses financially. Additionally, it recommends enhancing healthcare services in police barracks and calls for further research to inform policy-making.

Keywords: *Intimate Partner Violence, Uganda Police Force, Police Officer*

Introduction

Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) poses a significant challenge within law enforcement communities worldwide, and Uganda is no exception. In recent years, attention has increasingly turned towards understanding the impact of IPV on the performance of police officers, particularly in a context where such violence occurs among individuals within the same profession and the confines of police barracks. According to Mitchell (2016), Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is a form of domestic violence by a current or former spouse or partner in an intimate relationship against the other spouse or partner. In addition, the World Health Organization, (2012) defines Intimate Partner Violence as any behaviour within an intimate relationship that may lead to psychological, physical, economic and/or sexual mischief in a relationship inclusive of acts tending to physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological mistreatment, economic abuse and controlling behaviour.

The National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (2021) defines Intimate Partner Violence as abuse or aggression that occurs in a romantic relationship. This refers to both current and former spouses and dating partners. The vice varies in how often it happens and the level of severity. This ranges from one episode of violence that has lasting impact to chronic and severe episodes over years. A uniform definition derived from Breiding MJ (2015) states that Intimate Partner Violence refers to physical violence, sexual violence, stalking and psychological aggression inclusive of coercive tactics by a current or former intimate partner such as a spouse, boyfriend/girlfriend, dating partner or sexual partner. This issue is of paramount importance as it affects the well-being of individuals and families and has profound implications for the effectiveness and efficiency of law enforcement agencies. Against this backdrop, this paper delves into the specific dynamics of IPV among police officers in Uganda, examining its prevalence, forms, underlying causes, and most critically, its repercussions on the job performance of those tasked with upholding law and order.

Forms Of IPV Among Police Families

IPV takes the form of Physical, Sexual, Psychological and Economic violence. According to Breiding (2015), *Physical Violence* refers to the intentional use of physical force with the potential for culminating into injury, harm, disability and/or death. This is manifested through acts such as scratching, pushing, shoving, and slapping, among others. This form of IPV also encompasses coercing another to commit or aid in the perpetration of the above-mentioned acts.

Secondly, *Sexual Violence* is defined by Breiding (2015) as unwanted sexual advances or acts committed or attempted by one person towards another without the consent[1] of the latter. This is manifested through rape, defilement, body shaming, sharing of intimate images or experiences, forced prostitution, forced abortion, female genital mutilation and performances or acts that compromise the integrity of one's sexual and reproductive health.

Thirdly, *Psychological Violence* is defined as any acts of aggression that compromise

1 Words or overt actions by a person who is legally or functionally competent to give informed approval, indicating a freely given agreement to have sexual intercourse or sexual contact

the mental soundness of one by another. According to Dokkedahl (2019), this form of IPV can also refer to any behaviour which causes psychological harm to the partner or former partner. It can be manifested into two major types i.e., emotional abuse and controlling behavior. Emotional abuse refers to insults, belittling, constant humiliation, intimidation, threats of harm. Controlling behaviour refers to isolating a partner from their social groups such as family and friends, monitoring/tracking movements, restricting access to resources, employment, education, medical care, and recreation, among others. It is on this basis that the European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE) argues that psychological violence is better understood from a perspective of caused harm.

Lastly, the EIGE defines *Economic abuse/violence* as an act or behaviour that instigates financial stress, loss, or manipulation to an individual by another. This may be manifested in forms such economic negligence, damage of property, restriction of access to a source of livelihood, failure to provide, denial to work/employment, among others (EIGE, 2022).

Intimate partner violence is globally acknowledged as a basic human rights violation and a fundamental obstacle to the achievement of gender equality. It exists in all races, genders, social economic classes, ages, religious affiliations, and environmental backgrounds (Dobash & Dobash, 2012).

Violence between intimate partners includes women's attacks on men as well as men's attacks on women, although women are by far the majority of the victims and are more likely to be injured (Johnson & Ferraro, 2000; Blackwell, 2009). It is worth noting that although gender violence is usually perpetrated more by men on women, it is not a universal feature of male behaviour. The majority are not involved in perpetrating violence against women and may seek to intervene to protect women as well as other men from gender violence (Engel, 2009).

According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN), a Victim of IPV is one who has recently been affected by the crime; on the other hand, a survivor is one who has successfully gone through the healing process and recovered from the physical, emotional, economic, and psychological wounds caused by the incident. In psychotherapy, the term survivor is used more often, as it is a better expression of empathy with the affected person.

It is imperative to note that both men and women are victims/survivors and perpetrators of IPV. Though one gender is depicted to be of more powerful than the other, the current change in social norms and gender roles has proven that both genders can fall victim of IPV.

In abusive relationships, violence arises out of the need for power and control of one of the partners over the other. The abuser will employ various tactics of abuse such as physical, verbal, emotional, sexual, or financial in order to establish and maintain control over the partner (Azumar, 2017). Men usually use violence to establish power hierarchies. The batterer often wants to show the woman that he is in control or may want to prove to other men that he controls her (Engle, 2009). Abusers' efforts to dominate their partners have been attributed to low self-esteem or feelings of inadequacy, the stress of poverty, hostility, and resentment toward women (misogyny), resentment and hostility toward men (misandry), personality

disorders, genetic tendencies, social cultural influences, and unresolved childhood conflicts, among other factors (Azumar, 2017).

Intimate partner violence must be understood within wider contexts of power and meaning. It is critical to understand that violence between individuals is a dimension of violence by states, communities, and institutions, and that those who routinely use violence in their lives, such as police and soldiers, tend to use it interpersonally as well (Blackwell, 2009). Lindsey (2009) found that the same police who were responding to domestic abuse disputes and keeping victims safe were ignored as perpetrators, yet some were themselves "batterers with a badge".

These findings agree with those of Blackwell (2009) who asserts that police and military in the USA use violence against their partners at far higher levels than in general population. The women's movement of the 1970s spurred research on violence against women, but little attention was paid to the family lives of officers who were called to intervene in family disputes (Johnson, 2005). Literature indicates that IPV is two to four times more common in police families than in other families. At least 40% of police families will experience IPV compared to 10% of American families in the general population (Breiding, 2015). These studies were, however, conducted in the USA.

IPV is a health, legal, education, economic, development and a human rights issue. IPV is a global epidemic that kills, tortures, and maims physically, psychologically, sexually, and economically. It denies the victims security, dignity, equality, and self-worth (Kamusiime, 2009).

On the side of the women, IPV has been linked with unintended pregnancy, miscarriage, still birth, intrauterine haemorrhage, nutritional deficiency, abdominal pain as well as non-communicable diseases such as hypertension, cancer, and cardiovascular diseases. Survivors are at a higher risk of getting addicted to alcohol, drugs, and contracting HIV/AIDS or other STIs due to forced intercourse or prolonged exposure to stress (National Coalition against Domestic Violence, 2015).

Before 1970, intimate partner violence was a problem that had no name; it was invisible and raised little public concern until it was named and publicized by feminists through the women's movements. Intimate partner violence was simply looked at as an unfortunate event, the outburst of an out-of-control husband or a response to a nagging wife, and men believed it was their right as men to beat wives who disobeyed them (Root, Wittner & Blakely, 2009). Violence within marriage is historically linked to a legal definition of the family that made it acceptable for a man to exercise his authority over his wife by beating her. From ancient Greece and Rome to Europe in the Middle Ages, men could beat or kill their spouses with impunity.

As late as the 19th century, British law books stated that the husband could exercise his power and domination over his wife by beating her, although the beating was not to be cruel and violent (Lips, 2005). However, this raises a question as to whether there is any form of beating that is not violent since IPV ranges from pushing, scratching, grabbing to use of a gun.

Moreover, by allowing a man to beat his wife, the law had given more powers to men, thus promoting inequalities between husbands and wives, which fuels violence.

Having one or more guns in the home puts a woman at a higher risk and makes her 7.1 times more likely to be murdered by her husband (Breiding, 2015). Female victims of IPV in police families may fear to report the abuse because the abuser has access to a weapon. Firearms are used to control, terrorize and intimidate victims and survivors of intimate partner violence (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, 2016).

This situation makes female victims of IPV in police families uniquely vulnerable to abuse and it constrains their access to justice. The researcher intends to examine the IPV survivors' experiences in police families, in a Ugandan context and establish how this impacts on their work performance plus recommend ways of how they can access justice.

Nature of Intimate Partner Relationships in the Nsambya and Masindi Barracks

The study paid particular attention to key concepts such as the Victim Vs Perpetrator, Gender, and level of education, employment status, and designation, level of responsibility and work, Police officers' rank, Intimate Partner Relationship status, Partners' designation, Partners' level of responsibility at work, Partners' rank, Relationship status and duration, residence. This information provides an overview of the foundations of the sample space that may determine the possibility of being a victim or perpetrator of the IPV. It further examined the extent to which the persons in the barracks are indeed aware of the vice, as discussed below.

It is important to note that 57% of the respondents were male and 43% female. Eighty per cent (80%) of respondents were aged 30 and above; 11% of the respondents were aged 25-29; 8% of the respondents were aged 20-24; and only 1% of the respondents were aged 10-14. This is supported by the police manpower strength audit conducted in 2022 which indicated that the male police officers totalled 37,066 against a total number of 8,929 female police officers. This indicates that male police officers are more than the females in Uganda Police Force.

The majority of the respondents were educated, represented by 46% who had a UCE qualification, 38% with a UACE qualification, 12% with Bachelor's degree, 2% with PLE qualification and only 2% with a Master's degree. The majority of the respondents were employed: 87.8% by an organization or business, 6.7% were unemployed and only 5.6% were self-employed. Over eighty-one per cent (81.1%) of the respondents were Police officers and 18.9% were employed as civilians.

The nature of intimate relationship was also a matter of investigation. Seventy per cent (70.0%) of the respondents were married, 5.6% were cohabiting, 7.8% were single, 5.6% were dating, 5.6% were divorced, 4.4% were separated and only 1% were in complicated relationships that could not fall anywhere.

The duration of these relationships was also a matter of discussion: 61.1% of the relationships had lasted between 4 and 5 years; 13.3% of these had lasted between 2 and 3 years; 10.0% of these relationships had lasted between 3 and 4 years; 8.9% had lasted 1-2

years and 5.6% had lasted less than 6 months. Fifty-six per cent (56%) of the respondents were residing in the barracks with their partners while 44% of them were residing separately from their partners. Sixty-four per cent (64%) of the respondents had their partners residing constantly in the barracks while 26% resided outside the barracks. Hence this means all were existing relationships.

For those employed as civilians, 40.0% were at low management level, 33.3% were at middle management level, 17.8% of these were at entry level and only 4.4% were at senior management level. For those employed as Police Officers, 70.0% were categorized under other ranks, 18.9% were non-gazetted officers, only 5% were gazetted officers.

Ranks in the Uganda Police Force are structured, the highest being the Inspector General of Police and lowest being special police constable. Classification is in four categories namely: senior officers above the rank of Assistant Superintendent of Police (gazetted officers), inspectors and assistant inspectors (inspectorates/commissioned), sergeants and corporals (non-commissioned officers) and the fourth category of constables and special constables (officers of other ranks). This structure stipulates the roles and duties of each officer.

The statistics above provided an overview of the construction of relationships in the barracks. Based on this, it was observed that most of the respondents were aged 30 years and above. These were mostly male by gender, held a UCE qualification, were employed as Police officers in lower management positions categorized under other ranks (constables and special constable) and were married.

Their partners were employed by civilians at low and middle management roles. For those with Police partners, the majority were categorized under other ranks; their relationships had lasted between 4 and 5 years; resided within the barracks together with their partners. This qualifies the definition of Intimate Partner Violence as an act or pattern of acts that necessitate an intimate relationship for the crime to occur.

The above analysis also shows key aspects of relationship that formulate the nature of IPV factors such as presence of two different gender identities, age of partners, level of education. Employment status, designation at the workplace, level of responsibility at work, Police officer's rank, status of the Intimate relationship, designation of the partner, partner's level of responsibility at work, partner's rank (in case of police partners), residence, whether partners reside in the same premises. Being a representation of the status in both rural and urban settings, it is safe to say that it is representative of the composition of Intimate Partner Relationship. This reaffirms Wong's (2014) definition of an Intimate Relationship as an interpersonal relationship that involves emotional and physical intimacy.

It is important to note that the frequency or existence of sexual activity was not examined but this does not affect the social construction of the relationship as quoted by Ribbens (2012), its common understanding for an Intimate Relationship to be considered commonly as a sexual relationship, but the absence of such intercourse might not necessarily nullify its existence, as reaffirmed by Verone (2013).

The aspects of the individual Intimate Partners and those commonly shared by the partners in the relationship provide an understanding of the intimacy between them and factors that contribute to the nature of the intimacy. As discussed by Mashek (2004), the composition and depth of intimacy varies within and between relationships. Anthropological studies indicate that intimacy is the ultimate product of successful seduction.

This is a vital process that involves building of rapport, which triggers potential partners to confidently disclose confined thoughts and feelings within and between each other. This process is affected by key concepts examined by the study such as level of education, employment and its associated concepts, among others, these aspects are a key basis for intimate conversations which become the foundation for "confidences", also referred to as secret knowledge, that create a bond between people, as discussed by Moore (1985).

Residing together or constant contact between intimate partners contributes to the longevity of a relationship. Nurturing intimacy for a long period of time involves well-developed emotional and interpersonal awareness. It calls for the competence to be both separate and together as participants in a relationship. This is affirmed by Murray Bowen who referred to this as "self-differentiation" which leads to a connection that involves as range of robust conflict and intense loyalty (Aronon, 2003).

Changes in factors that contribute to self-differentiation lead to imbalance in robust conflict and intense loyalty. This imbalance can create a situation where an intimate relationship thrives on intense loyalty with minimal conflict. On the other hand, a relationship can experience robust conflict with minimal loyalty. This variation contributes to the occurrence and forms of Intimate Partner Violence. Thirty-five (35) respondents interviewed were aware of the occurrence and magnitude of intimate partner violence in the barracks out of whom 28 strongly agreed that indeed intimate partner violence exists in the barracks. How this vice manifests itself in the barracks is discussed below.

Physical violence

Twenty-six (26) respondents strongly disagreed to have ever been beaten or physically assaulted by their intimate partner. Fifteen (15) respondents decided not to disclose whether they had ever been beaten or physically assaulted by their partners. Eleven (11) of the respondents strongly agreed to have been beaten and/or physically assaulted by their partners. A minority of 8 respondents strongly agreed to have ever beaten and/or physically assaulted their partners while a majority of 28 respondents strongly disagreed to having ever beaten and physically assaulted their partners. This statistic indicated an occurrence of physical violence among intimate partners in the police and as well concealing IPV as the 15 respondents failed to disclose.

A respondent from Masindi was quoted saying:

> *"One day I checked my husband's phone and that's the day violence erupted. I uncovered a lot of other relationships my husband was involved in. When I asked him, he instead out of shame beat me for checking his phone. When I went to work my colleagues laughed at me because I had bruises, I felt ashamed."*

Another respondent from Nsambya was quoted saying:

> *"My husband drinks and he got another woman in his group. This woman always came home saying she is a friend and even would propose that we cook together. I later on realized something was not right. One day I fought with her and when my husband came back, he started beating me for ashaming him and chasing away the visitor".*

Sexual violence

A total number of 40 respondents agreed to have ever been sexually assaulted by their partners; 20 respondents disagreed; and 30 respondents strongly disagreed. Therefore, the majority of the respondents indicated that they had ever been sexually assaulted by their intimate partners. When asked whether they had ever sexually abused their partners, 31 respondents strongly disagreed, 25 disagreed, and 23 were neutral. This statistic indicated an occurrence of sexual violence among intimate partners in the barracks. It is in line with a definition by the American Psychological Association (2018) which considers such acts to be part of sexual abuse. According to its definition, any sexual behaviour deemed to be abusive by one person upon another, often perpetrated using force or by taking advantage of another is considered to constitute sexual abuse which is a form of Intimate Partner Violence.

A respondent from Nsambya was quoted saying:

> *"I face a lot of forced sex; I am married to a medical doctor but I am forced to have sex every night and then he doesn't care even if I am in my periods. This corresponds with the harmful cultural practice among the Batooro where they say that "omusajja tanyangwa", meaning that you can't refuse a man". This indicates that police officers come from the wider cultural setting and so they are also culturally intoxicated by the harmful cultural practices.*

Another respondent from Nsambya was quoted saying:

> *"I have been married to my partner for a long time and we have two children, but my wife has been denying me sex for two years now. I failed to get help, so I left home. It took me more than a year to leave. Before that she first started listening to my phone calls with my workmates and kept on saying that they are my girlfriends, this annoyed me, and we started having problems until when I decided to leave the home."*

A respondent from Nsambya was quoted saying:

> *"I am civilian, and I work away from home, one day I came back home and caught my husband with another woman having sex We quarreled and he left the home."*

Economic violence

The majority of respondents (29) agreed to have been economically neglected by their partners

and 28 respondents strongly disagreed to have economically neglected their intimate partners. It is important to note that the above scenarios are actual manifestations of economic violence among police spouses. This was affirmed by Adams (2008), who defined economic abuse as: "A form of abuse when one intimate partner has control over the other partner's access to economic resources, which diminishes the victim's capacity to support themselves and forces them to depend on the perpetrator financially."

This is further related to financial abuse, as argued by Carnot (2004) who says that:

> *"Financial abuse may occur when a partner engages in an act which is the illegal or unauthorized use of a person's property, money, pension book or other valuables (including changing the person's will to name the abuser as heir), often fraudulently obtaining power of attorney, followed by deprivation of money or other property, or by eviction from own home. Financial abuse applies to both elder abuse and domestic violence."*

A respondent from Nsambya was quoted saying:

> *"I stayed in a relationship for 23 years, but it has not been easy since my husband doesn't support me financially and instead, he takes my money. Whenever I refuse to give him my money, he says I am disrespectful and when we buy property, it was not in his names and I sign as a witness despite the fact that I have contributed money."*

On the contrary, a male police officer was also quoted saying:

> *"I lost respect from my wife since I do not earn much. She always says I am not man since I do not give her money that she wants but then she knows that I earn little. She left me for another man who is a civilian. She does not like my work and always complains that I stay away for long. She has a good job but she does not want to share her money and always wants to develop her parents' home and does not care about our home."*

This is supported by social values, myths, and perceptions regarding Gender Based Violence. For example, in Rwanda and DRC, it is believed that a man has both final and sexual power over a woman and also should be a sole provider for the family. This escalates violence in cases where women are well positioned and earn more than their spouses and so the men do not contribute to family demands.

Emotional violence/psychological violence

A minority of 15 respondents strongly agreed to have harassed their partners based on access and utilization of their phone and social media. The manifestations above indicate an occurrence of emotional/psychological violence. As argued by Dutton (1994) and further emphasized (2000) in his book section on psychological abuse in violent domestic relations, he states that:

> *"It is often associated with situations of power imbalance in abusive relationships,*

and may include bullying, gas lighting, and abuse in the workplace". The respondent's voices indicated presence of emotional violence among police officers as a result of extra-marital relationship, failure to apologize, distance transfers causing suspicion, false accusations and cyber stalking. Psychological abuse, often called emotional abuse, is a form of abuse characterized by a person subjecting or exposing another person to a behavior that may result in psychological trauma, including anxiety, chronic depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder.

A civilian respondent from Masindi was quoted saying,

"Our 12 years marriage had been moving on well not until my husband got another woman outside wedlock. He was so unapologetic and made the issue seem so minor that I had to live with the new situation" (accept my co-wife), he started having less time for me and not providing. I was emotionally affected and from that time, our marriage has been experiencing conflict, which has so far lasted, for 3 years".

Another respondent said:

"I experience many false accusations in my relationship. My workmates used to tell my partner that I was in love with my boss. By then we were working at the same station. My husband made my life hard at work and he reported me to our commanding officer based on these accusations. This led to my transfer, and we have never been at peace."

A respondent from Masindi is quoted saying:

"When my wife left to a nearby district for work, she got into a relationship with another man; this man started calling my number all the time. Even after my wife lost the job and returned home the man kept on calling me and threatening me".

Post-relationship Violence/ Cyber Stalking

Although 34 respondents disagreed to have ever harassed their former partners when the relationship had ended, 6 respondents disclosed to have harassed their former partners upon completion of their relationship and 11 respondents strongly agreed to being harassed by a former intimate partner after the relationship had ended. This indicates occurrence of post-relationship violence among intimate partners in the barracks. A respondent from Masindi was quoted saying:

"He keeps stalking me to know my movements even asking friends my whereabouts all the time. Sometimes he uses boda bodas (motorcycles) to follow me up. Am not safe he at times speaks to the children in privacy to know more about me".

The different experiences discussed above indeed indicate that the majority of the police families are aware of the existence of Intimate Partner Violence which is manifested in all its forms including Physical, Sexual, Economic, and Psychological and Post-relationship violence.

Causes of IPV among Police Families

According to WHO (2012) IPV is a form of Gender-Based Violence; and cognizant of this, it is safe to argue that the root causes of GBV as a general phenomenon are applicable to IPV; these include Unequal power relations and Gender inequality. Unequal Power Relations can be best understood from a power distance perspective. Geert Hofstede (2010) defines Power distance as the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations expect and accept that power is distributed unequally. This is exhibited in institutions such as family, school, community and workplaces, among others. Power distance is categorized into High Power distance and Low Power distance.

An institution that gives great reverence to a person of authority is one with high power distance and one that values the equal treatment of everyone is considered to have low power distance. Geert Hofstede (2010) Further explains that inequality is seen as a basis for societal order in a high-power distance institution; on the other hand, institutions with low power distance see inequality a times as necessary, that is think of a Parent-Child relationship, but the more that relationship can be equalized the better for everyone. The author further notes that in a family setting, all persons are born into a family. It is from this institution that their mental software is acquired immediately after birth. This is passed down from the elders in whose presence they are raised. Children often model themselves after the examples set by the elders in the family (Geert Hofstede, 2010).

According to Mafumbate (2019), the African society has a sense of respect for authority and elders are an essential tool for soldering and smoothening social relations amongst members. Head of families, village or community are accorded deep respect in their capacity as leaders by legitimacy or constituted authority. This is reechoed through an old Igbo saying that, "He who listens to an elder is like one who consults an oracle". In an African setting, the oracles are considered to portray the truth, their words and instructions are heeded to for the promotion of good behaviour among the young. According elders their due respect guarantees maintenance of custom and tradition (Mafumbate, 2019).

Based on this, it is further argued that the Ugandan and African culture at large has raised men to be the heads of the family and their decisions, aspirations, plans, and rules are considered conclusive and followed religiously by all members of the household. In most circumstances there are mild to severe repercussions in moments of defiance (Engle, 1997). In reference to power distance, the African families and communities at large have raised women and children to expect and accept that men in the community are more powerful and should portray this in all ways. Hence, power is distributed unequally in the family and the less powerful accept it and expect it. This emphasized by sayings such as '*Omusajja tayangwa* (you cannot refuse a man) and – *Empaka ennemeremu; zikubyamukyawe* (Prolonged arguments earn the disliked a beating) (Ssetuba, 2002).

In addition, other causes of IPV can be classified into (1) individual factors which include: young age, low level of education, witnessing or experiencing violence as a child, harmful use of alcohol and drugs, personality disorders, acceptance of violence (e.g. feeling it is acceptable

for a man to beat his partner) and past history of abusing partners (Heise L, 2002). In addition, there are factors consistently associated with a woman's increased likelihood of experiencing violence by her partner(s) across different settings which include exposure to violence between parents, sexual abuse during childhood, acceptance of violence; and exposure to other forms of prior abuse (Abramsky, 2012).

Heise (2002) further noted relationship factors such as conflict or dissatisfaction in the relationship, male dominance in the family, economic stress, individual(s) that have multiple partners and disparity in educational attainment, i.e., where a woman has a higher level of education than her male partner does. The scholar also argued community and societal factors such as gender-inequitable social norms (especially those that link notions of manhood to dominance and aggression), poverty, low social and economic status of women, weak legal sanctions against IPV within marriage. Lack of women's civil rights, including restrictive or inequitable divorce and marriage laws, weak community sanctions against IPV, broad social acceptance of violence as a way to resolve conflict, armed conflict and high levels of general violence in society, as also being key causes of IPV (Heise, 2002). The study discovered nine major causes of IPV among police families as discussed below.

Dominance and control of the relationship by one partner (power imbalance)
When asked whether dominance and control of the relationship by one partner over the other is a cause of IPV, 31.1% of the respondents strongly agreed, 38.9% agreed, 13.1% were neutral, 10.0% disagreed, 6. 7% strongly disagreed. A majority of 35 respondents agreed that dominance and control of the relationship by one partner causes Intimate Partner Violence; a minority of six respondents disagreed to this being a cause.

This agrees with Geert Hofstede (2010) who explained the role of high-power distance and its relation to acceptance of dominance and control. The scholar states that in families with high power distance, the head of the family is expected and accepted by their subordinates to use their power in ways that assert the dominance.

Infidelity and lack of trust
When asked whether infidelity or lack of trust is a cause of IPV, 53% of the respondents strongly agreed, 24.4% agreed, 11.1% were neutral, 4.4% disagreed, 6.7% strongly disagreed. A majority of 48 respondents strongly agreed that infidelity and lack of trust is a key driver of intimate partner violence in the barracks. Ten respondents were neutral and a minority of six respondents strongly disagreed. This was manifested in ways under which spouses' phones were checked as a way of monitoring the people they relate with at workplace as well as who calls at what time.

One respondent said,

> *"She at times gets phone print outs to monitor me. For me I think it is an abuse of office. Since she has access to information and can get a call data from any network". "I always live under fear and threat because of her lack of trust".*

This agrees with Heise (2002) who argues that relationship factors such as conflict or

dissatisfaction in the relationship often instigate IPV starting with emotional or physiological forms of violence.

Cultural norms and expectations

When asked whether Cultural or Societal norms and expectations are a cause of IPV, 21.1% of the respondents strongly agreed, 43.3% agreed, 21.1% were neutral, 8.9% disagreed, 5.6% strongly disagreed. A majority of 39 respondents agreed to cultural, social norms and expectations being a cause of Intimate Partner Violence. A minority of five disagreed. This is agreement with Engle (1997) who states that:

> *"In the Ugandan and African culture at large men are raised to be the heads of the family and their decisions, aspirations, plans and rules are considered conclusive and followed religiously by all members of the household".*

Economic stress

When asked whether economic stress is a cause of IPV, 43.3% of the respondents strongly agreed, 37.8% agreed, 11.1% neutral, 2.2% disagreed, 5.6% strongly disagreed. A majority of 68 respondents agreed that economic stress is a cause of IPV. A minority of five respondents disagreed to this being a cause. This agrees with an article by National Institute of Justice (2009) which states that:

> *"Financial strain may keep women in abusive relationships. A review of census and survey data revealed that women at greatest risk of intimate partner violence tend to be those in relationships where the couple has few economic resources, high subjective stress about finances, experience higher unemployment and live in proximity to economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. The choice to stay or leave violent relationships may be based on the decision that a partner's economic contribution to the relationship outweighs the risk of violence. It also may compel women to live with men's violent behavior rather than seek help or take other steps to leave the violent relationship".*

This goes both ways for women and men, in a situation where one partner is more financially empowered than the other, conflict is often brewed between the couple. The risk of leaving the relationship over losing source of livelihood compels many to stay in an abusive relationship thus contributing to the prevalence of domestic violence in the barracks.

Differences in occupation/ ranks

When asked whether differences in occupation, i.e., being a police vs civilians is a cause of IPV, 34.4% of the respondents strongly agreed, 31.1% agreed, 15.6% were neutral, 10.0% disagreed, 8.9% strongly disagreed. A majority of 31 respondents strongly agreed that there is a difference in occupation where one partner is a police officer and another a civilian. A minority of eight respondents disagreed. This is agreement with one of the respondents who mentioned that;

> *"My wife doesn't trust me because I am a police officer and I spend a lot of time at work with my fellow officers, she thinks that all officers sleep with each other."This*

bothers me and makes me not want to go home and as well I can't settle at work; I have even lost my social friends as I can't interact with them freely."

This was emphasized by CP, Dr. John Kamya, who stated in an interview that:

"Some officers face a lot of stress arising from their jobs and sometimes their partners are not able to cope with the stress. Rather manage or address these issues like any other civilian through extensive arguments and prolonged conflict. Since officers have access to weapons, some of them lose control and end up discharging their weapons in response to such situations instead of understanding that Police officers and Civilians have different life stressors that need to be carefully managed in relationships with the help of professionals in acute situations. We have some officers who are in prisons as a result of misuse of guns due to IPV."

Ignorance of Intimate Partner Violence and its associated effects

When asked whether Ignorance of intimate partner violence and its associated effects is a cause of IPV, 24.4% of the respondents strongly agreed, 32.2% agreed, 26.7% were neutral, 7.8% disagreed, 8.9% strongly disagreed. A majority of 80 respondents agreed to have this as a cause of IPV. A minority of 10 disagreed. This agrees with the submission of D/ASP Lydia Nambusi, a focal person at the Sexual and Children Related Offences department at CID headquarters when asked about the causes of IPV. She stated that:

"Most Police officers are aware of the law but at times fail to implement their mandate at home. As officers we are called to prevent, detect and respond to crime but in some cases, officers fail to sensitize themselves and their community members of laws relating to crimes against the person such as IPV." For this reason, many Police families tolerate and accommodate crimes relating to physical, psychological, economic and sexual violence because they believe that some of these crimes are normal until acute manifestations such as grievous bodily harm, family neglect, trauma induced psychosis and/or loss of life and property are instigated. These could be avoided if one knows that even the "small" manifestations of IPV like constant quarreling necessitate police intervention most especially in the barracks to avoid acute situations. This is the reason our officers commit suicide at times. How long can someone tolerate psychological violence?

Poor communication

When asked whether poor communication is a cause of IPV, 36.7% of the respondents strongly agreed, 37.8% agreed, 16.7% were neutral, 6.7% disagreed, 2.2% strongly disagreed. A majority of 68 respondents agreed to have poor communication as a key contributor to IPV in their families. A minority of 22 respondents disagreed. The majority of the respondents qualified this to be a key contributor to IPV. This agrees with the submission of D/ASP Lydia Nambusi who stated that:

"Some of the cases that are reported and sometimes resolved at Police level are basically instigated by poor communication. This could be due to the constant misunderstandings and misconceptions among couples. You find that a partner stops

providing for the home because they don't understand how funds are spent but when you dig deeper you realize that the less dominant partner also contributes to the little resources available, but their efforts are never recognized. For this reason, none of the two is willing to express himself or herself without anger or judgment and this is when violence erupts. With some mediation, guidance and counseling some of these police families realize that the problem was with poor communication and they both had the best interest of the family at heart."

Anti-social and aggressive peers

When asked whether association with anti-social and aggressive peers is a cause of IPV, 26.7% of the respondents strongly agreed, 40.0% agreed, 18.9% neutral, 8.9% disagreed, 5.6% strongly disagreed. A majority of 85 respondents agreed to have this as a cause of intimate partner violence. A minority of five respondents disagreed. A majority of the respondents qualified this as cause of violence. One respondent stated that:

"I have a very good wife she goes to work and comes back home in time to cook and prepare hot water for bathing, she doesn't gossip and only talks to a few of our neighbors, I have never had issues with her cheating but when she gets angry, she says so many hurtful things even from years ago. I think if she spends time with her friends and talks to other women, she will find a way of reducing some of the pain she has in her heart and we will be able to have less painful fights. She brings back things we did even before we got married. Her friends could even advise her on how to be better in bedroom issues."

Secondary trauma from work

When asked whether Secondary trauma from work is a cause of IPV, 30.0% of the respondents strongly agreed, 36.7 % agreed, 18.9% were neutral, 6.7% disagreed, 7.8% strongly disagreed. A majority of 76 respondents agreed to have this as a cause of IPV at home while a minority of 14 respondents disagreed. This outcome showed that the majority of the respondents agreed that secondary trauma from work is a key contributor to IPV. CP. DR. John Kamya, the Commissioner Human Resource headquarters stated that:

"Officers work in high stress settings and they sometimes don't take off time to relax or rehabilitate their minds and bodies. This stress usually piles up and causes many to exert it on their partners. This is a key cause of emotional violence among couples. Most officers don't utilize their leave days, which would help them rejuvenate and build stronger bonds with their families by spending more time at home away from case files".

Performance of Police Officers at Work

The duties of a police officer are based on the mandate of the force and the specific objectives of the directorate, department or unit they have been attached to. Fundamentally, a police officer is mandated to protect and serve. Their execution of these duties determines is regulated by appraisals based on their Key Performance Indicators at unit level embedded in their officer's

job description.

Beauchamp, Bray, Eys, and Carron (2002) argue that work performance is a measure of an individual's effective execution of a task assigned to them by a supervisor. For police officers, this may include the duties assigned to them by virtue of the office/position they occupy, instructions from their commanding officer or a superior officer (orders from above).

University of Washington Human Resources (2022) explains that good performance at work is based on an individual's quality of work which is manifested in accuracy, thoroughness, and competence. Quantity of work is manifested in productivity level, time management and ability to meet deadlines. Job knowledge is manifested in skills and understanding of work. Working relationships are manifested in ability to work with others and communication skills. For purposes of this article, the linkage between IPV and Job performance shall be based on the above parameters i.e., quality of work, quantity of work, Job knowledge and working relationships during execution of police roles and duties.

Effects of IPV on Work Performance of Police officers

Compromises Quality of work: The University of Washington Human Resources (2022) defines quality of work as the measure of an individual's accuracy, thoroughness, and competence in executing their work. In most cases, IPV at home contributes to poor execution of tasks and ultimate transfer due to inefficiency. The psychological violence in form of trauma is extended to clients who come to seek for justice at police, thus compromising the quality of work.

Compromises Quantity of work: The University of Washington Human Resources (2022) defines quantity of work as the measure of an individual's productivity level, time management and ability to meet deadlines. Economic forms of IPV such as restricted access to resources and physical forms such as injury limit an officer's mobility and diligence in the line of duty. In situations where an officer cannot access resources to enable him/her to execute his/her work or when an officer has become physically incapable to execute commands, he/she is ineffective and thus unproductive. This also slows down their turnover at work which contributes to poor time management.

Deters victims from improving their Job knowledge: University of Washington Human Resources (2022) defines job knowledge as the measure of an individual's skills and understanding of work. In situations where officers are distressed and unmotivated to work due to the emotional impact of IPV, manifested through poor service delivery and absence from work, officers are excluded from working on sensitive assignments because they might not be competent enough or have the right attitude to execute the task with efficacy. This deprives them from gaining on-job experience and skills that are essential in their career development. This affects promotions and deployment in "wet" positions due to limited skills and understanding of the job.

Compromises working relationships: University of Washington Human Resources

(2022) defines working relationships as the measure of an individual's ability to work with others and foster positive communication skills. IPV manifested in forms of sexual deprivation compels many officers to engage in sexual relationships at the workplace. This is evidenced in some cases where partners are accused of spending a lot of time at work and others are known to be favoured in promotions and deployment due to the role of these relationships. It is important to note that such intimate relationships at work compromise the chain of command and effective communication in the unit.

Recommendations

The victim protection law to supplement the Domestic Violence Act: The study conducted by Kathryn Wilkes, Lisa Churcher and Applied Research Bureau (the Consultants) in 2019, on the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act 2010 (DVA) by the Ugandan public justice system indicated underreported reported cases of Domestic Violence and over a half of victims had never disclosed the violence to anyone despite the presence of the DVA. The report indicated that police and prosecutors are increasingly aware of the law, however, the prevalence of domestic violence was still disturbingly high and significantly underreported and the recommendation was to supplement the law with the Victim protection law to ensure victims of their safety. This was the same recommendation among the intimate police partners.

Deployment policy: The deployment should consider married couples to be deployed close to each other to be able to meet their family obligations. Yet single parents/mothers should be deployed close to their families to take care of their children. Distance Deployments were considered as major cause of IPV due to suspicions, failure to return home and cited increased rate at which officers were becoming polygamous putting their spouses at risks of infections (STDS) and STIs. There should be a fair deployment policy that also considers technical capacity and special skills and knowledge

Create awareness on IPV among Police Families on individual effects of violence: To inform officers of the available justice mechanisms (referral systems) and as well discourage them from abuse of the law to subject their partners to violence (misuse of guns and securing court documents to deal with violence like court orders to get phone printouts to track their spouses). Many police officers are aware of the laws on IPV but sometimes they do not use them to prevent violence or seek justice or they misuse them to deal with their partners.

Establish partnerships with key stakeholders: Further findings reveal that there was an urgent need to create partnerships with key stakeholders including civil society organizations that provide services in relation to IPV. This will enable police victims' access response services such as medical care, psychosocial support, and economic support. This way, victims will be supported to follow through the justice procedures, confident there is a neutral service provider to support them follow up their cases as well as restore their former state.

Empower IPV change agents: It was also noted that there are focal persons empowered by the barracks administration to manage cases of IPV, starting with the officer in charge barracks (OC), senior officers' committees, and a gender focal person, among others. These

have made progress in addressing these issues, though they are often hindered by limited knowledge and skills in addressing these matters. Train these focal persons to prevent, protect and respond to cases of IPV within the police barracks to address IPV at the grassroots level. These committees should also be tasked to monitor and provide feedback on the efficacy of interventions put in place.

Strengthen the Sexual offenses, Child and Family Protection and Community Affairs Departments of Uganda Police Force: There is need to establish focal persons in each department to only focus and deal with intimate violence among its officers. In this way, victims shall have an institutionally recognized team that shall focus on addressing their own issues and ensuring access to justice since charity begins at home.

Enhance access to psychosocial support: Counselling services should be provided free to potential victims of IPV among the police to avoid escalating further violence to both clients and their family members. Each barracks should have an attached professional counsellor that victims go to at their own and seek counselling services. If violence is managed at initial stages, the grave impact may be solved before incidents happen like preventing victims from committing suicide, misuse firearms to kill spouses, deserting, among others, that negatively impact on their work performance.

Economic empowerment and support: The spouses to the police officers should be supported **f**inancially through Sacco's and other financial institutions that can give access to low-interest loans to support their businesses that can enable them contribute to family demands. This wil reduce on financial stress and cases of failure to provide for their families. This will enable officers to concentrate and perform their duties diligently and as well reduce on corrupt tendencies due to pressure to meet daily family demands.

Enhance access to basic medical services: The hospitals/health facilities in police barracks should be able to provide free medication to police officers and their immediate families including free medical examinations and maternity services to mothers and as well offer free medical examinations and fill the police assault forms (PF3, PF3A) used as evidence in courts of law against perpetrators. The health facilities should be able to also provide Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), emergency contraceptives, free HIV testing and counselling, treatment to STDS and STI and maternity services to mothers.

Continuous research and capacity building: The Welfare Department should conduct research on IPV among police officers as a result of Economic Violence. The study recommends continuous capacity building to officers to understand the forms of IPV, causes, effects and remedies to the problem.

Conclusion

IPV has severe effects on everyone, and does not spare law enforcement officers and their intimate partners.The affects extend to individual, immediate family members and the general public. Police officers are exposed to all forms of violence common to the general public according to these research findings and this negatively impacts on their professional service

delivery. It is very rare to detect the psychological effects of IPV and this puts the whole institution at a great risk which in turn can spoil its image to the general public. It is very risky for armed police personnel presumed to prevent and respond to IPV to be also facing the same. Chances are high that a police officers who are suffering IPV, may extend the same violence because of the psychological trauma they are facing to another victim who comes to report a case at police, or fail to listen and at times judge a case based on past experience. Uganda Police Force should address IPV as a general problem starting with supporting enactment of the victim protection law, creating awareness among its officers on how to access justice and available support services, apply a deployment policy that protects the police families, offer free psycho-social support services to victims, financial empowerment to officers, partner with NGOs to support its efforts, and above all, conduct further research to recommend more solutions to the problem.

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